

The Pupil Referral Service, Peterborough

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110601
Local Authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	378125
Inspection dates	17–18 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Not applicable
Headteacher	Claire George
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2009
School address	The Old Courthouse High Street Peterborough PE2 8EW
Telephone number	01733 452675
Fax number	01733 452665
Email address	flettonoffice@peterborough.gov.uk

Age group	4–16
Inspection date(s)	17–18 October 2011
Inspection number	378125

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They made visits to 16 lessons taught by 16 teachers. Inspectors met with a group of pupils, the chair of the management committee, a local authority representative and members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including the school development plan, assessment records and safeguarding policies. They analysed completed questionnaires from staff and pupils, as well as 14 from parents and carers.

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

- Are pupils in Key Stage 4 making sufficient progress to make up for previous gaps in education?
- How effective are partnerships in supporting vocational education for older pupils and reintegration of younger ones back into mainstream education?
- How effectively is the new leadership team embedding its vision for the future and securing improvement?

Information about the school

The Pupil Referral Service (PRS) makes provision for pupils who live in Peterborough and who have been permanently excluded from school or are at risk of permanent exclusion. It also provides home tuition on medical grounds. The PRS operates from four sites spread across the city. These comprise: a primary unit; a Key Stage 3 unit; and two separate sites for Key Stage 4 pupils. An outreach team works from the primary unit and supports primary age pupils who are registered in mainstream schools both in the unit and in their school. There are no Key Stage 1 pupils based in the unit but nine Key Stage 2 pupils have a full-time place. Most of these pupils have a statement of special educational need. The Key Stage 3 unit has provision for up to 24 full-time pupils. Currently, there are 16 pupils on roll, 13 of whom are full-time. The majority of pupils on roll are in Key Stage 4, of whom about a third are Year 11 pupils at risk of being permanently excluded. They access a work-related programme from the Learning Education and Achievement Partnership (LEAP) centre which is one of the Key Stage 4 sites. The remaining Key Stage 4 pupils have been permanently excluded and receive full-time provision at the other Key Stage 4 site.

While most pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, mostly relating to emotional and behavioural needs, a relatively small proportion of secondary aged pupils have a statement. The majority of pupils are White British. A small minority are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds, a very small number of whom have English as an additional language. The majority of pupils are boys, overwhelmingly so in the primary and Key Stage 3 units.

The leadership team is new in post since September 2011. Each unit has a teacher-in-charge but three of the four teachers-in-charge are currently in acting positions as are some of their deputies.

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

The Pupil Referral Service provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. They make satisfactory progress as a result. Good care, guidance and support enable pupils to develop confidence and to re-engage with their learning. Behaviour improves significantly for most, especially for those in their primary years and pupils in Key Stage 3, so that there is a calm atmosphere most of the time. Pupils are well looked after and feel safe and secure as a result. A breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the day. In the Key Stage 4 unit, where it was recently introduced, the breakfast club has helped to improve attendance quite dramatically. Attendance is satisfactory overall and very good in the primary unit.

When pupils arrive in the PRS, many, especially those in Key Stage 4, have significant gaps in their education. This is usually due to poor attendance and behaviour in the past. Hence, they often begin with low levels of attainment especially those who are excluded when in Years 10 or 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress, especially in addressing the gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills. Many younger pupils have attainment levels that are broadly in line with, or close to, age-related expectations when they join the PRS. They make sufficient progress to maintain these attainment levels. Attainment is below average at the end of Key Stage 4 though pupils leave the PRS with a creditable set of alternative qualifications and some GCSEs. Pupils with medical needs supported by the PRS achieve well and gain GCSE qualifications that match national averages. Pupils across all key stages make good progress in developing their social skills and improving their behaviour. As a result, pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 are effectively reintegrated into mainstream schools and most Year 11 pupils move successfully onto further education courses, training or employment.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good teaching was seen more often in the primary and Key Stage 3 units than in Key Stage 4. In most lessons, teachers manage behaviour well and establish good working relationships with pupils. Tasks are usually interesting and involve pupils actively. However, too often work is not well matched to the individual needs or interests of pupils. At times it is too hard but more often it is not challenging enough especially, for the more able. Sometimes pupils are repeating work they have already done. Pupils are unsure about how well they are doing in their learning. This is because they do not receive precise enough feedback on what they have successfully achieved and what they need to do next to make their work better. The feedback they receive on how well they are doing in terms of their personal development and behaviour is more

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

comprehensive.

The new leadership team has set a clear vision and direction for the future development of the service. Members of the team are ambitious in their aspirations and are already working to realise some of the key goals they have set for the PRS. The headteacher leads well and is making good progress in establishing a sense of common purpose across the PRS. One of the key goals is to achieve unified and common systems and procedures across all four units. Currently systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are different in each and vary in quality and effectiveness. There is some good initial assessment of pupils' academic and personal development needs when they first arrive but this is not consistent across all four centres. The data on progress is not analysed systematically enough to give a clear picture about how well pupils are performing and patterns of performance across different subjects, key stages or groups of pupils. This limits the information middle and senior staff have to inform planning for improvement. The management committee has not been sufficiently challenging about the quality of provision and outcomes because it has not had enough information or the training to enable it to do so effectively. Though formal monitoring of teaching and learning at both middle and senior levels is not established practice, the headteacher and senior leaders have gained a good overview of the work of the units from informal observations and visible presence across the PRS. Consequently, they and the local authority have an accurate picture of how good it is and have identified the right priorities for development. In the short time she has been in post, the headteacher, working in partnership with other senior staff, has secured key improvements, such as in attendance. The capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Up to 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise attainment further by:
 - ensuring that work is well matched to the individual needs of all pupils so that they make faster progress
 - setting clear learning targets for individual pupils
 - providing pupils with precise feedback on how well they are doing and what they need to do to make their work better.
- Put in place consistent systems for tracking and analysing pupils' progress by:
 - setting up a system for baseline assessment of pupils' academic as well as personal development needs
 - implementing across all key stages a clear and effective system to track pupils' progress using National Curriculum levels for Key Stages 1 to 3 and course related grades or levels for Key Stage 4

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

- ensuring that middle and senior leaders analyse this data to provide the service, the Local Authority and the management committee with a termly overview of how well pupils are progressing across the different subjects and courses they are studying.
- Improve the effectiveness with which staff and the service are held to account by:
 - implementing a programme of formal observations of teaching and learning involving middle and senior leaders
 - developing the role of the management committee so that it asks more searching questions about the work of the service and its effectiveness.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

All groups of pupils make broadly satisfactory progress during their time in the PRS. Most make good progress in improving their social skills and managing their own behaviour. This is especially so for pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 and those on work-related learning programmes.

In lessons, most pupils focus well and cooperate with their teachers. Some in Key Stage 4 are less readily engaged but, to some extent, this is because work provided is not practical enough to meet their needs. For example, in a Year 10 science lesson, pupils took a little time to settle down because they were not keen on working from a text and were disappointed that there was no experimental work. In contrast, in a Key Stage 3 mathematics lesson, a group of boys focused well on the problems they were given and readily asked for help when stuck. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as others. Their behavioural and personal needs are focused on and they have clear targets for improvement. The practical nature of the work related programme supports Key Stage 4 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to achieve satisfactorily. The very small number with English as an additional language benefit from the high adult to pupil ratio in the PRS. They also make satisfactory progress in their learning.

Pupils enjoy toast at breakfast though are less keen on fruit. They are developing a sound understanding of healthy lifestyles including the dangers of smoking and drugs and alcohol. Pupils in the primary unit work on the allotment producing vegetables to be used in cooking their own meals. Older pupils are now contributing to improving the environment at the Key Stage 4 unit. They are at the early stages of drawing up plans to develop a sensory garden for the children's centre next door. Key Stage 3 pupils bake cakes to raise funds for good causes. Most pupils interact well with one another. Conversations at breakfast are sociable and behaviour polite. Pupils have a secure understanding of right and wrong. They increasingly understand how their behaviour impacts on others and readily apologise for misdemeanours. Their confidence improves as they experience success. While pupils enjoy art and media

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

studies, and learn more about the wider world through these, their overall cultural development, including their knowledge of cultural diversity, is restricted due to limitations in this area in the curriculum.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers prepare resources carefully for their lessons. Learning objectives are usually clear and learning is planned to be progressively more difficult. However, planning does not take sufficient account of the prior learning or individual needs of pupils. Hence, pupils are often doing the same or similar work. At times, the methods used are not those best suited to pupils' learning needs. Where teaching is good, the work is practical so as to engage pupils' interest. Teachers and support staff keep a close eye on how well pupils are getting on and intervene to either ensure pupils stay on task or to help with any difficulties. There are examples of work which is checked and corrected well, but comments for improvement or feedback to pupils on how well they have done are not frequent enough.

Curricular provision is satisfactory. It provides a secure foundation for those pupils being reintegrated into mainstream schools. Sound programmes are in place for literacy and numeracy across all sites. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning though this is limited in the Key Stage 4 unit. Art and media studies provide good opportunities for creativity. The media studies work in Key Stage 4 is particularly effective in developing pupils' functional literacy and personal and social skills through projects based on real-life dramas to which

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

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

pupils can relate. Work experience placements for Year 11 pupils, usually one day a week, are well developed. Vocational provision in the Key Stage 4 unit, and links with partners to extend this provision, are limited but being developed by senior staff. Links with schools to support reintegration of excluded pupils are good.

Each pupil is well known to staff and significant support offered to help each to improve their behaviour and attendance. Many pupils have 100% attendance as a result. Over time, pupils' attendance levels double or triple compared to their attendance in mainstream school. Behaviour and personal and social development are monitored closely. Rewards and sanctions are used to good effect to help pupils to learn to manage their own behaviour. The PRS involves an extensive range of agencies and professionals to support pupils and their families, including medical support and advice about future careers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has set a positive tone and high expectations for pupils' learning as well as their personal development. She has created an effective team around her who bring important knowledge and skills in relation to managing a service such as this. There has already been a significant improvement in attendance at the Key Stage 4 unit. The courses being followed by pupils here are being rapidly improved to provide a more relevant and appropriate curriculum. New systems are being developed and a culture of staff working as a unified team across the units. Systems for assessment have previously been a weakness, with inconsistent approaches to assessing pupils both when they first arrive and during their time at the PRS. Individual pupils' progress is now tracked but the analysis of data to identify patterns in the performance of different groups of pupils remains limited. Nonetheless, there are no significant differences in the performance of pupils based on gender or ethnicity. Discrimination of any form is not tolerated.

The local authority provides effective oversight of the work of the PRS but the management committee is not effective enough in questioning senior staff about the performance of the PRS. Safeguarding requirements are well met and rigorous procedures are in place in all the units to ensure pupils' safety. Risk assessments for off-site provision, such as work experience, are diligently conducted. Community cohesion is well promoted within the units and increasingly so with the local community, especially the community around the Key Stage 4 unit. As a result, pupils

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

increasingly appreciate their role in the community in which they live and work. The PRS has yet to form links with other units and schools nationally and internationally.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers was low. However, those who have responded are very positive about the service. Almost all agree that they are informed about their child's progress; that their child is well prepared for the future; that the PRS meets their child's needs; that their views are taken on board and that the PRS is well managed. A few parents and carers indicate that they feel their child is not making enough progress. The inspection findings show that progress is satisfactory overall but there is room for pupils to make better progress. Written comments were generally full of praise for the work of the PRS and its impact on their child.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Pupil Referral Service, Peterborough 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 inspection team received 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	57	3	21	2	14	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	64	3	21	1	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	71	3	21	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	50	3	21	0	0	2	14
The teaching is good at this school	8	57	4	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	43	5	36	1	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	4	29	7	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)	10	71	3	21	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	64	4	29	0	0	1	7
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	71	2	14	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	79	2	14	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	3	3	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	64	4	29	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



19 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Pupil Referral Service, Peterborough, PE2 8EW

Thank you for your help and for taking the time to give us your views during the recent inspection. We think that the unit provides you with a satisfactory education. Most of you achieve satisfactorily and grow in confidence as your learning improves.

- The breakfast club gives you a good start to the day.
- You make good progress in improving your social skills, behaviour and attendance.
- The good care, guidance and help you receive makes you feel well supported and enables younger pupils to be successfully reintegrated into mainstream schools.
- Most Year 11 pupils move onto further education, training or employment.
- The headteacher is working closely with staff to support your needs and to improve the provision so that your learning improves.

In order to make provision better, we have asked the headteacher and senior staff to give you work that is at the right level for you, and more feedback on how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve. In addition, we have asked the headteacher to set up a better system for assessing your work and checking how well different groups of pupils are progressing. We also want her to involve the more senior staff further in checking the quality of teaching and learning, and the local authority to help the management committee to oversee the work of the Pupil Referral Service more effectively.

We think that you can help by continuing to work hard and attending as regularly as you can. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gulshanbir Kayembe
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**