

Paradise Park Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100388
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	354846
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Bill (William) Stoneham

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Smith
Headteacher	Jill Faulkner
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. Five lessons were seen which were taught by the service's two teachers and by staff from a nearby Premier League football club. In addition, meetings were held with members of the management committee, a small selection of parents, a selection of education partners, staff and groups of pupils. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised including the unit's development plan, self-review material, analysis of the attainment and progress of its pupils, records of lesson observations, policies, and six parental and carer questionnaires

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the service's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- What are the factors which affect the trends in attainment across the unit?
- How effective are the measures taken to improve attendance and behaviour?
- How effectively does the curriculum provide for individual needs?

Information about the school

The unit provides for pupils with complex needs, including behavioural, emotional and social needs. All have experienced a disrupted education and have either been permanently excluded or at risk of being excluded from mainstream school. Nearly all pupils have a statement of special educational needs and/or disability. There is a high turnover of pupils, which means the unit has to adapt on a regular basis to their challenging individual needs. At the time of the inspection, all the pupils attending the unit were boys. Half the pupils are of White British origin; most others are of Black or Black Caribbean heritage. All are known to be eligible ♦ for free school meals.

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

Paradise Park PRU offers its pupils a good education. Some aspects of its work, including the care, guidance and support for pupils, its partnership work and the effectiveness of its work with parents and carers, are outstanding.

Most pupils join Paradise Park with exceedingly low levels of prior attainment, reflecting significant disturbances in their education. In these highly exceptional circumstances, the progress they make in their education and their social and emotional development is impressive. Most make at least good progress, with a minority making outstanding progress. By the time they leave the service, some pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. Outcomes for all pupils are in excess of what might be expected given their starting points; for some, they are significantly higher. The progress made by pupils illustrates the commitment and passion of the dedicated staff team.

Excellent partnerships with a wide variety of specialist agencies play an outstanding part in overcoming barriers to learning and accelerating pupils' progress. Pupils adopt safe lifestyles, they are encouraged to be healthy, and safeguarding arrangements are good, with thorough risk assessments undertaken so that pupils can participate in educational visits. Pupils' good progress reflects the quality of the good curriculum, especially the way it is personalised to meet their individual needs, and the unit's good work to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. For many, Paradise Park provides life-changing experiences. Progress is accelerated by consistently good teaching. In most lessons observed, learning and progress were good and never less than satisfactory. The unit has done much to improve pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). ♦ Some students write confidently and cogently, and some are developing good ICT skills. Nevertheless, inconsistencies are evident, particularly in the way reading skills are promoted in lessons. Opportunities for the pupils to read either independently, or out aloud to an audience, are not always seized. On too many occasions, either the teacher, or another adult in the class, did the reading. This restricts the scope for the pupils to improve their own skills and understanding. In other respects, teachers set challenging and realistic targets for all pupils. The monitoring and assessment of the progress each individual pupil makes is an area where significant improvements have been made. ♦

♦ Since the previous inspection many other improvements are identifiable. The unit has a good record for reintegrating its pupils, a point that was well made by some local primary headteachers. Self-evaluation is good and is improving, especially now that a stronger and more focused management committee has been established. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored well and strengths in the care, guidance and support have been further enhanced. Partnership work is outstanding and makes a crucial contribution to

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academic and social outcomes, as well as providing scope for the pupils to enjoy their work and to experience new opportunities such as outdoor pursuits and visits to museums. The work with parents and carers, some of whom are struggling to come to terms with the profound social, emotional and behavioural issues faced by their children, is especially impressive. A track record of sustained improvement illustrates the ambition and drive of the good leadership team. There is a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the pupils skills in literacy by:
 - boosting the pupils' confidence in reading by ensuring that every possible opportunity is taken for the pupils to read independently, or out aloud.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils generally behave well. Isolated incidents of less good behaviour are handled confidently by staff. In lessons, pupils behave well and respond to the challenges set. Pupils from different ethnic groups all make consistently good progress because classrooms are settled, staff are prepared well, and the pupils respond favourably and usually enjoy the work that is set. One of the merits of the service is its success at reintegrating challenging pupils into mainstream education. There is good evidence that pupils who are reintegrated return with improved records of attainment and are better equipped emotionally and socially to cope with the demands of mainstream school.

Responsibility and enjoyment are actively encouraged. Through their school council, the pupils have a say in improvements and make a contribution to the wider community. A sensitive reward system encourages the pupils to behave well, but they are also given scope to reflect on their actions and how others might be affected. Teachers and teaching assistants operate well together to ensure that pupils enjoy their work and exercise responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to pursue healthy lifestyles. The free provision of fresh fruit is a significant bonus and the small outdoor area is used well for physical activity. The partnership with a local Premiership football club also offers very good opportunities for physical activity and developing healthy lives.

Considerable efforts are made to foster future economic well-being. Pupils' attendance at the unit is close to the national average. Their attendance rates are frequently significantly higher than those attained when they were in mainstream schools. Considerable attention is placed on fostering the pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Though reading merits more emphasis, given their low starting points, improvements are often significant, but attainment levels overall remain below average.

◆ Thoughtful work is done to ensure good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The classroom displays of the pupils' views of their education and work on their diverse ethnic heritages were quite moving. Spiritual development is fostered through assemblies and the adjacent city farm. This is used well as a learning resource. It offers experiences that many children who live in densely populated urban areas are not usually able to enjoy.

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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	4
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	2
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	3
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?

Lessons are interesting and succeed in engaging and motivating the pupils. Learning is good because lessons are consistently well taught by staff with good subject knowledge. The working relationships between staff and pupils are good. Good learning is further promoted through activities that are very well planned to meet pupils' individual needs. This was well illustrated in some of the one-to-one tuition that was observed. In one such English session for example, one boy made impressive strides in his understanding of sentence construction. In a similar session, another pupil was able to differentiate between the use of formal and informal speech and give examples. On the rare occasions where the pace of learning is slower and effectiveness is lessened, it is because the teacher, or a support worker, endeavours to do too much of the work for the pupils. The lessons observed during the inspection featured mainly good learning because of the challenges set and the high expectations.

The curriculum is good. Pupils enjoy following programmes that have been carefully structured to meet their individual requirements and curriculum innovation has contributed to improved attainment. This is illustrated by the partnership with a Premiership football club and a strong extra-curricular programme. The former ensures that the pupils have access to good-quality sports teaching. The latter provides exciting experiences that the youngsters might otherwise never experience, including outdoor pursuits, museum visits and even pleasures as simple as a visit to the seaside.

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Paradise Park provides an outstanding, caring and supportive environment. There are excellent trusting relationships with parents and carers. The individual needs of all pupils are paramount. Families and carers, even from difficult-to-reach groups, are fully involved in their child's education and care. Its outstanding work with an array of agencies greatly enhances the pupils' learning, confidence and social well-being. As one parent commented: 'Without Paradise Park I don't know what would have happened to my son. All the staff deserve medals.'

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 passionate and determined leadership of the headteacher, plus the committed and dedicated support of all staff, results in a clear focus on successfully driving improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the good management committee, are ambitious for success and fully committed and involved in securing improvements. The beneficial working partnerships with many agencies help to secure good, individualised programmes for education and social care, and successfully promote good learning and personal development.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Appropriate risk assessments are applied and all appropriate policies are in place and monitored. There is a keen determination to ensure that the pupils enjoy an appropriate education in a safe setting. Pupils make good progress because the management of teaching and learning has a good focus on raising attainment. An emphasis on respect, rights, boosting confidence, self-esteem and encouraging responsibility underpins much of its work. This makes a good contribution to the promotion of equality and tackling discrimination. Good efforts have been made to promote community cohesion. The pupils make a good contribution to their own community and their support for the adjacent city farm improves their awareness of their local environment. Though the unit is very small, some enterprising work is done to raise cultural awareness and the pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own identities.

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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	2
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

Six parents and carers replied to the inspection questionnaire and some former parents were consulted during the inspection. As the table below shows, all replies were overwhelmingly positive. The service also offered evidence of its own work in canvassing the views of parents and carers. The results again pointed to extremely high levels of satisfaction.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Paradise Park Pupil Referral Unit 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 six completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 15 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	2	33	4	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	50	3	50	0	0	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)	2	33	4	67	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	67	2	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	33	4	67	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



9 November

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Paradise Park Pupil Referral Unit

You may remember my recent visit to see you at work. Thank you for making me so welcome. I have fond memories of meeting and talking with you and seeing your work. I am impressed with what you are doing. You told me about the quality education you receive and I am pleased to say that I agree with you. The education you receive is good. You make good strides in your learning and personal development. The staff help you to do this. You help by adopting positive attitudes and by your usually good behaviour in class. You could help even further by ensuring that your behaviour out of lessons is as good as when you are in your classes.

Your progress is good because all of your staff are committed to helping you improve. You are well taught, you have a good and exciting curriculum, and the care, guidance and support provided are outstanding.

I have made one significant suggestion for improvement. I was pleased to see the progress you are making in English, and in your numeracy work and your use of computers, but I would like to have seen more of you read. I have asked your staff to ensure that you are now all given more opportunities to develop your skills in reading.

Thank you again for making me so welcome. I know many of you were excited about Bonfire Night. I hope you had a chance to see some good firework displays and that you all remained safe. I enjoyed meeting you and would like to wish you every success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Bill Stoneham Lead inspector

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