

# Greys Education Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	134032
<b>Local authority</b>	Bedford
<b>Inspection number</b>	381592
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Bill Stoneham

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>	Pupil referral unit
<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>	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Terry Ashmore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	01 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	Manor Drive Kempston Bedford MK42 7AB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01234 408477
<b>Fax number</b>	01234 408458
<b>Email address</b>	greys@greys.beds.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	5–16
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	7–8 March 2012
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Bill Stoneham

Additional inspector

Jill Smith

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Eleven lessons were observed, featuring 11 different teachers or tutors. Discussions were held with members of the management committee, pupils, the headteacher and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the service's work and looked at pupils' work. In addition, questionnaire responses from four parents and carers, 18 staff and 26 pupils were analysed and their views taken into account.

## Information about the school

Greys is a complex organisation covering three centres in Bedford, including a hospital ward. In addition, outreach services provide support to pupils of all ages who are at risk of being excluded from school. Pupils face many barriers to learning, including those who have been, or are in danger of being permanently excluded; pupils who have medical or mental health needs; and looked after children in need of support. Although able to take pupils from the age of five, the service does not admit children who are eligible for Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The ethnic and gender mix of pupils varies during the year, as does the number of pupils in public care. Some pupils are dual registered and educated part-time at the centre. The proportion identified as having disabilities and those with special educational needs is higher than average, as is the proportion known to be entitled to free school meals. The service has gained a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools status and a recently conferred international award for its innovative use of information and communication technology (ICT). Further reorganisation has taken place since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2011.

## 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

- Greys Education Centre offers all pupils a good education. The recently appointed headteacher offers strong leadership and has successfully led the service through a period of change and uncertainty associated with re-organisation. Overall effectiveness is good rather than outstanding because the promotion of literacy is not yet consistently high enough to result in outstanding progress for all pupils.
- Pupils achieve well. Their good achievements are enhanced by an excellent curriculum. The emphasis on developing skills in literacy, numeracy, and ICT and the broad provision of vocational options in Key Stage 4 have significantly boosted achievement.
- Most teaching is good, with a small number of lessons outstanding. Such good teaching is boosting attainment. In some lessons, pupils are not consistently enabled to develop their literacy skills, especially their reading and extended vocabulary.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Inspectors found the service to be happy, safe and harmonious. Pupils' good behaviour makes a significant contribution to learning. Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils have many opportunities to exercise responsibility through charitable events, for example. Older pupils are used as mentors and sporting activities, such as boxing, do much to promote self-esteem, discipline and responsibility.
- The visionary headteacher is supported well by all his staff. Reorganisation has seen improvements in the management committee; it offers good, critical support. Self-evaluation is accurate; strengths identified at the previous inspection have been developed and the service has improved well. Much emphasis is placed on improving the quality of teaching and target setting and the monitoring of all aspects of every pupil's work and conduct has improved markedly.

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

- Ensure that teaching is outstanding in even more lessons by seizing every opportunity:
  - to encourage pupils to read aloud
  - for pupils to develop an extended vocabulary by checking their understanding of different works and encouraging them to use such words

accurately in their spoken and written work.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

The achievement of most pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is good. Some pupils, including those with behaviour, social and emotional difficulties, make excellent progress and their achievements are outstanding. Some Year 11 pupils make excellent progress in their English and mathematics GCSE courses, gaining grades at C or above, which is far higher than had been forecast when they were in mainstream education. Parents and carers, rightly, praise the progress made by their children.

Most pupils enter the service with low levels of prior attainment, representing the disruption they have faced in their education. When they leave, whether to return to mainstream education, or at the end of Year 11 to enter further education, training or employment, standards remain below average, but higher than forecast when they entered the service. Most pupils, including those educated at home and in the hospital ward, make at least good gains in their skills in literacy, numeracy, and ICT. Reading levels by the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2 are below average, but have improved well. Key Stage 4 GCSE results show a good trend of improvement over the last three years. Good achievement is supported by the service's improved and detailed monitoring and tracking systems and evidence from classroom observations. Data indicate little variation in the performance of boys and girls and significant improvements in other aspects, such as attendance and behaviour, which contribute to good achievement overall. An outstanding curriculum also helps. The service's personalised Key Stage 4 provision ensures that potentially vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are able to follow courses that meet their needs with success. These pupils achieve well too.

Pupils make good and, occasionally, outstanding progress in lessons. In an outstanding Key Stage 3 art lesson, pupils developed skills in colour and tone. They were set carefully planned individual tasks to challenge them in their endeavours. All worked with care and interest. Pupils in the hospital ward and primary and secondary centres were seen to read well. Numeracy was also promoted well. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils had to measure accurately the shoots of an Aloe Vera plant; in a Year 10 design technology lesson, accurate measurements were needed when setting up a lathe.

### **Quality of teaching**

Most teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. The quality of teaching has improved well since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to secure outcomes for the pupils that are at least good. Lessons are planned well and care is taken to ensure that individual needs are met. Most lessons are taught in a way that engages and interests the pupils. In the very best lessons, pupils' learning is often outstanding and they make rapid progress because independent and collaborative work is promoted well. This was amply illustrated in a

most effective Year 9 ICT lesson. Pupils worked well individually and together, showing excellent skills in producing slide shows that were enlivened with graphics and music. All the pupils showed a high level of skill in the use and application of ICT. High expectations and challenge are key features of most lessons. In the very best lessons, pupils are encouraged to read for themselves and written work is varied and challenging. Although pupils of all ages make at least good progress overall in developing their literacy skills, this is occasionally limited when they are not given enough opportunities to read, including reading aloud. In addition, staff do not consistently stress key words and subject specific language, or encourage pupils sufficiently to use such vocabulary in their oral work. This restricts outcomes to being good, rather than outstanding.

Teachers take advantage of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Team work and responsibility are fostered well. The outstanding curriculum has a positive impact on teaching, helping to ensure that lessons are engaging and interesting. It also offers pupils opportunities to try things that they might otherwise never have been able to experience. The boxing classes, for example, enable pupils to develop responsibility and co-ordination, as well as developing physical fitness.

Parents and carers are correct in their view that the teaching provided is good. As one parent commented: 'My daughter has made good progress since attending The Greys. This is because of the attentiveness of the staff as a whole.'

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

Pupils are provided with working environments where they are safe, secure and cared for well. They know how to keep safe and in the inspection questionnaires, pupils, parents and carers all indicated that a safe and secure working environment is provided. Though a small minority of parents, carers and pupils expressed disquiet about behaviour, evidence shows that behaviour is at least good over time and, occasionally, outstanding. Indeed, in many of the lessons observed, pupils' good and excellent behaviour made a significant contribution to their learning. Evidence of at least good behaviour is provided by the improving attendance rates. Attendance for the whole service is over 90%. In the primary sector, attendance is high. Fixed-term exclusions are low and falling. This is a pleasing outcome for a service where many pupils have complex behavioural issues. In part, these positive outcomes reflect improvements in the personalised and varied curriculum, which is successfully engaging pupils and helping them to gain better results. Pupils develop a good awareness of how to stay safe and have a well-developed understanding of the different forms of bullying. Incidents of bullying and harassment, including those based on race, gender or sexual orientation, are rare. When they arise, they are dealt with quickly and appropriately.

Another aspect of the improving behaviour is the responsibility placed on the pupils themselves. Pupils in all year groups are given scope to seek positions of responsibility and act as leaders. One particularly noticeable aspect of this is the opportunity for older pupils to work as mentors with primary-aged pupils. Pupils are involved in other programmes such as anti-bullying campaigns. Most pupils are happy to attend Greys because they feel safe and valued.

## Leadership and management

The headteacher provides good leadership and has skilfully led the service through re-organisation and built on the strengths identified in the previous inspection. He is supported well by a good staff team and an effective management committee. Staff morale is high. Every respondent to the staff inspection questionnaire said they were proud to work in the service. There is a strong focus on improving pupils' achievement. Equality of opportunity is promoted vigorously, especially through the excellent, broad and varied curriculum, and discrimination is not tolerated. Since the last inspection, the monitoring and tracking of pupils' work have improved significantly; the performance of different groups is monitored closely. This ensures that any gaps in performance are identified and closed. Provision for all pupils is good and there are no significant variations in the rates of progress of the different groups; all are achieving well, with some making outstanding progress. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Each site is safe and appropriate provision, including detailed risk assessments, is made for off-site education.

Accurate self-evaluation has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Improved target setting has resulted in better academic, personal and social outcomes. A keen focus on professional development for staff has contributed to the improved outcomes by enhancing the quality of teaching. The management committee is improving and it understands the challenges facing the service. It gives good support and is becoming more involved in monitoring progress and holding the service to account.

Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has continued to evolve well and is a key strength of the service's provision. It is outstanding because the personalised provision, particularly in Key Stages 3 and 4, comprising a mix of traditional subjects, key skills and vocational options, has led to better achievement in all years and especially in Year 11, because pupils can follow programmes that meet their needs. The improved curriculum, allied to good extra-curricular provision through music and sport, for example, promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development effectively. Healthy eating is encouraged well and is reflected in an appropriate award. E-learning is a particular strength. Pupils develop quite sophisticated ICT skills and their work links effectively into programmes to improve behaviour and safety. This visionary work resulted recently in the service receiving an international award for e-learning. Only two schools in Europe were given this honour.

The service has developed well since its previous inspection and has demonstrated the capacity to improve. Its success is shown by the levels of satisfaction expressed by parents and carers and the pupils themselves, anecdotally and in inspection questionnaires.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
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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 Greys Education Centre, Bedford, MK42 7AB**

My colleague and I thoroughly enjoyed our recent visit to meet you. We enjoyed talking to you and learning about your views. You told us that the service is good and that you are happy with the education you receive. The inspection confirms that you are receiving a good education.

We liked many things. You are taught well and benefit from an outstanding curriculum. Your teachers and all other staff are keen for you to succeed. In most lessons, the work set is challenging and engages you. You are also given many good opportunities to develop your skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, occasionally in some lessons, staff do not consistently seize all opportunities to boost your literacy skills. We have asked your headteacher to ensure that, in lessons:

- you are encouraged to read aloud as often as possible
- you are given sufficient opportunities to develop your extended vocabulary by staff checking your understanding of new or unusual words and encouraging you to use these words in your oral and written work.

We liked the extent to which you contribute to centre life. We were impressed to hear that some of the older pupils act as mentors in the primary unit. We noted your keenness in lessons; your strongly improving attendance and your good behaviour. By maintaining and building on these standards, you can help the staff secure the improvements we have requested.

Thank you for making our visit enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Bill Stoneham  
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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