

Manchester KS3/4 PRU

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	136743
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	385886
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2012
Lead inspector	Pauline Hilling-Smith

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	280
Appropriate authority	The local authority and the management committee
Chair	Sheila Newman
Headteacher	Helen McAndrew
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith

John Ellwood

Tony Price

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons taught by 13 teachers or other staff. Discussions were held with students, representatives of the management committee and local authority, other partners and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at the school's evaluation of its performance, the current development plan, minutes of meetings of the management committee and safeguarding documentation. The responses to 26 questionnaires returned from parents and carers were also analysed.

Information about the school

This larger-than-average-sized pupil referral unit (PRU) opened in May 2011. It comprises the former separate Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupil referral units and further sites. It also includes other commissioned alternative provision. There are in total 12 sites throughout the city. It caters for students who are either permanently excluded or at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. The majority of students in Key Stage 3 stay for two terms but students who arrive in Year 10 and 11 stay longer. The majority of students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The unit has been awarded Artsmark. This is the school's first inspection. The school is an accredited centre for Edexcel, Assessment and Qualifications Alliance and Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory pupil referral unit. It enables students to re-engage with learning and secures good progress in social development and satisfactory progress in English and mathematics for the majority of students. It is not yet good because it is still developing and not enough students are making good progress. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Students' attainment on entry to the unit is low because their education has often been disrupted and there are gaps in their learning. The majority of students narrow the gap between themselves and their peers in levels of attainment and leave with broadly average standards. However, attainment remains low for a minority of students English and mathematics.
- Teaching results in satisfactory progress over time. An increasing percentage is good and the majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good. This outcome is as result of good leadership and management of teaching and learning. However, this good practice in teaching is not yet consistently the norm.
- The majority of students make rapid improvements in their behaviour and personal development and re-engage with learning. Students are usually polite and respectful, and bullying is rare. Attendance is broadly average though some students do not arrive on time.
- The curriculum is rich and meets the needs of students well. It gives students access to a wide range of alternative curriculum opportunities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Leadership and management are good because partnerships are strong. This enables the unit to be effective in preventing exclusions from the mainstream schools. The good analysis and evaluation of monitoring data and good management of performance drive school improvement effectively. The management committee provides clear challenge and support.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - promoting literacy and numeracy work across the curriculum to help students to meet their individual targets in English and mathematics.

- Ensure that all teaching is good or better by:
 - giving students clear written information about what they need to do to achieve the next level in their work
 - asking questions which deepen students' learning
 - ensuring that tasks are always at the right level of challenge
 - ensuring that the tracking of students' progress fully informs the planning of future lessons.

- Improve punctuality and attendance by:
 - using reward systems more consistently to help those students who need to improve their punctuality and to improve overall attendance.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Students arrive at the unit with low attainment in English and mathematics and other school subjects often because their education has been disrupted and there are gaps in their learning. Records show that on entry students' self-esteem is low and their life skills are not well-developed. When they arrive clear procedures for establishing where students are in their learning in English and mathematics are undertaken, often under the supervision of the pastoral staff on each site. Plans, based on these results, are made to fill identified gaps in learning and to set targets for achievement. Sometimes a lack of information from sending schools makes it difficult to see exactly what the students are capable of and the targets set are less challenging than they could be. However, the majority of students accelerate their progress in English and mathematics and other school subjects and narrow the gap between themselves and their peers in other schools with the same starting points. They are able to do this because they make good progress in their social development which means that they are better able to re-engage with learning.

Assessment data about students' progress is used to track progress and identify when they are ready to return to mainstream settings, especially for those in Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4 the information is used to identify the most appropriate next destination. There is no difference in the progress made by students across any of the sites. In lessons students apply themselves well to their learning and cover the ground set out for them. However, there are not sufficient opportunities planned for students to improve their skills in English and mathematics in other subjects to help them to reach their personal targets. Support staff and teachers sometimes change roles and take turns to deliver expositions or take part in discussions with individuals or groups to extend students' thinking.

The majority of students make good progress in developing personal skills, particularly a self-awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others and on their own success. This

means that they are better equipped to be successful in their next school or other settings that they attend. There is no difference in the progress made by disabled students and those who have special educational needs. The vast majority of parents and carers who gave their views about achievement were positive about achievement as were the majority of students.

Quality of teaching

The vast majority of parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire agree that teaching is now good and the majority of students agreed. During the inspection good and satisfactory teaching was observed and the majority of teaching was good. However, the percentage of good lessons has increased only recently. In the best lessons the degree of challenge was at the right level and students were clear about how successful they were and what they needed to do next to attain the next level. They were motivated by the discussions that were taking place and engaged by searching questions. However, marking does not provide the students with clear written information about what they need to do to attain the next level in their work and in some lessons the level of challenge in tasks set for students was too low. Occasionally questions require only short answers from one student. Consequently, the impact of teaching on students' learning and progress over time is satisfactory.

Sometimes students make good or occasionally better progress in lessons when expectations are high. For example, in one lesson where the teaching was good students first consolidated their skills in working out percentages. They went on to apply their knowledge to calculate the price of articles in a sale when a percentage discount was specified by a shop. At the same time students practised their reading skills and developed their ability to work out answers to scenarios which required a number of steps. When this happens, students' progress accelerates and those who were underperforming make up lost ground. Specially trained staff provide effective support for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, particularly those with mental health difficulties that enables many of them to successfully re-engage with learning and to make the same progress as other students.

Schemes of work are adapted and personalised for each student to help ensure that the needs of each individual student is met. They are carefully planned to cover the requirements of the curriculum and to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers plan activities to build on prior learning and to address the requirements of accredited courses. For example, in an English lesson, students took a mock examination and experienced the pressures of answering timed questions without help from the teacher. Students' moral development is promoted well because it is given a good amount of attention in lessons, such as when students consider the effects of aggression.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

When students arrive at the unit their behaviour and attitude to learning often disrupts their progress. However, after a short time, as a result of the respect, high expectations and commitment shown to them by the staff, the majority of students settle and are able to spend more time learning. They are helped to understand how they need to improve their behaviour so that they can begin to achieve better and move on. The staff discuss expectations and help students to identify what they need to do to enable them to improve

their self-control and to modify any unacceptable social interactions. Students try hard to meet the expectations of the staff even when they are finding it very difficult to do so. Parents and carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the staff to increase students' life chances, and the vast majority build up trust in the staff. As a result of this partnership, students' behaviour and attitude to learning improves. There are some outbursts of extremely challenging behaviour but these are usually well managed. The number of exclusions is reducing.

A minority of students say that behaviour is not always good and parents and carers agree that this is, 'work in progress'. The vast majority of students say they feel safe and there is very little bullying of any kind. They strongly agree that the school deals with these rare cases of bullying effectively, and parents and carers agree. Attendance is broadly average. Sometimes students arrive to the centres very late and reward systems are not always used consistently to promote better punctuality and attendance. However, most students improve their attendance when they attend the unit and when this reaches the target set it is used as an indicator that the student is ready to move back to their mainstream school. Attitudes to work and the response to visitors and staff are friendly and respectful and conduct is usually orderly and safe.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is an exceptional leader. She has sustained a good and increasing rate of school improvement against a very drawn out programme of restructuring and re-opening. The vision of success for all students as a result of a wide range of carefully tailored opportunities and high-quality teaching has begun to be realised. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The management committee helps to meet the needs of the unit well through an appropriate balance of challenge and support. In conjunction with the business manager, senior leaders ensure that the management committee members are presented with very clear information upon which they make well-founded decisions. Self-evaluation and assuring the quality of commissioned provision involves everybody, and staff use the tracking system to monitor students' progress. However, tracking data is not informing what happens in classrooms as precisely as it should because the analysis of progress is not sufficiently fine-tuned. The leadership of teaching and learning is good because targets set are followed up and professional development opportunities are well planned. Performance management procedures are detailed and well focused and have a good impact on the performance of all staff. The accelerated progress seen in aspects of students' personal development and the progress of a few students in English and mathematics, show that the unit's capacity to improve further is good. Partnership with mainstream schools is well organised and strong and the impact of this benefits many more students than attend the unit.

Strengths of the curriculum are its enrichment, personalisation and provision for students' personal development, particularly their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and the fact that it gives students access to a wide range of alternative provision. Students make a significant contribution to displays, through high quality art, some of which is to be exhibited in the Olympic Village in August. All staff are welcoming and keen to share the students' successes and this ethos permeates the school. The school takes positive action to promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination in all of its work. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and meet statutory requirements.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Manchester KS3/4 PRU, Manchester, M18 8BA

Thank you for being polite and approachable when my colleagues and I inspected your unit. We enjoyed talking with you and visiting lessons. Thank you for taking the time to give us your views. It was clear from talking with you and the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers that you feel very safe at school.

We judged the unit as satisfactory. This is because teaching has been satisfactory overall since it opened. However, the majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good. This is because the headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to help the teachers to teach well. All the staff have a deep desire for you to be successful and so they make sure that they take every opportunity to help you to understand the consequences of the choices you make. You are making satisfactory progress in learning and good progress in your personal development. A few of you are doing better than this because you make sure you attend and arrive on time.

We have asked the staff to do three things to help you make good progress more often. The first is to make sure you improve your English and mathematics in all lessons. The second is to make more lessons good by always asking you to complete activities at just the right level of challenge and to ensure that they write in your books to show you how well you are doing and what you need to do to be successful. The third is to make better use of rewards to encourage you to attend better and arrive on time.

I hope you will try to do all you can to help the staff and encourage each other to do the right thing.

Yours sincerely

Pauline Hilling-Smith
Lead inspector

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