

Parkside Pupil Referral Unit

291 Spring Road, Ipswich IP4 5ND

Inspection dates	1–2 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the last inspection, the unit has grown in size and the number of pupils on roll has more than doubled. This expansion has been managed well by senior leaders.
- Senior leaders have shared the good practice established at the Parkside unit with the Lindbergh Centre, enabling pupils with challenging behaviour who have been excluded from other schools to successfully re-engage with their learning and be kept safe.
- Teaching is securely based on knowing pupils' very different medical, social, emotional and behavioural needs. By building positive relations, and managing their behaviour with great sensitivity, tolerance and understanding, effective teaching enables pupils to behave and achieve well.
- Assessing pupils' prior learning, their backgrounds and interests on arrival with them and their parents enables staff to tailor provision to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Behaviour is managed well. The endless patience show by staff when dealing with pupils' complex emotional and behavioural needs is exceptional. Staff work tirelessly to build pupils' aspirations, boost their confidence and help keep them safe. Pupils and parents spoke warmly about the care and support they receive.
- The majority of pupils leave Year 11 with awards in basic literacy and numeracy, work-related or GCSE qualifications. This, and the high-quality careers guidance, prepares them well for the next stage of their learning, training or work.
- The progress and personal development of pupils who have special educational needs or disability are monitored effectively to ensure that they achieve equally as well as others.
- Senior leaders rigorously hold staff to account for their work. Leaders at the Lindbergh Centre have successfully improved provision.
- The management committee provide clear strategic direction and ensure that arrangements to help keep pupils safe are in place.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress has been made in merging the two units together. Policy and procedures are not yet applied consistently across both sites.
- Monitoring of the progress made by all pupils, in the unit and at the home unit are not fully established.
- Learning is not clearly mapped across the new curriculum to ensure that pupils gain all of the necessary knowledge and skills needed for GCSE and other awards at Key Stage 4.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the unit's overall effectiveness further by ensuring that:
 - the two centres are merged together fully, so that policy and procedures are applied consistently
 - senior leaders gain a sharper view of the unit's overall impact on pupils' personal development and academic achievement
 - the new curriculum is evaluated fully to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils so that they are fully prepared for GCSE examinations and other awards
 - the newly introduced procedures for monitoring the learning and progress of all pupils are firmly established.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Senior leaders have steered the unit through a period of major change and have stabilised the quality of provision and behaviour on the recently acquired Lindbergh site. Significant progress has been made in a short space of time by sharing best practice. Senior leaders recognise that more needs to be done to strengthen provision further by merging both sites together so that they operate fully as a single unit.
- The intensive nurturing, high-quality provision and excellent care for pupils at the Parkside site have been maintained since the last inspection. Higher expectations and greater accountability of staff and pupils at the Lindbergh Centre are promoting a culture of improvement. As a result, the provision is increasingly effective in improving pupils' outcomes.
- The two acting headteachers and deputy headteacher share a clear vision for the future development of the provision. Staff understand senior leaders' expectations of them in enabling pupils to attend regularly, engage and achieve well. Regular meetings with middle leaders hold them accountable for the overall achievement of pupils in English, mathematics, science and some foundation subjects.
- Self-evaluation is largely accurate, acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of both sites. The unit's development plans rightly prioritise securing further improvement of the Lindbergh Centre. Senior leaders have not shied away from taking action when their expectations of teaching and the quality of care for pupils have not been met. Weaknesses have been tackled head-on and robust procedures put in place to manage the performance of staff.
- Leaders of the Lindbergh Centre manage its day-to-day running effectively. They monitor the welfare of individual pupils closely and this has led to improvements in attendance and behaviour. Staff work as a team to ensure that the centre is a calm environment in which to learn and classrooms are well resourced.
- Improved monitoring, better teaching, care and support at the Lindbergh Centre have made a significant impact on those pupils who attend regularly. Some pupils do not attend often enough. Others have alternative arrangements made to learn at the Lindbergh Centre, at offsite providers or at home using computers. These arrangements encourage many more pupils to re-engage in their learning. However, these arrangements have only been introduced recently and it is still too early to judge their impact on pupils' achievement.
- Centre leaders oversee the development of a project-based curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 3 and in Year 10, designed to capture the interest of pupils who have missed significant amounts of schooling. Pupils are attracted back into learning by providing them with tasks matched to their abilities and interests.
- The majority of Year 11 pupils follow a broader range of courses leading to GCSEs and other accredited awards. A minority of pupils spend time in the unit and work at home using computers. These arrangements are new and have not been evaluated fully by senior leaders to see if they are working effectively.
- Regular personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education helps pupils appreciate the viewpoints of others from differing backgrounds and develop a clearer understanding of fundamental British values. Project-based learning and the unit's commitment to developing pupils' social and emotional well-being adds significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Well-established partnerships have been forged with a wide range of external agencies. Links with medical and social services, the police and the local authority provide expert support for pupils with chronic health issues, and help to protect those pupils who are most at risk. In partnership with the local authority, an experienced headteacher is employed on a part-time basis to promote further leadership capacity on the Lindbergh site, and to steer the unit towards becoming an academy later this year.
- Effective communication between school and home is highly valued by parents and carers. All of those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire praised the unit's work. One commented that, 'it is the quiet, calm and tidy atmosphere of Parkside and its nurturing environment that have allowed my child to put into practice more socially acceptable ways of dealing with adults and his peers, and has also allowed him to excel academically.' Another stated, 'staff are always willing to listen to parents and children with concerns. This school has made an amazing difference in my daughter's life, we are so lucky and thankful to have a place.'
- **The governance of the school**
 - Members of the management committee bring a wealth of knowledge, understanding and experience

to the unit. They know its strengths and weaknesses well and are able to articulate clearly the journey it has travelled, what has been achieved so far and what else needs to be done.

- Minutes of meetings show that they provide effective support and challenge for senior leaders to secure improvements. They monitor the impact of the work of senior leaders and support them fully with their plans for improvement.
- They ensure that performance management procedures are applied fairly and consistently, and that only those staff who demonstrate their impact on driving improvement are rewarded with salary increases.
- They oversee spending of the pupil premium and check that it is used appropriately. Disadvantaged pupils achieve equally as well as others because additional funding enables staff to offer an enhanced level of care and support for them, and to provide pupils with one-to-one support to improve their literacy and numeracy.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Following two monitoring inspections of the unit by Her Majesty's Inspectors in October 2013 and July 2015 senior leaders, staff and the management committee are acutely aware of the heightened importance of checks when recruiting new staff and the timely following up of concerns raised about child protection in this setting. This inspection found that they do this robustly. Both monitoring inspections found that safeguarding arrangements were met fully.
- Staff training on safeguarding, including 'Prevent' training is up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is firmly based on building positive relations with pupils, and the sensitive handling of their behaviour. Staff show great patience, tolerance and understanding of pupils with complex medical, social, emotional and behavioural needs. This personalised approach actively promotes equality of opportunity well by recognising the need to tailor strategies for dealing with each individual pupil.
- Staff manage behaviour well, by making their expectations clear and knowing the best strategies to deal with individuals' challenging behaviour. At Parkside, pupils' personal and emotional needs are known well; different strategies are put in place to enable them to work by themselves or cooperatively with others, and, when needed, to let them take 'time out' to manage their own well-being.
- At the Lindbergh Centre, most pupils have significant gaps in their learning due to poor behaviour and attendance. Staff are able to re-engage them in their learning by developing new skills that improve their understanding. Poor behaviour is tackled sensitively and calmly.
- Teachers use their detailed subject knowledge to prepare resources for lessons, including hands-on, practical activities and opportunities to find out for themselves using computers. They effectively pose questions that capture and retain pupils' interests. Teachers encourage pupils to respond without fear of making errors so that they deepen their resilience in learning.
- Marking of pupils' work is done according to the unit's policy on marking and assessment, with teachers making appropriate suggestions to help pupils improve their work. These procedures are more established in English and mathematics in Key Stage 4 than in other subjects.
- Pupils joining the Lindbergh Centre undergo a two-week induction programme to assess their personal, social and emotional needs prior to their staged reintroduction back into learning. Tests of pupils' prior attainment also provide staff with a clear indication of what they already know and can do, and what additional support is needed to help them get back on track. Effective management of these arrangements by the special educational needs coordinators from both sites ensures that pupils' individual needs are fully met.
- Assessments are also made to gauge the social and emotional development and the welfare of individual pupils. Regular records are kept of any incidents arising concerning their behaviour and punctuality, preferred ways of learning and personal interests. This ensures that pupils' needs are known well so that staff can deploy the best approach to motivate pupils to engage with their learning.
- Teacher's assessment of pupils' progress is not consistent across both sites. It is generally more accurate on the Parkside site than on the Lindbergh Centre, mainly because the progress pupils make is dependent on the theme and content of the project they follow each half term. Checks have not been made to ensure that pupils learn the essential skills in English, mathematics and science within each project, so that they are fully prepared for further learning in Key Stage 4.
- In the Parkside unit, classrooms and corridors are rich environments in which to learn, with good-quality

displays of pupils' work and information to reinforce their use of language and literacy. Although fit for purpose, the environment in the Lindbergh Centre is less stimulating and underdeveloped.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The unit's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff show a detailed understanding of the personal needs of pupils, which enables them to help those who are very sensitive and most in need to re-engage in their learning. Consequently, pupils socialise with others and enjoy life in the unit.
- Teachers and support staff are adept at building pupils' aspiration and boosting their confidence. Pupils speak positively and warmly about the level of care and support they receive, one pupil describing the unit as 'the best school I have been to'.
- Good relations are forged daily, from the moment pupils arrive in breakfast club. Staff socialise well with pupils, gaining their confidence and putting them in the right frame of mind for learning.
- At the Parkside unit, pupils have opportunities to engage in a range of enrichment activities, particularly in music, catering, broadcasting, computing and technology. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to participate in physical activity and exercise.
- Many pupils join the unit having missed long periods of schooling, either through illness, truancy or exclusion. Intensive work by staff to re-engage pupils, monitor their attendance and liaise with external agencies to tackle the ingrained absence of a small minority is leading to improvement. Overall attendance remains low but is rising and is much closer to the national average this year.
- The unit's records show that a small minority of pupils are persistently absent, or are on reduced timetables. Alternative arrangements made for them to learn away from the unit are helping to keep them in education. However, their limited presence in the unit means that staff have minimal time with them to promote their personal development.
- A recently introduced pupil council enables pupils to contribute to school life through fundraising, sharing their ideas and by representing the views of other pupils.
- The unit employs its own careers adviser. Pupils receive effective advice about the courses to follow, and future education and training opportunities. Most pupils are helped to gain a work-experience placement in local businesses or to act as volunteers in the community to help inform their choice of future careers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Many pupils arrive at the unit having been excluded from school due to their poor behaviour. Improving this is a top priority. Staff foster good relations with them, find out their needs and interests and clarify the unit's expectations of them.
- Both sites provide pupils with a safe place to be. Staff ensure that they are orderly, calm and pupils feel secure.
- Pupils value the care and support provided for them. They say they feel safe in the unit, and that bullying is rare. When it does occur, incidents are dealt with by staff.
- Records show far fewer incidents of poor behaviour and exclusions occurred this year. Staff record incidents in detailed case studies to illustrate the impact they have had on helping pupils to modify their challenging behaviour and re-engage fully in learning.
- Pupils are shown how to stay safe online. Staff are trained in applying e-safety at all times.
- Recent issues regarding the welfare and safety of a few of its most vulnerable and challenging pupils on the Lindbergh site have been followed up thoroughly with parents, the police and social services.
- A small minority of pupils taught off-site at other local providers are monitored closely by support staff to ensure that they feel secure, integrate with others and achieve well.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- The unit makes significant gains in re-engaging pupils with complex medical needs, low attendance and poor behaviour and attitudes back into learning. Without the care, support and intensive, day-to-day work staff do with pupils, staff recognise that pupils would struggle to achieve academically. The high-quality,

personalised care they provide for pupils, coupled with good teaching, enables them to settle quickly, grow in confidence and make good progress.

- Pupils arrive in the unit at different times throughout the academic year as a result of long periods of illness or absence from school. A significant proportion arrive in Year 11 having been excluded from their mainstream schools. From these very different starting points, most pupils who attend regularly go on to achieve essential qualifications by the end of Key Stage 4. Bearing in mind the significant gaps in their prior learning, this represents good progress.
- The unit's information shows that currently, the majority of pupils are making good progress in English and mathematics, and to a lesser extent in science and art. This is particularly noticeable with those pupils attending the Parkside site, who have spent the most amount of time in the unit.
- Pupils' books show that older and the most-able pupils studying GCSE English, mathematics, science and art are provided with sufficiently challenging work and are coping well with it. Some of the extended writing in English is very good. More-able pupils are known well by staff; they provide them with good-quality teaching and guidance to enable them to re-engage in learning and pursue a range of GCSE qualifications.
- In this unit, all pupils are viewed as disadvantaged in some way due to their personal backgrounds, lack of schooling, their special educational needs or disability. All of them are all treated equally, as individuals rather than as groups. The pupil premium is used well to boost pupils' engagement and achievement by paying for transport to enable them to participate in enrichment activities, learn off-site and by providing additional one-to-one tuition, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This has led to a significant improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils over the past year. Its full impact on raising their achievement is less clear. Senior leaders carefully track how funding is used to support each disadvantaged pupil, but this information is not matched with details about their performance to illustrate the full impact the funding is having.
- Leaders' commitment to encouraging all pupils to experience the workplace and wider community has led to a larger proportion of them learning at other providers away from the unit. Most who do so achieve basic awards in literacy and numeracy, or level one vocational awards that prepare them for the next stage of training or the work place. Last year, the large majority of Year 11 pupils progressed into local colleges or training providers to continue their education.

School details

Unique reference number	124527
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10001395

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	The management committee
Chair	Liz Harsant
Acting headteachers	Sally Swan and Libby Page
Telephone number	01473 717013
Website	www.parkside.suffolk.sch.uk
Email address	admin@parkside.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 November 2012

Information about this school

- The Parkside unit caters for 50 pupils who have been unable to access mainstream education due to their medical and mental health issues. Most pupils are in Years 10 and 11. Currently, the unit has 55 pupils as it has agreed with the local authority to take 10% over its pupil admittance number (PAN).
- In 2013, the Parkside unit took charge of the Lindbergh Centre, which caters for 40 pupils who have been excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion from their mainstream schools. Almost all pupils are in Years 10 and 11. Currently, the centre has 44 pupils as it has agreed with the local authority to take 10% over its PAN.
- Most pupils have special educational needs or disability. Approximately half of them have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Almost half of all pupils are eligible for support from the pupil premium grant. This is government funding for pupils who are eligible for free school meals or those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Since the last inspection the headteacher has retired. Currently, two acting headteachers share the leadership and management of the unit.
- The unit works in partnership with key external agencies such as the local authority, social services, the police and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).
- The unit uses the following offsite training provision: Suffolk New College, Otley College, St Alban's High School, the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) and the Green Light Trust.
- The Parkside unit was visited in October 2013 by Her Majesty's Inspectors following concerns raised about safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors judged the unit's safeguarding arrangements to meet requirements.
- The Lindbergh Centre was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors in July 2015 due to concerns raised about

the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, aspects of the quality of leadership and management and the behaviour of pupils. Inspectors judged the unit's safeguarding arrangements to meet requirements.

- The unit is due to become an academy in partnership with another local pupil referral unit in April 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out learning walks on both sites to observe pupils in lessons and see all teachers, instructors and support assistants at work
- They held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, the vice-chair of the management committee, the pupil council and a representative from the local authority.
- They took account of seven responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. A further eight free text responses from parents and carers, and 16 responses to the staff questionnaire, were also considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the unit's self-evaluation and improvement plan, staff training records, assessment data and monitoring records relating to behaviour attendance and safeguarding. They scrutinised a sample of pupils' work in books.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Rowena Simmons

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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