

Chalkhill Education Centre

Princess Royal Hospital, Lewes Road, Haywards Heath, RN16 4NQ

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress during their time in this pupil referral unit, especially in their behaviour and attitudes to learning. They work very hard in lessons and gain confidence by achieving well and producing their best work, much of which is outstanding.
- Students aged over 16 years do as well as younger pupils. Those taking AS and A levels achieve very well. Many, though not all, who are not in education, employment or training on entry to the unit go on to further education.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are polite and respectful at all times. The relationships pupils develop with each other and with staff are exemplary, based on mutual respect and consideration for others. Pupils feel safe.
- Pupils benefit from outstanding teaching. Lessons are very well planned and contain interesting and challenging tasks that pupils enjoy doing to the best of their abilities. Most, though not all, teachers provide written comments in marking pupils' work so that pupils know how to improve it.
- The unit is very successful in preparing young people for a successful return to their previous school or to other education or training.
- Leadership and management of the unit are very effective at improving teaching and learning through robust lesson observations and encouraging teachers to deliver exciting and challenging lessons.
- The management committee provides an outstanding balance of challenge and support to senior leaders. The excellent accommodation is made even more attractive by the excellent displays of pupils' work.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspector held meetings with the head of education, a representative of the local authority, individual teachers, pupils, the ward manager and the consultant psychiatrist. The inspector also met with the Chair of the Management Committee and informally with pupils and medical staff.
- The inspector observed eight parts of lessons taught by six different teachers. He spoke with pupils about their work and their experiences of the unit and scrutinised pupils' work.
- A range of documents was examined including the unit's self-evaluation, its development plan, minutes of meetings of the management committee, attendance and progress records and the single record of recruitment and vetting checks.
- Account was taken of the responses in eight questionnaires completed by members of staff. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Martyn Rhowbotham, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Chalkhill Education Centre is an average-sized pupil referral unit based in new premises on the site of the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath. Most pupils are aged between 11 and 19 years, although the unit can take younger children. Most pupils are still registered with their existing school and attend the unit on a part-time basis.
- Pupils are referred to the service because they have a range of, or combination of, extremely complex medical and/or mental health difficulties. These include acute psychosis, mood and conduct disorders, bipolar disorder, clinical depression and obsessive compulsive disorder. Many pupils have serious eating disorders. Pupils are admitted on either a planned basis after community-based interventions or on an emergency basis if the situation with a young person is judged to be extremely serious and urgent.
- Admissions to, and discharges from, the unit are the responsibility of consultant psychiatrists.
- Most pupils stay in the service for very short periods; the average length of stay is 22 days.
- Due to the specialist nature of the unit, pupils are referred from many different local authorities, some being very distant from the unit.
- At the time of the inspection, 12 of the 15 pupils were of a White British Heritage. Eleven pupils were resident in the hospital, the remaining being day-care patients.
- Few pupils have a statement of special educational needs, although all have significant emotional, behavioural and/or mental health difficulties.
- The unit does not receive any pupil premium funding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of course options for students aged 16 and over by:
 - introducing a range of vocational courses
 - further developing links with colleges and training providers.
- Ensure that all the marking of pupils' work includes comments on what pupils need to do to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils make excellent progress during their often very short time at the unit. Most enter the unit with the expected abilities in reading, spelling and mathematics and those pupils who stay for longer periods of time make very good progress in these subjects. The very short length of stay for most pupils makes the formal measuring of progress in these subjects very difficult. However, scrutiny of young pupils' work and the often outstanding progress observed in lessons provide convincing evidence that pupils are not just marking time.
- Pupils make excellent progress in their behaviour and attitude to learning. The unit provides exceptionally well for young people's emotional development and the very significant mental health problems the pupils face which have been the major barrier to successful learning in the past. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning in this exceptionally supportive environment is outstanding. The well-planned curriculum that focuses appropriately on personalised timetables, and very effective target setting and monitoring contribute to pupils' achievements.
- Pupils settle into education very quickly, sometimes beginning lessons on the day they are admitted. The very supportive environment enables them to gain confidence, develop their social skills and self-esteem and to become successful and independent learners. They enjoy their time in school.
- Most pupils remain registered with their mainstream school with a view to either returning there or to another school or college. Continued, regular attendance is therefore very important and, despite their very complex medical and mental health difficulties (often a combination of both), there are very few pupils who do not attend regularly. The unit is very successful in re-integrating pupils back into education, with some 70% returning successfully to their previous school and a further 19% enrolling with another education or training provider after their discharge from the unit.
- Pupils produce outstanding standards of work, especially in food technology and art. Pupils in all subjects are justifiably very proud of their achievements and talk articulately and with great enthusiasm about their work. Pupils enjoy reading and they take part in discussions sensibly and with great enthusiasm. Despite their very significant difficulties, virtually all pupils attend lessons, join in extremely well and complete the work set to very high standards.
- The few pupils with a formal statement of special educational needs make as good progress as their peers.
- Pupils who were studying GCSEs and AS levels in their mainstream school prior to their admission to Chalkhill receive very good support. Those pupils who are in attendance at the time of examinations do very well and 12 GCSEs were achieved last year, including four at grade A* and two at grade B.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- All teaching is at least good and a significant proportion is outstanding. Teachers have suitably high expectations of how pupils will behave and take part in lessons. All lessons are planned well with the very different needs of pupils in mind, and teachers are extremely skilled at adapting their lessons to cater for the emotional needs of pupils. Through the exemplary use of negotiation, teachers ensure pupils are engaged purposefully in an appropriate task, even though it may not be the one they had initially planned. This strategy is highly appropriate and very effective.
- Both teachers and pupils are skilled in the use of technology in lessons. In an outstanding art/media lesson, a pupil produced an animated cartoon of exceptional quality using complex software with great confidence. Pupils are very keen to discuss their work and to explain what they have learned.
- Classrooms are extremely attractive and are organised well by teachers. The displays of pupils'

work in classrooms and around the centre are outstanding. Teachers successfully create a very purposeful and productive atmosphere in lessons to which pupils respond extremely well by trying very hard to produce their best work.

- All lessons contain tasks that are appropriately challenging and pupils enjoy carrying out innovative and interesting activities that help them develop a range of skills. These include negotiation and communication, as well as more formal skills such as numeracy and writing. In one lesson, pupils took part in an excellent discussion describing their feelings and emotions having read a war poem. In a mathematics lesson, pupils used the skills they had learned in plotting bearings to use compasses correctly to find a given location in the community.
- In nearly all cases, activities are amended so as to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teachers are aware of pupils' abilities, as well as having an extremely good knowledge of their medical and mental health needs and the implications for learning that these present. This leads to lessons progressing rapidly and excellent progress being made by pupils.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully to make sure pupils understand and they are given very good opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. Pupils are successfully encouraged to talk about their work and what they have learned. In some lessons, pupils evaluate each other's work and achievements and they do this very well.
- Pupils' work is marked frequently and pupils receive very good feedback as to how well they are doing in lessons. Teachers question pupils well and frequently to check on their learning and progress. In some areas, however, marking does not provide pupils with advice about what they must do to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around the centre. Pupils move calmly to and from the ward to lessons. They arrive punctually and are ready and willing to learn.
- Of particular note are the exceptionally respectful relationships pupils develop with each other and with staff. Pupils get on extremely well with each other and are very supportive in lessons, often helping each other out with the task in hand. In an outstanding food technology lesson, pupils worked together to plan a meal and produced food of exceptional quality.
- Pupils remain very focused on their work in lessons and on the very few occasions that their attention wanders they are very skilfully returned to their work by teachers. There is no use of inappropriate language and pupils are without exception extremely polite to adults and to each other.
- Pupils said that bullying is very rare and that they feel very safe in the centre. Pupils also reported that there was no name calling or other behaviour that could be hurtful to others.
- The whole-school registration creates a purposeful start to the school day.
- Pupils' attendance whilst at the centre improves rapidly for all pupils, some by as much as 80%. In the context of pupils' severe medical and/or mental health needs, this is very impressive. Virtually all students attend all of their timetabled sessions.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The head of education provides dynamic leadership and has high expectations of teachers and pupils. Staff enjoy working at Chalkhill and are proud to do so. Teamwork is excellent and staff are totally committed to improving the lives and chances of young people who are facing severe difficulties and trauma.
- Leaders and managers understand clearly the unit's strengths and weaknesses. The development plan is detailed, contains good-quality, measureable targets and is monitored frequently by senior managers and the management committee.
- Arrangements for monitoring the performance of staff are well established and the largely accurate lesson observation scheme is evaluated externally for its robustness. As yet, the

performance management scheme is linked only loosely to pay. Staff have good access to a wide range of professional development opportunities and the unit has benefited from good links with other establishments within the local authority.

- The unit's very successful emphasis on improving pupils' self-esteem and confidence is outstanding. The curriculum is planned well and makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through, for example, the very exciting and diverse art curriculum. The curriculum is too narrow, however, for post-16 students.
- Therapeutic activities improve and complement the curriculum and parental and pupil surveys indicate high levels of satisfaction with the provision. Medical and education staff work extremely well together, sharing a common goal of achieving the best possible outcomes for all young people.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The management committee consists of an excellent range of highly-skilled and experienced professionals. Scrutiny of the minutes shows that the committee is chaired extremely well and that it focuses on the important matters that make a positive difference to young people's lives, such as the quality of teaching and pupils' attendance and achievement. The management committee provides an outstanding balance of support and challenge to senior leaders and makes a significant contribution to performance management, although this is not yet linked to pay. Members provide very strong strategic direction for the unit and monitor its performance extremely well. They visit the unit often and one member recently carried out a pupil consultation exercise which was valued highly by leaders, staff and pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131189
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	403877

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit (Community)
Age range of pupils	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Appropriate authority	The Management Committee
Chair	Stevie Crowther
Headteacher	Graeme Cornell
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 January 2010
Telephone number	01444 441805
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