

# South Derbyshire Support Centre

KS2 Centre, c/o Granville Community School, Burton Road, Swadlincote, DE11 7JR

**Inspection dates** 28–29 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Good leadership and management make sure that a close eye is kept on teaching and pupils' achievement, and that the centre is continually improving.
- The centre is highly valued by local schools. It is considered to be inventive and successful in helping pupils to overcome their difficulties.
- Pupils make good progress. They work hard and achieve well.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations of the quality of pupils' work and behaviour. They are skilled in helping pupils to concentrate and enjoy learning, so pupils catch up quickly.
- Pupils learn to manage their own behaviour. They say there is little bullying and that they feel safe at the centre. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy.
- The centre has a 100% success rate in returning pupils to mainstream schools. It maintains close links with these schools so that pupils are supported well when they leave the centre.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The primary unit does not gather enough information about pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics from their mainstream schools. As a result, staff do not make sure that pupils practise them regularly enough to improve their progress further.
- The centre does not check that its work to reduce exclusions from mainstream schools is as effective as possible.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, three of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in both the units and in a mainstream school, and heard some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with members of the senior leadership team, a member of the management committee, and a representative of the local authority. Discussions were held with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Documentation covering teaching, pupils' progress, behaviour management and links with local mainstream schools was reviewed. A range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding, was also examined.
- There were insufficient responses to trigger any analysis through the Parent View website. Consequently, the views of parents and carers expressed in a recent questionnaire sent out by the school were taken into account.

## Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- South Derbyshire Support Centre is a pupil referral unit that works alongside several secondary schools and a number of primary schools in the southern area of Derbyshire. All the pupils on roll in the centre are dual-registered with their mainstream school.
- The centre opened in September 2011. It consists of two units, both of which were already pupil referral units. One unit is for primary pupils and is sited within a secondary school. It takes pupils on a part-time, fixed-term basis only. The second unit is for pupils in Key Stage 3. It is located a short drive away and is housed in an ex-school building. This unit takes both full-time and part-time placements.
- The centre provides an increasing amount of outreach support for its feeder mainstream schools.
- All pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium is above that generally found. This is extra money provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, from Forces families or in local authority care. However, due to the nature of the placements, the school only receives a small amount of this funding.
- The pupils are of White British origin and the vast majority are boys.
- The aim of the centre is to return pupils successfully to mainstream school as soon as possible. The primary unit is designed primarily to develop pupils' social and personal skills rather than their academic development.

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

- Improve primary pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills by:
  - collecting sufficient information on individuals' skills in these areas from their mainstream schools
  - increasing the opportunities provided for pupils to improve and practice these skills in the range of subjects and activities provided.
- Monitor and evaluate how well the centre's work contributes to reducing exclusions from the mainstream schools.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Pupils' attainment on entry is generally below average for their age. This is due to their difficulties in managing their behaviour which affects their learning.
- Pupils' progress is good. Most make progress at a faster rate than usually found. They catch up well and many leave the centre after two terms with standards broadly in line with national averages. The centre has a 100% success rate in returning pupils to their mainstream schools, which meets its prime aim.
- There are no variations in the progress rates of those who attend part-time or full-time. Similarly, the progress of different groups of pupils, such as those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who have statements of special educational needs and the very small number of girls is similar.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning improve due to the centre's strong focus on helping them to come to terms with their difficulties and concentrate on learning. Pupils' skills are assessed on entry to the centre, and at regular intervals until they return to mainstream. Teachers use this information to set demanding targets and work that help pupils to improve their skills and catch up.
- Pupils steadily develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills in the Key Stage 3 unit. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the staff skilfully engaged the pupils in creating 'nets' of a wide range of three dimensional shapes. The students clearly enjoyed this and participated fully in deciding how well they had done and how they could improve next time.
- Although the primary unit is mainly focused on developing the pupils' social and personal skills, pupils make good progress in reading and writing. Nevertheless, due to a lack of sufficient information on the pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills on entry, opportunities are lost to improve their attainment and progress further.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers, well supported by the other adults in the centre, are skilled at working with pupils who have previously not found learning easy. Pupils say that they like the staff, and appreciate their high expectations. Teachers expect pupils to do their best and pupils make good progress as a result.
- Teachers generally use information on pupils' attainment on entry and regular assessments to identify gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding. They plan lessons that will fill these gaps and help pupils to move forwards. However, the staff in the primary unit do not have as much detailed information on pupils' skills as they do in the Key Stage 3 unit. Consequently, opportunities are sometimes missed to further develop and improve the younger pupils' skills through all their activities.
- The very good ratio of staff to pupils enables every pupil to get help and support when they most need it. The adults who assist the teachers provide highly effective support. They work closely alongside teachers. They contribute to planning so that they know exactly what each pupil needs in order to behave well and learn.

- The teaching assistants also provide excellent support for pupils working in their mainstream schools. On one occasion in a mathematics lesson on fractions, for example, tactful and well-considered support helped a pupil to concentrate, persevere, behave well, and interact with other pupils. He clearly enjoyed the lesson and learned well.
- Staff use questioning skilfully to check on pupils' learning and to draw out and extend their knowledge and understanding further. Pupils' work is regularly marked, and encouraging comments on how to improve are usually given. Staff discuss pupils' work with them, and they often mark it together. This makes sure that the pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve further.
- Specialist teachers are employed for particular subjects, such as sport and science. Their good subject knowledge helps to ensure that lessons are interesting, enjoyable and that pupils remain focused on learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils make good progress in improving their behaviour and attitudes towards learning. They say that the staff look after them well and are very good at helping them to address personal difficulties, and to think through problems that arise before acting too hastily.
- Pupils arrive for lessons punctually, settle quickly, and do what is expected of them. As the majority of lessons interest them, they work diligently and at a good pace, showing positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average for all schools. Most students attend the centre far more regularly than they attended their mainstream school as they settle down and begin to enjoy learning. As a consequence, their attendance at their mainstream schools also improves.
- Disruptions in lessons are rare and pupils behave sensibly around both sites. No inappropriate language was heard during the inspection and records confirm this to be typical behaviour. In discussions with staff, they confirm that generally, pupils behave well.
- A behaviour checklist is used to record and track pupils' progress in all aspects of their social and personal development. Their efforts are rewarded as their behaviour improves. This encourages pupils to continue on this positive path in preparation for their return to full-time to mainstream.
- Pupils make good progress in learning how to remain safe and healthy. They know about different forms of bullying, and confirm that such incidents occur very rarely in the centre. Pupils stress that they work without any fear of harassment or intimidation.
- Incidents that are serious enough to require fixed-term exclusion are uncommon at the centre. The number of exclusions from the mainstream schools that the centre serves appears to have dropped since it opened fifteen months ago. However, this has not been confirmed by systematic checks.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The senior leaders are focused on making the centre a place where effective learning and positive personal development take place. They want pupils in danger of, or who have been

excluded to be successful, return to mainstream and continue to achieve well. This vision is clearly expressed by the widely-respected headteacher and is shared by all the staff and other leaders.

- All staff demonstrate high levels of commitment to the centre's work, to its improvement and to the pupils. They have high expectations that all pupils, irrespective of background or ability, have equal opportunities to be successful. The effectiveness of the centre since its opening, and the strong drive towards excellence indicates a good capacity for further improvement.
- Teachers' performance is monitored effectively. This happens through both formal observations and by the headteacher's more informal approach of spending as much time as possible around the centre and in classrooms. The headteacher knows the staff well. She uses information effectively from formal observations, pupils' progress and other sources to contribute to management decisions about teachers' pay and promotion.
- The centre knows its own strengths and weaknesses. It has developed an appropriate improvement plan with key priorities. However, the centre does not collect sufficient information on the effectiveness of its work in the mainstream schools, particularly in relation to whether the rate of exclusions is decreasing. This prevents a thorough review of this aspect of its work.
- At Key Stage 3, there is a clear focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, reading and writing. In addition, though, pupils receive a broad range of subjects and topics which they find interesting and enjoyable, and which support learning in other areas. For example, in a cookery lesson, pupils learned about healthy eating, safety and measuring, and also developed their writing skills.
- The budget, particularly the funding to support those on free school meals, is carefully used to provide resources and specialist teaching to interest the pupils and help them to learn more effectively. As a result, their attainment in these subjects has risen sharply. Specialist teachers with particular expertise teach various additional subjects, such as the arts, which also promote pupils' interest, skills and well-being.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is mostly good. For instance, they improve their self-worth and gain a more positive view of their futures. Their social skills and behaviour improve and they learn to interact maturely with their peers and adults.
- As the centre is relatively new, it has received considerable support from the local authority. This has been very effective, for example, in re-equipping and re-modelling the premises, and in providing training for the management committee. The local authority provides helpful guidance and support for the headteacher to fulfil her role, and supports the centre in checking on the quality of teaching and its analysis of pupils' achievement.
- The centre works closely with parents and other agencies; they give the centre their strong backing. Parents value the fact that the headteacher gives them direct support in helping to resolve any issues that might affect their children's education.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The management committee has undergone a wide range of training. This has helped ensure that all safeguarding and child protection aspects meet requirements. It has also developed the committee's ability to challenge and support the centre. Members regularly visit the centre, both formally and informally. They use this information to keep themselves fully aware of the quality of its work and to make sure that all pupils have every opportunity to do

equally as well as their mainstream peers. They check on this by reviewing the centre's achievement data. Through regular meetings with the headteacher, the management committee monitors the quality of teaching and makes sure that its improvement plays a crucial role in the pay progression of staff. The management committee has a good understanding of the budget. It monitors spending, including pupil premium funding, to make sure that it has a positive impact on raising standards and that any gaps in different pupils' achievement are closing.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131633
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402489

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

<b>Type of school</b>	PRU
<b>School category</b>	Pupil Referral Unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	16
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Whittell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01283 522889
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