

South Gloucestershire EOTAS

Charborough Road, Filton, Bristol, BS34 7RB

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Strong leadership of the school has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the achievement of pupils has improved since the time of the previous report.
- Teaching is good. Teachers and other adults know the needs of their pupils exceptionally well and plan activities that help pupils to learn in a calm and very supportive environment.
- Pupils make good progress in lessons and are catching up on the learning they have missed at an earlier stage in their education. Several pupils leave with nationally recognised qualifications even though they are often in the school for a very short time.
- Members of the management committee know how well different groups of pupils are doing and provide strong support for leaders.
- Pupils say that the school is a safe place to learn and that they are listened to by staff and feel valued as individuals.
- Pupils and staff use resources, which occasionally are limited, creatively to provide a curriculum that is matched to pupils' needs and to tackle gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Behaviour is good. Many pupils have gone through very challenging times and are learning to regulate their own behaviour. Their rates of attendance have improved significantly during the time they are at the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not given enough support so that they can respond to the comments teachers make through marking and improve their learning.
- Opportunities for pupils to experience success through individual programmes are not always well enough developed to better prepare them for working life.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited the school's three sites and observed teaching and learning in six lessons. Four were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and informal discussions were held with pupils, members of staff, a representative of the local authority and members of the management committee. The views of 26 members of staff who returned their questionnaire were taken into account.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work. He analysed the progress pupils made during the time they are at school. Other policies and documents reviewed include attendance information, improvement plans and safeguarding information.
- The inspector took account of the few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and to the school's parental survey. He met with a number of parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school consisted of a managed partnership between the local authority's Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) service and the New Horizons Learning Centre, which was a school for pupils with behaviour, social and emotional difficulties. Shortly after the time of that inspection, a re-organisation and restructuring took place.
- From September 2013, the school has been named the South Gloucestershire EOTAS.
- The current provision is housed on three different sites across South Gloucestershire and takes pupils from a wide geographical area. It serves 15 secondary schools and academies, about 100 primary schools and three special schools. It consists of four elements which are listed below.
- The Junction learning centre has a capacity of 40 places and currently has 37 pupils on roll. Pupils who attend have a broad range of complex medical needs, for example, social and emotional anxieties, mental health needs or chronic illness. In addition to this, the school offers a home tuition service because of pupils' individual needs.
- The primary pupil referral unit (PRU) has a capacity of 12 places and currently has five pupils on roll. This unit caters for pupils with behaviour, social and emotional needs. Typically these pupils have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. Their placement is usually short term while they are allocated specialist provision.
- The secondary PRU, with a capacity of 30 places, has currently nine pupils on roll. These pupils have complex behaviour and emotional needs and have usually been permanently excluded from two mainstream schools.
- The school provides commissioned support for pupils who have been temporarily excluded from secondary school for more than six days and supports permanently excluded pupils who are waiting for placement at a second mainstream school.
- There are currently no Key Stage 1 pupils attending the school.
- All pupils who come into the school have a statement of special educational needs (about one quarter), education, health and care plans, or are supported at school action plus.
- Given the complexity of the pupils' needs, reduced programmes of study are agreed that reflect the pupils' individual circumstances. In addition to this, many pupils arrive after periods of long-term non-attendance.
- Most pupils are of White British backgrounds.
- Typically, just over one third of the pupils are eligible for pupil premium, which is extra funding for those who are eligible for free school meals or are in the care of the local authority. This is above the national average. However, this funding is mostly allocated to the schools with which the pupils are dual registered.
- The headteacher took up her post in the school in September 2014.
- A number of secondary pupils attend alternative placements. These are currently City of Bristol College, Education First, Kids Company, and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide pupils with better support so that they can respond to the comments teachers make through marking to improve their learning.
- Enhance pupils' experiences and opportunities to experience success, by developing a wider range of individual programmes which help pupils develop skills which better prepare them for working life.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are good

- Leaders at all levels have successfully promoted a culture of high expectations of pupils. The values and attitudes are built through strong relationships with pupils and a detailed understanding of their individual needs. As a result, pupils develop the confidence to re-engage in learning. This is improving their life chances and preparation for life in modern Britain
- Strong teamwork is evident across the school. Staff work well with each other in lessons and are skilled at intervening at just the right moments when additional support is needed.
- The quality of teaching has been improved since the time of the previous inspection. Monitoring and feedback are accurate and used to develop teachers' skills. As a result, teaching promotes effective learning and ensures that different groups of pupils have an equal opportunity to do well.
- The school works well with parents and carers. Those parents spoken to were highly complimentary of the work of the school in helping their children to improve their attitudes. For example, one pupil commented, 'I have changed my attitude and things for the better at home and at school.' Staff regularly call parents to identify any concerns and to promote regular attendance.
- Pupils receive regular advice and support, linked to their personal needs, in order to help them to understand how different courses and other opportunities might benefit them for working life. This guidance has been partially successful and extending this advice and support features in the school's future planning.
- There are well-established links with alternative providers to help to widen the curriculum offered by the school. However, leaders have rightly identified that there is scope to develop this work and provide courses and experiences that will better prepare the pupils for working life. Attendance is closely checked.
- Leaders have used the additional primary school PE and Sport premium funding to provide specialist training for staff and coaching for pupils. As result, pupil participation in sport has widened.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through different subjects, notably in art. Consideration and respect are values that are strongly promoted in all aspects of the school's work.
- A local authority representative provides valued support for the school, including joint lesson observation and other activities to check on the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Management committee members are well informed about pupils' progress through the regular reports from the headteacher. Several have an educational background or specific expertise of working with pupils. They are very secure in interpreting data and ask challenging questions to check on pupils' progress. They know how the pupil premium funding is used to ensure that this group of pupils makes progress that at least matches that of other groups. Performance management arrangements for the headteacher and other staff are rigorous. The management committee members are fully involved in making decisions about rewarding good performance and tackling weaknesses. They are confident that tolerance and respect are promoted because they make frequent visits to see the school in operation. They have undertaken training in safeguarding and have checked that all statutory requirements in relation to child protection are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Many arrive in the school with a history of failure in their previous schools and several face exceptional difficulties in their personal lives. However, given the positive way staff support these pupils both through home tuition and at the different centres, they experience success and several say they are enjoying being at school.
- Staff spoken to from alternative provision report that pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are improving and this was confirmed by parents. Such improvement is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development.
- For most pupils, attendance rates have improved dramatically and this has helped them to make rapid gains in their learning and build good learning habits.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors gave a number of reasons why they liked coming to school. Several commented that they felt that they were treated as individuals and that they knew what to do if they felt anxious or unable to participate.

- Case studies presented by the school indicate a remarkable turnaround in attitudes to learning and progress made by some pupils, including more-able pupils.
- Appropriate levels of supervision and adults' exceptional knowledge of the pupils' needs mean that playtimes are harmonious. Being active, playing games and sport are encouraged. The pupils return to classes ready to learn.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school keeps detailed records of any incidents. Pupils spoken to said that there was no bullying and that they had full confidence in the adults who looked after them.
- Leaders regularly check-up on pupils in alternative provision to ensure that they are attending and feel safe and secure.
- Pupils understand about keeping themselves safe, for example, when using electronic devices and the internet. They comment that, for example, the potential danger from social networking has been taught on several occasions.
- The responses of parents in the school surveys and those spoken to reflect a consistently positive view of the improvement seen in their children's attitudes and behaviour.
- The presentation of work in books is mostly good, especially at The Junction. There are instances of work not being finished or refusal to cooperate which are carefully logged by staff. The responses of staff vary according to the pupils' individual needs so as to build trust and confidence, and help pupils to regulate their own behaviour.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good and teachers expect the pupils to work as hard as they can. As a result, learning is purposeful in lessons and pupils make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Teachers use a broad range of assessments when pupils join the school to identify pupils' strengths and limitations. Given the experiences of these pupils, there are often considerable gaps in their knowledge and understanding in literacy and numeracy. Teachers use this information effectively to plan individual programmes of work.
- Good planning captures the pupils' interest and teachers are skilled at relating what they do in class to practical experiences; for example, pupils applied their work on rounding numbers to how much the Olympics cost.
- Teachers question well, giving pupils time to explain their thinking. This enables teachers to establish pupils' depth of understanding and choose the moment when to move on to more challenging work. Pupils spoken to say the work they are given is just right for them.
- Discussion in the class, for example as seen in English in Year 9, helps pupils to identify how improve the quality of their writing using adventurous vocabulary and complex sentences.
- Teaching assistants provide skilful support for different groups of pupils, including helping those pupils who need individual attention, for example to help with reading and exploring different vocabulary.
- Teachers mark work regularly and usually provide 'next steps' to help the pupils improve their learning. However, pupils are not always given enough time or support to reflect on these comments to ensure that they take on this advice or learn from their mistakes.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From their different starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school's information about pupils' progress shows that pupils in all groups typically achieve similarly well. This includes those pupils eligible to receive additional funding.
- Pupils with complex medical needs make good progress because they feel safe in the school and tasks given to them are well planned. The calm learning environment and good levels of encouragement help them to persevere with tasks.
- The progress made by most-able pupils is similar to that of other pupils and this is shown in their samples of work. For example, in Year 3 last year a pupil left the school having exceeded the age-related expectations in reading and writing having made good progress.
- Many pupils join the school with attainment which is well below that typical for their age because they have had a disjointed education experience, including some long periods of absence related to their specific needs.

- Parents and students agree that they make good progress and are gaining important literacy and numeracy skills. In the last academic year, the majority of pupils in Year 11 gained entry-level qualifications in English or mathematics.
- The school's information about how well pupils are doing shows that the pupils' overall progress compares well to that of pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the primary PRU, pupils are developing their reading skills using their knowledge of letters and their sounds well to read unfamiliar words. More-able pupils read with fluency and understanding.
- Case studies provided by the school show some success in placing and supporting the pupils on specific courses to help them gain work-related qualifications. However, there individual programmes do not always promote stronger achievement and widen choice.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	131626
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	442504

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
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bron Kucharski
Headteacher	Louise Leader
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2012
Telephone number	01454 868600
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