

# The Latimer Education Centre/Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100476
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kensington and Chelsea
<b>Inspection number</b>	354852
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Kell

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>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	n/a
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tony Meehan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	194 Freston Road Kensington and Chelsea W10 6TT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Seven lessons were observed, each taught by a different teacher. Meetings were held with members of the management committee, an officer of the local authority, a range of staff and two groups of students. The inspector observed the unit's work, and looked at a range of documentation, such as assessment data, attendance, behaviour logs, and improvement planning. The 11 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by staff and students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the unit's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness with which the local authority, management committee and unit leaders ensure that provision meets the learning and personal needs of students with a statement of special educational needs.
- The procedures for tracking and analysing students' progress and the use of this information in setting individual targets.
- How well the unit monitors attendance in all settings and the procedures that it uses to raise individuals' rate of attendance.
- The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the unit's strategies for improving behaviour and other aspects of students' personal development so that successful return to a mainstream school is made possible.

## Information about the school

Latimer Education Centre is the only pupil referral unit in the local authority. Consequently, it admits all permanently excluded students of secondary school age. A few students have a statement of special educational needs for behaviour, social and emotional difficulties, while others are placed in the unit while they undergo statutory assessment.

Although there are 29 students on roll, eight of these attend full time at a local college. Students stay in the unit for varying lengths of time; a small minority stay in excess of two years and in extreme cases this has been up to four years. Three quarters of students are boys. The unit has on roll students from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, and the vast majority of them are in Years 10 and 11. None of the students are looked after children, although half are known to be eligible for free school meals.

An acting headteacher has been in post since September 2009, during which time there has been significant staff turnover. The unit has recently acquired Healthy School 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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Latimer Education Centre is a satisfactory pupil referral unit. It has stabilised after a period of turbulence associated with staff changes, including changes at senior level. It has satisfactory capacity to improve. While governance is currently satisfactory, the management committee is becoming increasingly effective in forging more productive links with local schools, and the local authority is working closely with the unit to develop its provision. Improvements over the past year have been driven by the outcomes of a satisfactory and broadly accurate self-evaluation. However, leaders tackled too many developments at the same time. Leaders now recognise that they need to prioritise the outcomes of self-evaluation in order to concentrate upon the few most important developments that will make the greatest difference to the quality of outcomes for students. The staff team shows great support of the headteacher's leadership. Partnerships generally are satisfactory, although the unit has established good links with parents and carers.

The unit provides a satisfactory quality of education. The curriculum focuses appropriately on developing students' key skills and it enables them to pursue accredited courses, such as GCSE, BTEC and entry level certificates. Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. Teachers provide activities that are appropriate for students' ages and interests, but they do not always personalise them by taking account of individuals' capabilities. This slows down the pace of learning. Overall, students' attainment is broadly average and they make satisfactory progress. Achievement is satisfactory, with no significant differences between the performances of different groups of students, including those with a statement of special educational needs and college-based students. However, not all students put themselves in the best position to learn. Despite individual improvements, attendance overall is low but improving. Furthermore, students travel independently and often arrive late.

Students make good progress in some aspects of personal development, such as how to remain safe, but they are reluctant to comply with the unit's expectations and rules. Behaviour is satisfactory, but learning is sometimes disrupted by low-level disturbance. This is partly because staff do not insist on students following set procedures when they arrive in the morning, even though the rules are in place. In other respects, the impact of the unit's work on improving students' behaviour is clearly evident. Students confirm that there is no bullying and that they feel safe in the unit. There are a reducing number of serious incidents, and the number of fixed-term exclusions shows a marked decline. The unit has good safeguarding procedures. It provides satisfactory care, guidance and support overall.

Historically, students stayed in the unit for long periods of time. In some cases, this was for most of their secondary education. Over the past year, there has been a recognition

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that students need to move on quicker and there have been notable successes. There is broad acceptance of the principle that the unit should be only a short-stay facility, but this is not translated into an overriding explicit expectation that is shared and reinforced by all staff that this should be the norm for almost all students.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Make the most of available teaching time by:
  - accelerating the rate of improvement of students' attendance
  - improving students' punctuality
  - clarifying and then applying expectations of behaviour at the start of each school day.

Raise the expectation that the unit will return students into a mainstream school or place them in specialist provision in the shortest possible time by:

- Ensure that staff routinely match activities to students' capabilities and prior learning in order to promote independent learning and accelerate progress.
  - establishing with students, parents and carers the principle that placement in the unit is only a short-term measure
  - strengthening partnership work with local schools
  - devising exit strategies and plans for students shortly after admission.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Students' ability spans a wide range, although their attainment on entry is broadly average. There have been examples of individual students making outstanding progress, which has resulted in five GCSEs at grade A\* to C, including mathematics and English. Overall, students make satisfactory progress and all who stay until the end of Year 11 acquire some accreditations for their work. Those who attend college full time also obtain qualifications. Students make satisfactory progress in acquiring key literacy and numeracy skills, although they do well to achieve elements of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and to pass Youth Award Scheme courses. Students with a statement of special educational needs make satisfactory progress in meeting their targets. In the lessons observed, progress was satisfactory. Learning did not proceed faster than that because the activities did not always encourage or enable students to tackle them independently. However, even when they did, students were often reluctant to accept the challenge and to take risks because of the fear of failure.

Students find it difficult to make significant transformations in their behaviour and attitudes. Their attendance, punctuality and behaviour are erratic and this influences the rate at which they make progress. However, over time a majority of students improve their attendance and show increasing awareness of the personal qualities that are required to move successfully into college or employment. They are prepared satisfactorily for leaving school. The unit's acquisition of a Healthy School award helps students to develop an adequate understanding of how to remain healthy. They make a satisfactory

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contribution to the local community, such as their inputs to a borough-wide poetry project and to a campaign aimed at raising awareness of the dangers of cannabis use. Despite the difficulties and setbacks that many students experience, they make satisfactory progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their appreciation of cultures other than their own. In particular, students learn that their actions have consequences and that they have to take responsibility for them.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Students are taught satisfactorily, although a small minority of lessons are good. Staff have good subject knowledge and they are enthusiastic in their approach. They promote students' speaking and listening skills well, such as through question and answer sessions. Lesson planning focuses on what staff expect students to learn, although teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment information to personalise these learning outcomes to match individuals' capabilities. Despite many effective features of classroom practice, students do not make rapid progress in lessons because minor disruptions create distractions that disturb learning. Teachers deal with these effectively but they still result in valuable teaching time being lost.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements, with an appropriate focus on core subjects and personal, social and health education. This is supplemented well by subjects such as textiles and humanities, although the accommodation prevents the opportunity to provide

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vocational subjects or subjects such as design and technology and food technology. Effective use of the community extends the range of learning opportunities and experiences, such as through educational visits and the use of local facilities like the leisure centre. A few links with other schools provide further curriculum enrichment opportunities, but these are at an early stage of development.

The unit's links with organisations such as the police, youth offending team and mental health professionals make a good contribution to the overall satisfactory quality of care, guidance and support that it provides. Music and drama therapists also contribute well to this multi-disciplinary approach. Good monitoring and tracking of students' more extreme behaviours enable staff to set targets and to focus individual support and specific guidance interventions. Where the unit is less effective is in supporting students to realise that everyday rules and boundaries have to be respected. Staff have not established a climate of day-to-day expectations, which they then enforce each morning, for example stopping the use of mobile telephones and the wearing of hats and outdoor coats. Therefore, instead of requiring every student to go through an accepted routine each morning, such as handing in mobile telephones, each teacher has to deal with the same distractions that these cause throughout the day.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Unit leaders have been through a difficult period. Their effectiveness in raising expectations and improving the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although a number of positive changes have been made. There has not been sufficient time for good impact to be wholly evident in all aspects of the unit's work. For instance, it is apparent in the good quality safeguarding arrangements that have been implemented and the way in which these are supported through close collaborative working with other agencies, but not in establishing consistently good classroom practice. Leaders are committed to equality of opportunity for all learners, but the unit's historical tardiness in returning students into schools reduces to satisfactory the practical effectiveness of this commitment. The unit's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory for the same reason. Despite, staff having good knowledge of students' parents and carers and the circumstances in which they live, only now is there evidence of the beginnings of the culture change that leads to raised expectations.

Leaders have made a good start in tackling priority development areas. For instance, they have newly developed procedures for tracking and evaluating students' academic progress and they are monitoring more closely students' performance in college. Those responsible

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for the governance and oversight of the unit carry out their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily, but this picture is changing for the better. There are many early signs that the management committee and the local authority are working more productively with the headteacher to maintain the momentum of change.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the unit. Comments such as 'the Latimer Education Centre has been a great help in bringing my child's education to where it is now', and 'the staff are caring and dedicated' are representative of their views. There is unanimous agreement that the unit keeps their children safe. They indicate that they are viewed as full partners in their children's education by confirming that their views are acted upon and that staff keep them informed about their children's progress. However, the fact that a quarter of parents and carers do not think that the unit meets their child's particular needs suggests that they, too, want their children returned to school more quickly.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Latimer Education 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 11 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 29 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	4	36	5	45	1	9	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	4	36	7	64	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	6	55	5	45	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	9	82	2	18	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	2	18	9	82	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	4	36	6	55	1	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	2	18	6	55	3	27	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	18	8	73	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	1	9	7	64	3	27	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	45	5	45	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	3	27	8	73	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	3	27	7	64	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	18	9	82	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	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



21 January 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Latimer Education Centre, London, W10 6TT**

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited earlier this week. Special thanks go to those of you who gave up your time to speak with me. Latimer Education Centre is a satisfactory pupil referral unit. Lessons are satisfactory, as is the range of subjects that you study. The staff care about your welfare and they are very willing to help, guide and support you. You know that you can always talk to an adult.

You make satisfactory progress in your work and in growing up as young people. You have a good understanding about how to stay safe and know about having a healthy lifestyle, but you need to do better in other ways. Not enough of you attend as often as you should and too many of you arrive late. Furthermore, you allow yourselves to be distracted too easily by getting into arguments or playing with mobile telephones and MP3 players. It is important that you change this behaviour as it is preventing you from learning as well as you should.

The people who run the unit do an adequate job. They want to make the unit even better and I have asked them to do the following in order to achieve this.

- Get more of you to attend as much as possible, improve your punctuality, and make sure that every one of you follows the rules about wearing hats and coats and not using mobile telephones.
- Make sure that teachers always provide you with work that is set at just the right level so that you can tackle it on your own.
- Transfer more of you back into school more quickly.

You can help the staff a great deal to make the improvements that are needed. You need to attend regularly, turn up on time, follow instructions and not be distracted.

I wish each of you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Kell

Lead inspector

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