

Hillingdon Tuition Centre

Providence Road, West Drayton, UB7 8HJ

Inspection dates 12–13 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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

- A dynamic and visionary headteacher, who is well supported by her staff, has brought about significant improvements to all aspects of the centre's work.
- Achievement is good. The skills of most students arriving at the centre are well below average for their age. This is because most have poor attendance records and negative attitudes towards education. Such attitudes change quickly. The centre has a strong record of reintegrating Key Stage 3 students into mainstream education and all Key Stage 4 students leave with a range of nationally recognised qualifications; some with GCSE passes in English and mathematics.
- Most teaching is good. Most lessons are planned well and students make good progress because the work is relevant. Their skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics improve considerably.
- Students behave well and their attendance rates frequently improve considerably. A safe and nurturing environment is provided in which students can develop their confidence and improve their work.
- Leadership and management are good. Leaders, including the management committee, have successfully addressed the issues arising from the last inspection. For example, a most effective system for monitoring progress and setting targets has been established. Such changes help to ensure all students make good progress and achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. This is because the pace of some lessons is slow and there is a tendency for some teachers to do the work for the students, thereby reducing the opportunities students have to work independently and solve problems for themselves.
- Some staff are inexperienced and require careful mentoring to ensure that lessons, and especially the subject content, are pitched at the level to engage and challenge the students.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in six lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Informal discussions were held with different groups of students and opportunities were created to hear students read.
- Discussions were held with staff, the chair of the management committee and the local authority. A number of partners and stakeholders were consulted by telephone.
- The inspector took account of five responses to the staff questionnaire and three responses received to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector scrutinised examples of students' past and present work and looked at various documents. These included the centre's self-evaluation and planning, arrangements for staff training, data on students' progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance, progression and safeguarding, including risk assessments.

Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The centre, which operates on two sites, caters for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It provides for students who have been permanently excluded from a mainstream school, or who are in danger of being permanently excluded. This latter group remain on the roll of their mainstream schools.
- Most students are from families of White British heritage and the large majority are boys.
- Most students have experienced considerable periods of time out of school and education. A small, but significant minority, have not attended school for considerable periods of time, sometimes exceeding an entire academic year.
- All students are supported at school action plus, though fewer than a quarter have a statement of special educational needs. About half are entitled to free school meals.
- An above average proportion of students are entitled to be supported by the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government) though, at present, such funding is not devolved to the centre. For dual-registered students, the funding is retained by the home school. For full-time eligible students, the funding is currently held centrally by the local authority. This arrangement is under review.
- The centre places an emphasis on returning Key Stage 3 students to mainstream schools. In Key Stage 4, the focus is on gaining nationally recognised qualifications, including GCSEs, so that the students can move on to further education, training or the world of work.
- Partnership work is a key feature of the centre's provision. Good quality and effective partnerships are maintained with many different bodies and organisations, including all secondary schools in the authority.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students receive some of their education off site at a local further education college.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further so that by the end of the current academic year, learning in all lessons is at least good:
 - by ensuring that students are given every opportunity to learn by working independently or collaboratively, rather than simply relying on their teachers to give them answers
 - by ensuring that students receive consistently effective advice through marking and other written feedback on their work, so that they are clear about their targets and what precisely they need to do to improve their work
 - by investigating with partner secondary schools, the scope that exists for specialist subject staff to mentor and coach some of the less experienced teachers working in the centre.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the centre with standards that are well below average. Though standards remain well below average by the end of Year 11, all groups, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, gain better qualifications than predicted when they had attended mainstream schools. Their progress and achievements are good.
- The longer students attend the centre, the faster their progress. Academic success and significant gains in confidence and personal skills provide a secure pathway preparing students well for returning to mainstream schools, or moving on to further education, training or work.
- Standards have risen well since the last inspection. In 2012, every leaver gained some form of examination success. A significant minority gained GCSE grades in English and/or mathematics, and a number enjoyed success in GCSE art.
- Secondary partner schools offered evidence to show that students reintegrating into mainstream education do so with better attitudes towards work and attendance. It is rare for a reintegrated student to return to the centre. The success enjoyed by the centre at Key Stage 4 is reflected in its high placement figures. In 2012, over 98% of those who left Year 11 had a place in education, training or employment.
- Much work is done to improve the students' skills in reading, writing, communication, mathematics and computing. Many students were heard reading aloud, with some girls reading extracts from *Of Mice and Men*, for example, with confidence and feeling. In a computing lesson, some boys were making good progress in their use and understanding of databases. They were also developing their skills in written English well, including their use of apostrophes. Exercise books also indicated good progress over time in a number of subjects.
- A small number of students in Year 11 spend part of their timetable studying off site. Their progress is good. The arrangements for checking their work, attendance, punctuality and behaviour are effective.
- Though the centre does not receive any additional government funding through the pupil premium, senior staff carefully check and monitor the progress of every student. There is no significant difference in the achievement of any particular groups of students.

The quality of teaching is good

- The positive relationships and respect that exist between staff and students are instrumental in raising students' confidence and in improving achievement. Overall, teaching is good and its impact is seen in the good progress that most students, at both sites, make during their time at the centre.
- The most effective teachers succeed in encouraging students to work positively and independently. They successfully encourage students to work and think for themselves. On the occasions where the quality of learning is less good, it is because some teachers talk too much and are inclined to provide the answers, as opposed to encouraging the students to work things out for themselves.
- Learning is frequently good because lessons are effectively planned, the work is challenging and engaging and teachers and teaching assistants support students sensitively. Good practice was clearly evident in a lively Year 11 lesson on the book *Of Mice and Men*. Each student had to analyse the personality traits of a key character. They were guided well in this activity, but had to work independently and develop their own portrait of a character. Learning was brisk and the lesson was clearly enjoyed by all.

- Some staff are relatively new to the profession and lack experience. The centre is small and there is usually only one member of staff teaching a particular subject. This makes it difficult to offer subject-specific mentoring to less experienced staff. Occasionally the pace and quality of learning slip because of a teacher's relative inexperience. The centre rightly acknowledges that its highly effective partnership work with secondary schools is not used to best advantage to provide mentoring for its less experienced teachers.
- A significant improvement since the last inspection has been in setting students targets and monitoring their progress against such targets. Students are now set targets in all subjects and the careful monitoring of the progress made against such targets is a key ingredient in the good progress that is now being recorded.
- The modelling of respectful relationships by teachers and other adults contributes well to the students' increasingly positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is managed very well and staff are skilled at diffusing tense situations.
- Though very few parents or carers contributed to the inspection questionnaire, those who did so believe that their child is well taught and is making good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The centre successfully meets the core aims of motivating students and re-engaging them with education. During their time at the centre, the attitudes and commitment of most students improve well. Students who freely admit to having past attitudes that 'stank', now produce good work, attend with greater regularity, are punctual and actually admit to enjoying their work.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the two sites is usually good. Staff place considerable emphasis on encouraging students to behave well, be polite, show respect and take pride in their achievements.
- There is a strong focus on acknowledging and rewarding success. For many of the students, being congratulated on an achievement or being told they have done something well is a new experience. The successful nurturing of the students' worthiness by the centre's staff contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students are encouraged to lead safe and healthy lives. Much work is undertaken on personal safety. There is a strong emphasis on eating healthily and on the dangers of alcohol and substance abuse.
- Students understand about different types of bullying such as cyber bullying, racist or homophobic name calling and know how to respond to such difficulties. Students feel safe and secure at both sites and their parents and carers agree. Students are protected well from the pressures of ordinary life and are helped to achieve in orderly surroundings. They express great confidence in their staff and know that if they are worried, or if something goes wrong, their staff will be on hand to help and offer support and encouragement.
- Many students had poor attendance records before joining the centre. Though a minority still struggle to attend regularly, most can now boast vastly improved attendance and better records for punctuality. Once they settle into the life of the centre, the attendance of the majority improves rapidly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's determination, commitment and vision for the centre have created a welcoming and a calm environment where the students can feel valued and can make progress. She is well supported by her senior team and all other members of staff.
- On arrival at the centre, all students are assessed in order to check their particular needs and arrange appropriate support. This ensures that all students are offered an equal chance to learn. Senior staff are careful to ensure that all students can access every activity that is available, thus ensuring that there is no discrimination.
- Outcomes have improved well since the last inspection. More subjects are now offered,

ensuring that students have a wider choice. This has been especially important in Key Stage 4, where a wider choice of work-related subjects has helped to boost interest in education, leading to better outcomes. Better target setting and improved methods of monitoring and tracking students' progress have also led to improvements so that outcomes are now good.

- A particularly notable feature of the centre's work is the quality of partnerships with local schools and external agencies, which make a strong contribution to students' progress and well-being.
- Procedures for managing teachers' performance are secure. Only those teachers who meet the required standards, as judged by the management committee, will be able to progress up the salary scale. Where teaching requires improvement, teachers receive additional coaching and help. This has led to improvements but providing specialist subject mentoring remains an issue and is something the centre is keen to pursue with its partner secondary schools.
- Self-evaluation is effective and has contributed well to improvements. A good development plan has been established and this too is helping to drive higher standards.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough, including the risk assessments for the occasions when students are working off site.
- The centre engages well with its parents and carers. Parental satisfaction is high and parents and carers view the service as being at least good.
- The working relationship with the local authority is good and this too has been a source of improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The management committee knows how well the centre is performing. Governors monitor its work, including the quality of teaching and learning, well. They rightly judge that it offers a good level of education and care to all students. They are fully aware of its successes, the improvements that have been made since the last inspection and where further improvements are required. Governors are fully aware of the performance management systems and the link between students' achievement and progression along the salary scale. The training they have received enables them to analyse outcomes, including examination results and the reintegration programme, well. Although additional funds through the pupil premium are not currently made available to the centre, other income flows and expenditure are appropriately monitored. The management committee is justifiably proud of the improvements made since the last inspection and the impact that the current headteacher has had.

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

Unique reference number	102366
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	404818

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	47
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Debbie Bell
Headteacher	Laurie Cornwell
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 October 2010
Telephone number	01895 447102
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