

Tribal Education
1–4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0845 123 6001
Direct F 0845 123 6002
Direct email:
rebecca.jackson@tribalgroup.com



28 September 2011

Mr Gordon McEwan
Headteacher
Williams House Medical Needs PRU and Tuition Service
1 Williams Grove
London
N22 5NR

Dear Mr McEwan

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Williams House Medical Needs PRU and Tuition Service

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your centre on 27 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the students, child psychiatrist, chair of the management committee, staff and local authority representative for taking the time to talk to me and providing me with very useful information about the centre's work.

Since the inspection, the previous headteacher left the centre at the end of December 2010 and a new headteacher was appointed in January 2011. This year, the centre has made four permanent staff appointments to replace temporary agency staff.

As a result of the inspection on 17–18 June 2010, the centre was asked to address the most important areas for improvement, which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the centre has made:

good progress in making improvements.

and

good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Students who join the centre have often had a fragmented and negative experience of schooling in the past because of their medical, emotional and complex learning difficulties. Consequently their attainment on entry is below average when compared with their peers nationally. Through skilful and tolerant management, the centre staff are helping students to overcome past barriers to better achievement. The centre's data and lesson observations show that learning and progress are improving well for the large majority and this is underpinning students' accelerating achievement.

There are continuing good improvements in teaching and learning. In lessons, students maintain their interest and concentration and enjoy the freedom of working independently. There are very good relationships within the classrooms and staff are kind and friendly, particularly when students become upset and find it difficult to cope. In one or two lessons, teachers' expectations of what students can achieve can be too low, so that students' progress is not as rapid as it could be. The centre tracks students' destinations after they have left the centre and virtually all students are now moving on to further education or employment.

In order to improve the teachers' use of assessment, leaders have established accurately students' starting points on entry in English, maths and information and communication technology (ICT). They are making effective use of an ICT program to check students' progress. Regular reviews provide all staff with a true picture of learning, and help them to establish where extra support is required. The local authority has assisted by improving the information that comes in with students from the feeder schools. All staff have received training on the new assessment system, and on how to incorporate their day-to-day assessments. This process is just beginning and so sometimes learning activities in lessons are not yet as challenging for the youngsters as they could be.

Students' individual target setting has improved well as a result of helpful staff training. This means that in lessons most students have a clearer understanding of their targets and the next steps they need to take to improve. The centre is in the process of introducing improved, more user-friendly, records about academic progress and attendance.

Since the inspection, the centre has broadened its range of programmes leading to qualifications and staff are increasingly proficient at tailoring the programmes to match students' individual needs, interests and aspirations. These strategies mean that virtually all students who stay to the end of Year 11 leave with an externally validated qualification. These programmes provide more effective support for students for whom reintegration into a mainstream school is the best option. Additional opportunities are provided for students showing exceptional talent to attend lessons and gain qualifications at local schools, for example in GCSE art.



Monitoring procedures by the management committee have been strengthened, following its reconstitution in April 2011. Key policies, including safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and health and safety, are now reviewed and approved regularly, as required. Senior staff, from a wide range of significant services, such as education, mental health and social services, as well as parents or carers, have been recruited to the committee and attend regularly. The minutes show that this committee provides strong support, challenge and guidance to the centre. The chair of the management committee, the headteacher of a local successful secondary school, visits the centre regularly and provides constructive feedback and recommendations to the new headteacher. This is enabling the centre to improve quickly.

Greater accuracy in data collection and increasingly effective monitoring procedures give the staff and management committee a much more accurate picture of the centre's strengths and weaknesses. A track record of improvement is being established in attendance and achievement. These factors give the centre a strong capacity to sustain improvement.

The centre receives very effective support from the local authority, particularly from the head of behaviour and alternative provision, who visits weekly. The agenda for these visits include many aspects of the centre's work such as checks on curriculum, issues with individual students, attendance, safeguarding, assessment, behaviour and individual education planning. The appointment of a new headteacher and permanent teaching and administrative staff strengthens the centre's ability to move forward, and the planned moved to newly refurbished buildings is much needed. Good support is also provided by the link school improvement officer.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mick Megee
Additional Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2010

- Work with the management committee to ensure that policies are monitored, evaluated and up to date to reflect current requirements.
- Use baseline assessments more effectively to:
 - identify accurately pupils' attainment when they join the service
 - plan future strategies for learning
 - identify more effectively how well pupils are making progress.
- Broaden the curriculum at Williams House in order to:
 - ease reintegration into mainstream schools
 - increase the range of accredited courses available in Years 10 and 11.