

North East Derbyshire Support Centre

The Green, Hasland, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 0LN

Inspection dates

15–16 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching well enough. They do not identify weaknesses in teaching in a timely manner and provide appropriate support to make improvements.
- There is no system of appraisal in place to hold staff to account for the progress pupils make.
- The quality of the curriculum is inconsistent across the four centres. Where teaching and learning is strong, this practice is not shared to support other members of staff.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is overgenerous. They have not closely evaluated pupils' progress to gain an accurate view of the school's performance.
- Teachers do not consistently evaluate pupils' mathematical knowledge to help them develop a good understanding of concepts. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve more complex questions.
- Pupils do not make good progress in reading. Staff do not have the skills to help the less able improve their reading ability.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have improved pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning. The relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Safeguarding procedures are effective.
- The proportion of fixed-term exclusions has reduced over the past two years.
- Pupils make good progress towards achieving vocational qualifications at the alternative provisions.
- Pupils appreciate the careers advice and guidance they receive. The overwhelming majority of pupils secure a place in education, employment or training.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school. They feel the staff have supported pupils to improve their behaviour and have been well prepared for their next steps.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of the heads of centres to ensure that the staff are held to account for the progress that pupils make
 - evaluating pupils' progress thoroughly across the curriculum to identify strengths and areas for improvement
 - ensuring that there is a planned programme of professional development to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in reading and mathematics
 - implementing a system of appraisal for all staff to identify training needs and to hold staff to account
 - sharing good practice across all the four centres to improve the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that the self-evaluation reflects the school's effectiveness more accurately.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to raise outcomes by:
 - ensuring that the teaching of mathematics enables pupils to develop their knowledge and are able to apply this knowledge to answer challenging questions
 - developing the strategies used by staff to improve pupils' reading skills
 - checking pupils' understanding of their learning to inform what work they should next be set to ensure their ongoing good progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' self-evaluation of the quality of leadership and teaching is too positive. The headteacher and centre leaders have not monitored the quality of teaching effectively to gain an accurate view. Pupils' achievement is variable across the four centres.
- Leaders have not evaluated the information they hold about pupils' progress across the curriculum. Consequently, they have not taken action to improve subject areas where pupils underachieve quickly enough. Pupils have not made good progress in mathematics for the past two years.
- There has been no system of performance management for staff during the current academic year. Staff have not been held to account rigorously enough for the progress pupils make. Leaders have not ensured that training needs for teachers have been prioritised to improve their practice.
- Leaders have not ensured that the best practice in teaching, and consequently where pupils gain a good body of knowledge, is shared more widely across all four sites. As a result, there is inconsistency in the quality of the curriculum across the school and pupils underachieve in reading.
- The new headteacher and centre leaders have improved the ethos for good conduct by the pupils at all four sites. Pupils value the immense support they receive from all members of staff and they take pride in attending the school. The centres are typically harmonious places for learning.
- Fixed-term exclusions and the use of physical restraint have reduced over the past two years because of the vast improvement in the quality of relationships between staff and pupils. Leaders have shown the capacity to make sustained improvements.
- Leaders have high ambitions for the pupils and provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils are focused and want to achieve well in their academic and vocational studies to help them prepare for their next steps. Pupils attain a range of vocational qualifications and some make good progress in writing, art and science. Very few pupils leave the school without a place in further education, employment or training.
- The school has targeted the use of the pupil premium funding to improve disadvantaged pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. However, this group of pupils' progress is inconsistent in these subjects. In contrast, the school uses the funding effectively to provide places on vocational courses for pupils. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in these courses and value the vocational accreditations they achieve.
- The quality-assurance process for alternative providers is rigorous. Leaders check thoroughly that the provisions are appropriate and that pupils are safe. There are established procedures in place to follow up non-attendance or poor behaviour at the sites to ensure that pupils are safe and working well.
- The school has used the physical education (PE) and sport premium well to buy equipment, such as football goalposts, to motivate more pupils to participate in

physical activity.

- Leaders have used the extra funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to make adaptations to the curriculum to meet these pupils' needs. This group of pupils makes good progress from their starting points. The school has not received any catch-up funding for Year 7 pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn about the consequences of their behaviour on others, and begin to appreciate other people's views, which may differ from their own. Pupils have a good understanding of equality. At the Hasland centre, pupils participated in a themed day entitled 'All different; all equal.' They learned about gender equality and participated in Paralympic events. During the inspection, pupils treated each other with respect and listened attentively to the views of others. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers are very complimentary about the work of the school. They appreciate the good communication staff provide and the improvements in their children's behaviour and attitudes to learning. Parents value the opportunities that pupils gain at alternative provision.
- The headteachers of the mainstream schools who commission part-time places at the school are also pleased with the impact of the school's work. They appreciate that expectations for behaviour are shared to ensure that there is a consistent approach between their own school and the centres. The headteachers welcome the improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning.

Governance of the school

- The management committee has increased their level of challenge over the past year. Committee members asked for more detailed information about the low rates of progress of pupils based at the centre in Chapel-en-le-Frith. Furthermore, they have asked pertinent questions about attendance and fixed-term exclusions. Following each meeting, the committee draws up a list of actions to follow up at the next meeting. However, it is not consistently clear how well the actions have been achieved when reading the minutes of the committee's meetings.
- The chair and vice-chair of the committee are both very knowledgeable about education and are keen to ensure that school leaders work with similar schools to improve the provision further. They have supported the headteacher to begin to evaluate the school's work with other headteachers. However, this work has only just started and there is yet little evidence of any impact on sharpening the school's self-evaluation.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and staff have a very good understanding of local safeguarding issues that may affect the pupils at all four centres. Staff have received training on county lines to identify whether pupils have been recruited to transport illegal substances. In addition, pupils have been warned about the dangers of gang culture.
- The school's records for keeping children safe are detailed and fit for purpose. Staff

record concerns diligently and contact external agencies promptly to help keep pupils safe. The actions of leaders are also recorded and shared among all the designated leaders for safeguarding. All parents contacted by inspectors felt that their child was safe.

- Pupils receive health and safety education when they attend alternative provision to keep themselves safe. This prepares them well for using the machinery and tools they are using for the first time.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in mathematics is inconsistent across the school. Teachers do not plan mathematics effectively to enable pupils to gain a good knowledge of the different topics. In addition, pupils do not apply their learning to solve more complex problems.
- Staff do not use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding of their learning in many subjects. On too many occasions, staff answer the questions they have asked before pupils have had the opportunity to think and respond. This reduces the level of challenge and pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Staff promote a love of reading. At the Buxton centre, pupils read daily and choose books which appeal to their interests. At Barrow Hill, pupils enjoy story time daily and learn to appreciate stories in a group. Pupils at Hasland have enjoyed reading in a group Roald Dahl's 'Marvellous Medicine' and have created similar medicines. However, teachers have not supported well enough the less able pupils to help them to improve their reading skills.
- At the Hasland centre, pupils are encouraged to learn the technical vocabulary to explain scientific concepts. Pupils debated the difference between reflection and refraction in waves in rocks. Staff checked pupils' understanding by asking them to explain their answers using their knowledge.
- Pupils' writing skills at Chapel-en-le-Frith and at Buxton are improving well as they respond positively to the feedback provided by staff to improve their descriptive writing. Pupils are using new vocabulary to improve their writing. One pupil, describing a spider, wrote, 'It had a pair of grasping pedipalps and a narrow, segmented tail.'
- The teaching of art is well planned. Pupils have designed an image of a human face on paper, and then used it to make a three-dimensional mask using clay. High expectations enable the pupils to achieve well.
- The relationships between the staff and pupils at the alternative provisions are good. Pupils studying leisure and sport have a good understanding of the requirements for a healthy diet and the adverse effects that drugs can have on the body.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. Pupils respond well to the guidance

and support they receive from the staff. They present their work neatly in their books. One pupil said, 'All schools should be like this.'

- Pupils' understanding of how to become a successful learner has developed well. Pupils are eager to succeed in their vocational and academic studies. Some pupils have willingly taken on extra roles to extend their skills, for example becoming a PE mentor to support younger pupils in their lessons. Year 11 pupils at Hasland have voluntarily attended extra revision lessons after school for their GCSEs. They complained to the staff when one of the sessions was cancelled.
- Pupils' independent living skills are promoted well. At Chapel-en-le-Frith, pupils are encouraged to draw up a menu, buy the products and cook them. At Hasland and at Barrow Hill, pupils use knives safely to chop fruit and vegetables and have enthusiastically made a wide range of dishes, including shepherd's pie, chicken fajitas and apple pie. Pupils have also baked cakes for parents to raise money for a pool table.
- At the alternative provisions, pupils' personal development is prioritised well. Pupils learn how to manage their mental health and well-being. They also understand the age and meaning of consent, as part of sex and relationships education. Pupils study Black History and the Holocaust to broaden their understanding of historical people and events.
- Pupils receive good-quality independent careers advice from the local authority. Any queries that pupils may have following the advice is promptly followed up by the learning mentor. As a result, most pupils have a clear career plan by the time they leave school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. Pupils have learned about internet safety and the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Pupils say bullying is rare, but when there are disputes staff listen to both sides of the story and resolve issues quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved markedly over the past two years. The school's behaviour policy is consistently applied at all four centres. All pupils have three behavioural targets which they review regularly with staff. Pupils' behaviour is marked at the end of each lesson and they each have the opportunity to receive certificates or participate in reward trips for good conduct. Pupils understand the system and appreciate that good behaviour is rewarded. The centres are calm and orderly. Pupils and staff say that boisterous behaviour is rare.
- Behaviour at the alternative provisions is also good. There are established systems in place if a pupil's behaviour is unsatisfactory, or if their attendance drops, to ensure that issues are resolved quickly.
- Pupils at Barrow Hill and at Buxton benefit from the nurture curriculum. Pupils learn to collaborate, take turns and problem solve together. Pupils recognise that their behaviour has improved during their time at the school.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average for similar schools. Similarly, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is below that seen nationally. The

learning mentor works closely with education welfare officers to put support in place for pupils whose attendance is low. This support has improved the attendance for many pupils, but there remains a small group of pupils whose attendance is low. Leaders are working hard with external agencies to improve the attendance of these pupils.

- The proportion of pupils who have received a fixed-term exclusion has fallen over the past two years. The number of physical restraints has also reduced in the same period.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils have not made as much progress as they should in mathematics in key stages 3 and 4. Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks show that they do not have the opportunity to develop a deep knowledge of mathematical concepts to be able to apply it to solve complex problems.
- Pupils do not make good enough progress in reading. Most pupils start the school with reading ages below their chronological age. Over time, many pupils do not improve their reading skills and in some cases fall further behind.
- Achievement in science varies according to the centre where pupils are taught. At Hasland, pupils gain a good understanding of different scientific concepts and regularly have the opportunity to answer questions which require them to apply their knowledge. However, at the Chapel-en-le-Frith site, there is very little evidence of pupils' work to demonstrate their scientific understanding.
- Pupils' writing skills develop well. They use accurately the technical vocabulary that they learned in their vocational studies at the alternative provisions. Pupils write detailed notes in geography to show their understanding of technical terms in a range of topics, for example sustainable environments and coastal erosion.
- The proportion of pupils who reintegrate into mainstream schools is high.
- Most pupils make good progress on vocational courses at alternative provisions. Pupils attain a range of awards, including BTEC level 1 in sport and active leisure and a diploma in AIM awards for land-based studies.
- The proportion of pupils who gain a place in education, training or employment is much higher than the national average. Last year, just under a half of pupils gained a place at college, and over a third of pupils secured an apprenticeship.

School details

Unique reference number	133947
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10102383

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Chris Greenough
Headteacher	Matt Morris
Telephone number	01246 237640
Website	www.nedsc.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	mmorris@nedsc.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2013

Information about this school

- The North East Derbyshire Support Centre is comprised of four separate sites. The Hasland site caters for key stage 3 and 4 pupils who have been permanently excluded.
- The Chapel-en-le-Frith site caters for key stage 4 pupils who have been permanently excluded.
- The Buxton site has both key stages 2 and 3 pupils. Some of the key stage 3 pupils have been permanently excluded. However, the key stage 2 pupils and the others in key stage 3 are dual registered with a mainstream school and attend the centre in the afternoon. They are at risk of permanent exclusion and receive a nurturing curriculum to help them reintegrate back into a mainstream school full time.
- At Barrow Hill, all pupils are in key stage 2. The pupils who attend in the morning have been permanently excluded. In the afternoon, these pupils receive individual tuition organised by the local authority. Key stage 2 pupils who are taught at the centre in the afternoon are dual registered with a mainstream school. They are at risk of permanent

exclusion and receive a nurturing curriculum with the intent to fully integrate back into mainstream school.

- Since the last inspection, the school has closed the Bolsover site and opened the Buxton and Chapel-en-le-Frith sites.
- The school has provision for pupils with social, emotional, mental health and behavioural difficulties. The majority of pupils are boys.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The school is set to join Esteem multi-academy trust on 1 July 2019.
- The school uses the following alternative 16 alternative providers: The Island Project, Young Anglers, The Blend, CRESTRA, REAL Education, Engineered Learning, CAST, Birchwood Equestrian Centre, Endeavour, East Midlands Vocational Academy, New Roots Care and Education, Adult Education Centre (Derbyshire), Positive 4 Young People, YMCA Derbyshire, Lane End Farm Trust, and The Genesis Academy.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons in all four centres and at alternative providers. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, all four centre leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and support staff. Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils at all four centres and at alternative providers.
- Inspectors contacted parents by telephone and reviewed the four texts sent by parents to the Ofsted free-text service. There were too few responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, for the results to be published. Inspectors also reviewed the 20 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors reviewed the headteacher's reports to the management committee, the minutes of the management committee, the school improvement plan, the self-evaluation document, leaders' monitoring records and information relating to pupils' outcomes. Inspectors also reviewed documentation related to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Karen Hayes	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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