

Phil Edwards Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131266
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	360243
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Stuart Charlton

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

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	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Sands
Headteacher	Peter Jones
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2007
School address	17 Sylvan Road Croydon London SE19 2RU
Telephone number	02087715603
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. The inspector observed the six full-time teachers and monitored performance in eight lessons. Discussions were held with the chair of the management committee and with staff, parents and students. The work of the Centre was observed and the inspector scrutinised the improvement plan, the minutes of the leadership team and management committee meetings, a range of other documentation and 17 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of leadership and management in ensuring quality provision for all students across every aspect of the provision.
- The effectiveness of the systems to judge attainment on entry, set challenging targets and track students' progress across all aspects of the provision.
- The outcomes for students in relation to their personal development, particularly in terms of behaviour and attendance.
- The effectiveness of the monitoring of teaching and learning in improving quality to ensure that all students achieve as well as they can.

Information about the school

The Phil Edwards Centre is one of five pupil referral units/short stay schools in Croydon and operates on four separate sites. The Sylvan Road site makes provision for permanently excluded students in Key Stages 3 and 4, Croydon Digital provides education for Key Stage 4 students not able to be admitted to a Croydon Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) because of their medical needs and Bridge to School offers an authority-wide early intervention programme for students in Key Stage 3 on a half-term basis. The Home Tuition service is administered from the Sylvan Road site and the Mayday Hospital School provides for primary and secondary age students on the Rupert Bear Ward at the hospital. About one third of the students are girls. The majority of students are of White British or mixed White origin with smaller minorities from Black or Black British backgrounds. There are very small minorities of vulnerable students and those with a statement of special educational needs, mainly related to emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The main focus for Key Stage 3 students at the Sylvan Road site is reintegration into a mainstream school while those in Key Stage 4 remain at the Centre until they reach statutory leaving age. Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and in September 2010 a revised senior leadership team covering each of the aspect of the provision was implemented. The Centre holds Healthy Schools status.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

The Phil Edwards Centre provides a good education for its students. The care, guidance and support provided by all staff are exemplary so that students make excellent progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem from a very low base. Students' progress in their academic learning is good and they gain qualifications in a range of GCSE subjects through which all are able to move successfully into further education, training or the world of work. The Centre has good systems in place, such as its first-day absence procedures and its rewards system, which are effective in promoting attendance and encouraging punctuality so that attendance overall is average. Behaviour is good and parents are very pleased with the Centre and the positive effect it has on their children.

The curriculum is good, being well balanced and giving a clear focus to the development of students' basic skills. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers establish excellent relationships with the students and these are the basis of the exemplary guidance and support for their personal development. The staff know each student well and use this knowledge effectively to address students' personal needs. The Centre has invested considerable time and effort to identify the most effective way for each student to learn in each subject. In a few lessons, teachers do not use this information to best effect to identify how they will adapt their teaching to maximise the progress made by each student.

The newly-appointed headteacher provides a very clear vision about how the provision should develop. In communicating this to staff, he is well supported by his senior leadership team. Together they have established a stable staffing base, mapped out a clear path for improvement based on accurate and honest self-evaluation and developed very effective team work across the teaching, support and administrative staff. Effective systems to monitor and evaluate the separate aspects of the provision have been developed and these provide good quality information which gives a clear overview of the Centre's performance. Since the last inspection, the management committee has undergone considerable changes in personnel including the appointment of a new chair. These changes have enabled it to refine its skills so that it can take full budgetary responsibility and act effectively to support and challenge the Centre's leadership. The Centre's work with parents and carers is exemplary and partnerships with other professionals are used extremely well to promote students' needs and well-being. The Centre takes every opportunity to ensure that students have high quality opportunities for a 'second chance' in education and it works tirelessly to prevent or tackle any discrimination. The audit of the Centre's commitment to community cohesion shows that this is good overall, but that work undertaken at an international level is not as well developed as the local and national aspects of the provision. The improvements which the Centre has effected on students' achievements, their attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning during a period when it has taken on wider responsibilities, coupled with the

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effectiveness of its self-evaluation, show that the capacity for further sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that in all lessons, teachers clearly identify how they will adapt their teaching to maximise the progress made by each student.
- Develop the international aspects of community cohesion to give students extended opportunities to learn more about the life of those who live in other countries.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Since the last inspection, the numbers of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grade A* to G and at A* to C have risen and are now close to those expected nationally. Given their low starting points on entry, this represents good progress and achievement. The present students, particularly those in Year 11, are on course to further improve on these achievements. There are no differences in the progress made by different gender or ethnic groups. Most students have gaps in their knowledge resulting from their erratic attendance patterns at their previous schools and the Centre is particularly effective in helping students to address these. In all the lessons seen, the excellent relationships between staff and students were used extremely well to engage and motivate students whose previous experience of education had been negative. In an excellent English lesson for Year 9 students, the teacher used a very wide range of teaching styles to ensure that the learning needs of each individual were fully met. Such exemplary practice is not consistent in all lessons.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is based on the high expectations established by all staff and the role models they present to students. This enables students to overcome their disaffection for education and make significant changes in their attitudes both within the Centre and in their lives at home. Students develop an excellent awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle and this is recognised through the Centre's Healthy Schools status. Students explained how they learn to keep fit both through timetabled physical education lessons and by participating in out-of-school activities. A significant number acknowledged how they have taken advantage of information about sexual health, tobacco and drug abuse to change their lifestyle. Students are very supportive of the Centre's reward system for good behaviour, work and attendance. All feel safe and many explained that the Centre provides a safer environment than their previous schools.

The Centre's first-day absence procedures are operated with rigour but sympathetically by the very dedicated administrative staff in each aspect of the provision. These have enabled attendance rates to be considerably improved and are a major factor in enabling disaffected students to re-engage in education. A strong feature of the provision is the way in which students are challenged to manage their own behaviour, and the overwhelming majority have made significant improvement since they first started at the Centre. Most now enjoy coming to school. Students make a positive contribution to their immediate community through the school council and fund-raising activities. The literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology qualifications they gain, together with the gains in their personal skills, prepare them well for life when they leave the Centre or return to mainstream education.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The very supportive relationships established by staff with their students are strengthened through individual mentoring and tutorial sessions. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and in their planning they always identify the ways in which students prefer to learn. However, in a few lessons, this does not extend to clearly identifying the teaching approaches they will use. In these lessons, although students' progress is good it is not maximised for each student. Generally teachers use resources, particularly interactive whiteboard technology, very well to interest and engage students. In most lessons, the range of activities is very well matched to students' needs, especially in art, food technology and information and communication technology.

At the Sylvan Road site and through the Bridge to School project, the curriculum includes good links with mainstream schools to effectively support students in Years 8 and 9 whose main focus is reintegration. For students in Key Stage 4 at the Sylvan Road site there is now a good balance of academic, vocational and work-related opportunities. Although these developments are relatively recent, the links established with local colleges and work-based providers are enabling students in Year 10 to be able to transfer to a vocationally focused programme in Year 11 at the Croydon Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit or continue with a GCSE-based provision at Phil Edwards. Through the use of the excellent technology-based learning programmes students at Croydon Digital and those in Home

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Tuition provision are able to access a wide range of qualifications which they will need in their future lives.

Staff make sure that all students, including those who arrive at different times, settle quickly and happily into life in the various aspects of the Centre's provision. Transition arrangements for those moving into the Centre and for those who move to other schools and colleges are excellent and contribute extremely well to reducing students' anxieties. The care, guidance and support provided by all staff are second to none. Staff spend a great deal of time listening to students, giving them advice and promoting their well-being to overcome difficulties in their personal circumstances. They are given excellent guidance about careers and opportunities available when they leave the Centre.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads by example and gives a clear sense of direction to the work of the Centre. He is very well supported by his new senior leadership team and between them they have ensured that improvements have taken place in classroom practice and that everyone is clear about what needs to be done for the provision to improve further. Staff approach key developments enthusiastically, for example the introduction of vocational and work-related programmes in Key Stage 4. The changes in personnel on the management committee have enabled it to include a wider range of skills, particularly in terms of financial management. Streamlining its operational systems and structures has enabled it to be much more effective in supporting and challenging the Centre's leadership and ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. The Centre has the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. Its campaigns very effectively to eliminate discrimination and the differences it makes to pupils' lives are a testament to this.

The Centre's partnership with parents and carers is excellent. The work that all staff undertake to help parents and carers to understand and support their children's needs is particularly impressive. Excellent links are established through regular review meetings, first-day absence calls and regular contact by phone or visit if there are issues. The work of the re-integration coordinators is crucial in establishing these close working relationships with parents and carers. There are plans in place to make more use of the Centre's website once confidentiality issues have been addressed.

Safeguarding and child protection are high on everyone's agenda and fully meet national requirements and guidelines. Risk assessments are a particular strength, being thorough and detailed. The Centre uses good links at local level with social services and the youth

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offending teams and in a wider context with the National Organisation for Pupil Referral Units to very effectively promote community cohesion. However, as yet there are few opportunities for students to learn about life for those who live in other countries.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

About one third of parents and carers returned their questionnaires and the school's own data was used to provide a clearer picture of their opinions. An overwhelming majority are very supportive of the Centre and how it helps both themselves and their children. As one said, 'The headteacher and staff are worth every penny of their pay!' The inspection team fully endorse such sentiments. The inspection findings clearly show that the very few negative comments do not accord with the overall good education that all students receive at Phil Edwards Centre. The comments of parents and carers about their children not enjoying school do not match those of the students in their questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Phil Edwards Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 44 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	5	29	5	29	4	24	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	59	5	29	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	76	3	18	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	53	6	35	1	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	41	9	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	53	6	35	1	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	41	7	41	1	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	9	53	6	35	1	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	47	6	35	2	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	41	8	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	59	5	29	1	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	59	6	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	29	6	35	1	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



13 January 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Phil Edwards Centre, Upper Norwood, SE19 2RU

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I inspected the Centre. I particularly enjoyed being able to talk to a good number of you. You explained clearly to me that Phil Edwards is 'cool' because of the way staff treat you like adults and help and support you not just in the Centre but in your home lives as well. I could see that these aspects contribute significantly to helping Phil Edwards to give you a good education. I agree with you that the Centre enables you to have a 'second chance' in education and that the care and guidance provided by all the staff are excellent. By helping you to overcome your dislike of school, Phil Edwards enables you to gain qualifications which prepare you very well for life after school or when you re-integrate into a mainstream school. The small group sizes are a real help and as one of you said 'lessons are fun plus teachers help you with any work you need to do'.

Through the questionnaires you completed each of you has identified the best ways that teachers can help you to learn. I have asked teachers to make sure they use this information in all their lessons so that you all learn as much as you can. In addition, I want you to have more opportunities to learn about the life of those who live in other countries. I know that you will try your very best at all times to help the staff to make Phil Edwards even better.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton

Lead inspector

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