

# Thompson House Tuition Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	133744
<b>Local authority</b>	Isle of Wight
<b>Inspection number</b>	381549
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Martyn Rhowbotham HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Pupil Referral Unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	16
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Ursula Hutchinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Kim Hall (Acting Teacher in Charge)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Sandy Lane Newport Isle of Wight PO30 3NA
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<b>Age group</b>	5–16
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	381549



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Martyn Rhowbotham

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Teaching and learning were observed across the pupil referral unit, including a joint observation with the acting teacher in charge. The inspector met with pupils, members of staff, a local headteacher and the chair of the management committee. The inspector examined a range of documentation, including that related to students' achievement and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaire responses were received from two parents and carers, seven school staff and six pupils.

## Information about the school

Thompson House Tuition Centre is a small single site pupil referral unit (PRU) situated in a rural location about a mile from the county town of Newport. The unit takes pupils from the whole island. Pupils aged five to 11 are referred to the unit because their behaviour has led to their permanent exclusion or it puts them at risk of permanent exclusion. The aim is to reintegrate these pupils back into mainstream education. Pupils aged 11 to 16 years are referred because of illness such as chronic fatigue, phobias, anxiety disorders or mental health issues. This group tend to have longer term placements. Many of the pupils have educational difficulties and/or disabilities. These needs include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, autistic spectrum disorder, Tourette's syndrome, post-traumatic stress disorder and general social anxiety. The very large majority of pupils are dual registered with mainstream schools. Since the last inspection, the context in which the unit works has seen significant change. The local authority's middle school system was phased out in September 2011 and involved considerable relocation for primary schools and the creation of two secondary academies, two foundation colleges, one pathfinder school and a faith college. The acting teacher in charge was appointed in September 2010 and an executive headteacher oversees the Thompson Tuition Centre and another local pupil referral unit.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good pupil referral unit. The staff go the extra mile to ensure that pupils are supported and, as a result, pupils improve their progress, achievement and attendance and gain an overall positive experience of education. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of staff. The unit is not outstanding because the analysis of data does not always result in early identification of pupils at risk of underachievement, and teachers' marking does not consistently provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve.
- Given their starting points and previous attainment, pupils who enter the unit in Key Stages 1 to 3 make good progress with their learning. The improvements made in reading are excellent and they make good progress in other aspects of English as well as mathematics. Pupils in Key Stage 4 make good progress in English, although a very small number do not progress as well in mathematics due to their medical conditions preventing regular attendance. Generally, pupils make better progress in Key Stages 1 to 3 because they are able to attend more frequently.
- Pupils benefit from good teaching. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and highly respectful. The best lessons are characterised by brisk pace and a variety of tasks and activities. Pupils work collaboratively together and are supportive of each other.
- Pupils behave well. This represents very significant progress for the younger pupils who have been excluded from mainstream due to often serious issues with their attitudes and behaviours. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable become more confident due to the progress they make whilst at the unit. Pupils feel safe.
- The unit is well led and managed. Self-evaluation is accurate and teaching is managed well, linked to the performance management of staff.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all marking provides indications of what pupils need to do to improve.
- Improve the analysis of data to enable early identification of pupils at risk of underachievement.

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## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Given their starting points and previous attainment, pupils who enter the unit in Key Stages 1 to 3 make good progress with their learning. The improvements made in their reading skills are excellent and they make good progress in other aspects of English. Progress in mathematics is also good, with most pupils making better than the expected progress. Pupils in Key Stage 4 make good progress in English, although a very small number of pupils do not progress as well in mathematics because their medical conditions prevent regular attendance.

The majority of pupils in Year 11 leave with some GCSE passes, mostly at grade C or below. All pupils leaving Year 11 go on to further education, employment or training.

A particular success of the unit is pupils' continued engagement in education over a sustained period of time when they reintegrate into mainstream schools or move on to college, training or employment. Previous underachievement is addressed well and many gaps in their learning are closed. Assessment information, scrutiny of students' work and lesson observations carried out during the inspection confirm that pupils make good progress in their learning. The unit is very effective at reintegrating younger pupils back into mainstream school.

Pupils engage well in lessons and are motivated to do their best. Pupils work collaboratively together and are supportive of each other.

Over the last year, there has been a successful focus on improving the reading of younger pupils. The daily reading times and the home reading club have been particularly successful in helping younger pupils make excellent progress in reading, given their starting points, with some reaching the national average for their age. Pupils enjoy reading aloud and this session makes for a productive and purposeful start to the school day.

All groups of pupils, including boys and girls, make good progress in relation to their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs make progress equal to that of their peers due to their needs being catered for well in lessons. Pupils' progress is tracked so that those at risk of underachievement can be identified and provision tailored accordingly, but staff are aware of the need to ensure that assessment information is used consistently well so that potential underachievement is always identified as soon as possible.

### **Quality of teaching**

Pupils benefit from good teaching in the unit, which enables them to make good progress. Lessons are purposeful and have a productive and positive ethos. Lessons

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are planned in detail and pupils' individual needs are taken into account well, enabling all pupils, irrespective of their abilities, special educational needs or emotional difficulties, to access the curriculum fully. Teachers and learning support assistants are very enthusiastic and they use gentle humour and encouragement to help pupils to achieve. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and highly respectful. From evidence provided by the school and through speaking with students, it is clear that this picture is typical.

The best lessons have good pace. A number of different activities and practical tasks keep pupils engaged and interested throughout the lesson. They enjoy learning and make good, and often very good, progress. Interactive whiteboards are used well. Pupils are keen to do their best and disruptions are minimal. Adults use praise effectively and pupils usually remain on task throughout the lesson. In the vast majority of cases, there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop and practise skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) through systematic teaching in lessons. This approach is particularly effective in reading and general literacy. These skills are then built upon by teachers across the curriculum, for example using ICT to a high level in English, measuring and counting in cookery and using a range of equipment and techniques in mathematics.

On a few occasions, pupils spend a little too long off task before being skilfully and calmly managed by staff to return to their work. Occasionally, pupils do not listen as hard as they might to the teacher, but this is because they are so keen to get on with their work. In the main, marking is supportive and encouraging. The best practice provides clear indications of what pupils should do to improve but this varies between subjects and is inconsistent across the unit. Where it is weaker, it does not provide sufficient guidance to help pupils improve and this slows their progress.

The planned curriculum impacts well on teachers' day-to-day practice. Teachers make good use of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a relentless and successful focus on supporting pupils' personal and social development through encouraging students to reflect and see things from different points of view.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils behave well in the unit. Although accommodated in a poor quality building, it is very welcoming, harmonious and a purposeful place for learning. Pupils' achievements are celebrated frequently through high quality displays of their work. Their achievements are also marked through the very successful rewards scheme that is related to their targets and which is applied consistently by staff. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of staff, who make clear to pupils that they can and will achieve. Pupils are punctual to lessons and generally settle quickly.

Pupils support each other in lessons; they are polite to staff and each other and they socialise well together. This represents very significant progress for the younger pupils who have been excluded from mainstream due to often serious issues with

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attitude and behaviour. There is clear evidence of good progress over time, with daily assessments of emotional literacy and behaviour. This enables staff to identify any patterns or trends and take corrective action. The personal, social and health education curriculum, together with cross-curricular themes and projects, ensures that issues relating to safety and health are discussed frequently. Aspects of diversity are covered through, for example, the exciting Aztec Village project run at a local farm centre and the celebration of Diwali.

Pupils learn to accept help and receive support and praise. They say they feel safe at the unit. Successful projects on bullying were carried out during anti-bullying week and the rare instances of bullying are recorded formally. Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying, including that related to special educational needs. They know what to do if they are being bullied and are confident that staff will deal with any rare incidents.

The attendance of the majority of pupils, with the obvious exception of those pupils whose medical condition prevents regular or substantial attendance, improves significantly during their time at the unit. Attendance this academic year, taking into account unavoidable absences, is good.

The small number of parents and carers who responded to the survey were extremely positive about their child's progress in behaviour and confidence; one stated that her child had 'made huge progress – socially, academically, emotionally and behaviourally'. Another said that the unit 'had worked very hard on my child's confidence and has made a huge difference to my child's life'. Transition into and out of the unit is managed very well, with ongoing support to help pupils settle quickly into their new environment.

### **Leadership and management**

The acting teacher in charge has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning and is also aware of the considerable strengths and the areas requiring further development within the unit. She has adopted a highly appropriate self-critical culture and this is shared by the extremely enthusiastic and supportive staff, who are determined to provide the very best for pupils. Staff tackle this task with energy and are proud to work in the unit. Teamworking amongst staff is excellent. There has been good improvement since the last inspection; this, together with generally accurate self-evaluation, shows that the unit has the capacity to improve further. The acting teacher in charge receives good strategic support and direction from the executive headteacher. Operational management is very effective and the unit runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Assessment procedures have improved and are now effective in tracking pupils' progress during their time in the unit. However, some data are not always analysed sufficiently in a few areas to identify pupils who are at risk of underachievement, and this can potentially slow the progress of these pupils.

The curriculum for younger pupils is planned very well. There is a successful focus on

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improving literacy and numeracy through a well-planned timetable that provides pupils with a good variety of subjects and activities through the day. The afternoon activities, such as swimming and gardening at a local farm education centre, are very popular and provide pupils with excellent opportunities to develop their social and personal skills. The GCSE offer for older pupils is appropriate for most and unit leaders have recently introduced other accreditation to meet the needs of those for whom GCSEs are not possible. The management committee brings valuable experience and expertise and provides good challenge to the unit. The local authority and the management committee are supportive of future changes that will enable the unit to develop its provision further in partnership with other agencies. Equality and diversity are promoted effectively through the curriculum and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

The unit works very effectively with mainstream schools and a wide range of external partners, such as the child and adolescent mental health service and medical professionals, to promote the well-being of pupils in its care. The unit provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The unit is particularly successful in working with parents and carers who may have had previous negative experiences of education and works with them successfully to improve the learning and attendance of their children. The unit gives a high priority to safeguarding the pupils and appropriate procedures are in place.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Thompson House Tuition Centre, Newport PO30 3NA**

As you know, I inspected your school recently. I really enjoyed talking with you and being in some of your lessons. I also enjoyed looking at some of your work, which was really impressive.

Thompson House Tuition Centre is a good school. You can be proud to go there and you can also be proud of the work that you do and how well you behave. You make good progress from your starting points and some of you make excellent progress in your reading skills. Kim and your teachers enjoy teaching you and they are very keen for you all to do well. It was great for me to see how kind and polite you are to your teachers and how well you all get on with each other.

I liked the lovely displays of your work on walls around school. They make the school look really nice and show how well you are doing.

I have asked Kim and your teachers to make sure that all of your work is marked well so that you know exactly what you need to do to improve, and that the school makes sure you know how well you are doing in every subject.

It was a pleasure to meet you and I wish you good luck for the future. Make sure you carry on working as hard as you can!!

Best wishes

Martyn Rhowbotham  
Her Majesty Inspector

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