

# The Study Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	131753
<b>Local authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	381396
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Scott

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

<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>	59
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracie McNeil
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 November 2008
<b>School address</b>	Compton Close Ealing London W13 0LR
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<b>Age group</b>	11–16
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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Scott

Additional Inspector

Janet Allcorn

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons or part-lessons, involving 11 teachers. All visits were accompanied by a member of the senior leadership team. Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the management committee, staff, students, parents and carers. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at its monitoring, assessment and attendance records, improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the management committee and safeguarding documents. In addition, they analysed questionnaires from four parents and carers, 14 students and 15 staff.

## Information about the school

The Study Centre Pupil Referral Unit caters for up to 72 full-time places for students from Years 7 to 11 who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. The Study Centre (PRU) is part of the local authority's provision for Education Other Than At School (EOTAS). The largest groups of students are of Black Caribbean, Black African and White British heritages, most of whom are boys. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school which has shown steady improvement in all aspects since the previous inspection. The school is not outstanding because there are inconsistencies in teaching that limit students' achievement.
- The majority of students make good progress in their learning and achieve well overall. They also make good progress in managing their own behaviour and in developing a range of good personal skills including spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The leadership of teaching and learning and the management of teachers' performance, including staff training, have been effective. As a result, teaching is good overall, resulting in positive outcomes for students. Nevertheless, there is still some variation in how well students achieve across subjects. This is because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In some subject areas, teachers' written marking does not always show students in sufficient detail how they can improve their work, or how students could improve grammatical accuracy and presentation.
- Students are typically well behaved, courteous and respectful of staff and of each other because staff manage behaviour well. The school successfully promotes a real culture of safety among its students.
- The headteacher and senior team work well together to guide and support staff. They know the strengths of the school and their determination to raise achievement, particularly in students' literacy and numeracy skills, has created confidence and a genuine sense of purpose throughout the school. Information on students' progress is accurately and regularly captured.
- However, analysis by managers is not always robust enough to be sure that the success of initiatives is evaluated, or that information is used fully to ensure that all groups of learners are on track to meet their challenging targets. Moreover, numeracy skills are not fully promoted across the curriculum.

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

- Eliminate inconsistencies in teaching by:
  - ensuring all marking of the students' work matches that of the best, and includes guidance as to how to improve
  - reinforcing accurate spelling, punctuation and neat presentation across the

- curriculum
- systematically providing opportunities for students to use and apply numeracy skills across a wider range of subjects and cross-curricular work.
- Sharpen the impact of leaders and managers, including the management committee, in driving improvement by:
  - ensuring the impact of new curriculum developments in the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is measured effectively
  - ensuring that tracking and monitoring information that leaders gather is analysed robustly in respect of different groups of students to enable appropriate action to improve progress further.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Attainment is average and students achieve well from below average starting points. The school's assessment data show that students' rate of achievement is steadily rising. A number of factors have contributed to students' improved levels of attainment. The curriculum has been revised to ensure that as many students as possible gain externally accredited awards to give them a meaningful currency in life beyond school. In 2011, the proportion of Year 11 students gaining five or more A\* to G grades almost doubled. The school has been particularly successful in narrowing the gap between Black Caribbean boys and their peers nationally, by sharply focusing on their individual requirements and by providing good staff role models.

Parents and carers correctly believe that students achieve well and make good progress in their learning because the quality of teaching is good. Lesson planning is detailed and work is personalised to meet the age and ability-related needs of each student, all of whom are either disabled or have special educational needs. Academic success and big gains in personal development, including self-help skills, prepare students well for returning to mainstream education or moving on to further education, training or employment.

The good relationships students have with their teacher and teaching assistant help make lessons purposeful and friendly events that are enjoyed by students and staff alike. For example, in a numeracy lesson, using sheets of card, Key Stage 3 students were able to find the centre of a circle by folding the card into segments and so calculate the diameter and radius of the circle. As a result of the teacher's highly effective questioning, students responded very well with good quality dialogue using key words in their answers which deepened their understanding of mathematics.

Students make good progress in reading and literacy, with further opportunities to accelerate their skills through guided reading and one-to-one support, so that by the time they leave the school their levels of attainment in reading and literacy are average. For example, in a Key Stage 4 English lesson, after passages of text were read aloud by a student, an enthusiastic discussion followed of Steinbeck's characterisation of various individuals in *Of Mice and Men*. As a result of the good emphasis on technical language and literacy skills, great empathy and understanding of progressively difficult concepts were demonstrated.

## Quality of teaching

Overall the quality of teaching is good. Teachers' and teaching assistants' excellent modelling of respectful relationships contributes well to students' increasingly positive attitudes to learning. Support for students with barriers to learning is carefully orchestrated to bolster their reading skills, particularly in Years 7 and 8, so that as many students as possible have ready access to the whole curriculum. This was well illustrated in a Key Stage 3 music technology lesson where students enthusiastically questioned each other using technical vocabulary as to whether the individual tracks were 'in time' with one another. Other strengths of teaching include secure subject knowledge that mostly enables teachers to communicate enthusiastically their love of the subject and confidently allow students to explore their understanding of the work in hand. This was evident in a Year 9 geography lesson, where students confidently identified and articulated the characteristics and physical features of the country of Brazil.

Parents and carers overwhelmingly confirm that they are satisfied with the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, despite these many strengths in teaching, there is still some inconsistency across subjects, especially in the quality of marking and feedback to students on their written work. Not all staff regularly challenge students well enough on spelling, punctuation and presentation. Overall there are insufficient planned activities to provide opportunities for students to apply their mathematics across the curriculum. However, the students, all of whom are either disabled or have special educational needs, are given very clear personalised programmes of work with specific targets that help them to make good progress overall.

Strong links made between topics across the curriculum mean that students understand the relevance of their tasks. The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is thoroughly woven, by teachers, into students' daily lives. There are many opportunities for students to reflect on their learning, work together, listen carefully to each other and reflect on the lives of people who follow different cultures and traditions. For example, students at Key Stage 4 have recently composed a song and entered a competition to have it performed as the Olympic torch is paraded locally.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspection evidence, including school logs and case studies, shows that behaviour over time is consistently good. Students, staff, parents and carers comment positively about the regular good behaviour around the school and in the overwhelming majority of lessons, together with the positive relationships between staff and students. The school's consistent use of the Credit-Card points system, together with the restorative justice programme, makes a good contribution to the effective management of behaviour so that teachers focus almost exclusively on students' learning. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted by the high expectations of all staff as role models. This enables students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable to overcome their difficulties more readily and make significant changes in their attitudes. This is evidenced in the continued

decline in fixed-term exclusions which reflects the students' increasing enjoyment of education.

Students understand about different types of bullying and know how to respond to any difficulties, such as cyber bullying, racist or homophobic name calling. They are confident that any bullying or incidents of poor behaviour are effectively dealt with by the school. Students feel very safe at school and parents and carers agree with them. Students know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when using the internet.

The recording, monitoring and use of attendance data are much improved and targets for students are more challenging than previously. Students can quote their attendance targets and know by how much they have improved. As a result, the overall attendance rate is broadly average.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher's commitment, vision and personal warmth have created a welcoming and harmonious ethos which permeates the school and beyond. The senior team and other staff work well together and know the strengths of the school. Weaknesses in teaching have been successfully tackled through well-considered training programmes and support given. There is still some inconsistency because information available about the progress of groups of students is not used consistently in the classroom to ensure each individual student makes best possible progress.

All learners have an equal chance to learn and any potential discrimination is tackled appropriately. Upon arrival at the school all students are assessed in order to establish their particular needs and starting points so that either a bespoke programme of support can be implemented or a referral made to alternative provision within EOTAS. Partnerships with high schools, the local authority and EOTAS are excellent, as are links with other agencies, which contribute effectively to the students' good progress.

The curriculum provides students with memorable experiences leading to worthwhile qualifications carefully matched to their needs. As a result of this and high expectations by staff in presenting very positive role models, the provision for students to prepare for life in the United Kingdom and a global society is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Throughout the curriculum students are encouraged to develop a good understanding of their own community and the different faiths, ethnicities and cultures within it.

The management committee is very supportive of the school, fulfils all its statutory duties and is increasingly effective at holding leaders and managers to account for students' achievement. Good procedures are in place concerning safeguarding and risk assessment. These meet all government guidelines and include a carefully planned approach to child protection and the vetting of adults.

Since the previous inspection, the school has improved the quality of teaching, raised

attendance, and broadened the curriculum. Managers' checks on implementation of the school's curriculum developments in literacy and numeracy, and analysis of the learners' achievement by groups of students, are at an early stage of development, but the improvements already evident demonstrate leaders' continuing capacity to sustain further improvements.



## 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](http://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.**



18 May 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of The Study Centre, London W13 0LR**

Thank you for your friendly welcome, and for being so open with us in our discussions when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed seeing you at work and recreation and considering whether we could suggest anything to make things better. We were particularly pleased to see the way you get along with each other so well and show high levels of respect for, and cooperation with, your teachers.

You go to a good school and your attitudes and behaviour are good. You, and your parents and carers, told us that the school is a caring and happy place where you are well taught and feel very safe. You make good progress in your lessons because the teachers know you very well and give you the time and attention you need to help you learn. Your teachers are determined to help you to succeed and give you the best possible education and I have asked them to make the following improvements by:

- ensuring that your work is consistently well marked, to include checks on your spelling, punctuation and presentation in all subjects
- ensuring that you have regular opportunities to apply your mathematics skills across all subjects
- ensuring that all staff thoroughly check the effectiveness of new developments in their teaching of literacy and numeracy across all your work in order to help you achieve your very best
- analysing more carefully how well different groups of students are getting on.

You too can play your part in improving the school by working hard to achieve your targets and by following your teachers' advice. Once again, it was very good to meet you all and I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Scott  
Lead inspector

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