

# The Buckinghamshire Primary Pupil Referral Unit

Units1 and 2 Abbey Centre, Weedon Road, Aylesbury, HP19 9NS

**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They make excellent progress, despite many pupils having experienced periods of disruption to their learning. Gaps are being successfully closed between their levels of attainment and those of pupils nationally.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The forward-thinking executive headteacher has brought about significant improvements to all aspects of the unit's work. Furthermore, alongside senior leaders, he has successfully managed the move to new premises and a single organisation with minimum disruption to learning.
- Teaching results in excellent learning. Pupils thrive in lessons where teaching is based on an accurate understanding of their needs, and there is highly effective use of accurate assessment information.
- The curriculum provides highly positive, rich opportunities for learning.
- The unit works exceptionally well with parents and carers, and as a result, attendance is rapidly improving. Staff ensure that parents and carers are well informed and involved in decisions about their children's learning.
- Behaviour in classes and around the unit's sites is outstanding. Much time is given by staff to helping pupils develop their social skills and to have a better understanding about right and wrong. Consequently, pupils' self-esteem grows because they take part in school life much more effectively.
- The local authority and management committee are sharply focused on ensuring that the unit operates in the best interest of pupils. They ensure that it fully serves the needs of the local primary school community through the highly effective outreach service.
- All adults work superbly as a team so there is great consistency in managing behaviour, which promotes exceptionally well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was undertaken with half a day’s notice. The inspectors carried out five observations of teaching and learning across all of the unit’s sites. All of the observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team, other leaders and teachers, the chair and vice-chair of the management committee, and a representative of the local authority. They also held discussions with pupils and staff from mainstream school settings. Inspectors took account of the responses of parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the unit’s recent surveys of the views of parents and carers and staff from mainstream schools.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents including the unit’s self-evaluation and its plans for improvement, records relating to behaviour, attendance and pupils’ progress, the outcomes of external reports commissioned by the unit, and policies and procedures for protecting pupils and keeping them safe.
- The school closed early on day two of the inspection due to the severe weather conditions.

## Inspection team

Sonja Joseph, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Sheila Nolan

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The unit, which operates on three sites, caters for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It provides for pupils at risk of exclusion. All pupils are dual-registered and remain on the roll of their mainstream schools.
- Most pupils stay for around two-to-three terms and then return to mainstream education. Some go on to be educated in the more specialist provision of a special school.
- All pupils are considered to have special educational needs (school action plus) which are behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. A tenth have a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and the large majority are boys. A small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and/or speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) varies with the different groups at different times. At the time of the inspection, around one fifth of registered pupils were eligible.
- Outreach staff from the unit support pupils in mainstream schools who are at risk of exclusion or who are in transitional return to mainstream schools.
- The local authority managers oversee the work of the primary pupil referral unit within the authority. They also manage the use of pupil premium funding.
- There is no useful comparison with government floor standards in the work of this unit.
- In September 2011, the unit underwent amalgamation into one pupil referral unit from three separate primary units. An executive headteacher and three senior leaders were appointed at this time. The management committee was also amalgamated and a new one convened.

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

- Ensure that the outstanding progress of pupils is sustained through:
  - further defining the roles of subject leaders
  - checking that all the marking of pupils' work includes comments on what pupils need to do to improve so that they can reach the next level.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** is outstanding

- Pupils start at the unit at various times during the year and their academic standards vary significantly. Generally, they begin with basic skills that are lower than that expected of their age group. All groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those known to be entitled to the pupil premium, make outstanding progress. Consequently, pupils leave with standards that are much closer to the national average than when they started at the unit.
- All pupils increase their reading, spelling, writing and mathematics skills at a much faster rate than expected because teaching is well matched to their needs and abilities, and they receive individualised teaching.
- Pupils often leave the unit after just a few months with a marked increase in their average point scores (APS) above that expected of pupils nationally. This boosts their confidence and results in much-improved attitudes to school. Testimony to this success is that all of the pupils who left the school during the last year are settled back into mainstream or special schools.
- Pupils' reading skills are often weak when they join the school. The one-to-one support they receive ensures that they make excellent progress in reading. This is also the case for boys who had been reluctant readers in the past. They enjoy a wide range of books and their reading logs show them to be avid readers.
- The school fosters excellent relationships, and most successfully eliminates discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity. All, including those with a statement of special educational needs, are fully catered for by the outstanding curriculum, so all have equal opportunities to learn and achieve.

### **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress due to outstanding teaching.
- Assessment information from pupils' mainstream schools and teachers' excellent subject knowledge are used to enable staff to plan learning that is precisely matched to the needs of all pupils. For example, in a mixed Year 3/4 English lesson, pupils made exceptional progress because work was set at just the right level. Questioning was used skilfully by the class teacher to check each pupil's understanding throughout the lesson, and to draw out and extend their knowledge, so enabling all pupils to learn at a rapid pace.
- Short-term targets are used well to help individual pupils know how to be successful. Teaching successfully engages pupils in striving to improve their work. Targets concentrate on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy so that pupils can gain quickly in all areas of learning. Pupils successfully evaluate their own and each other's work against the planned learning targets.
- Teachers plan the work of teaching assistants in detail so that pupils receive the highest quality of support. On one occasion, in a mathematics task, for example, tactful and well-considered support helped a pupil to concentrate, persevere, behave well and interact with other pupils. He clearly enjoyed the activity and learned exceptionally well.
- Staff have high expectations of behaviour and they manage lessons very efficiently. Consequently, learning is not interrupted by minor disruptions. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent and high-quality interactions are commonplace. Behaviour management is so effective that, even when pupils arrived at a lesson during the inspection in an excited state, the teacher quickly refocused them.
- Staff seize every opportunity to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. They encourage pupils to use the specialist language of the subject and know how to spell key words and phrases.
- Staff provide very effective and clear verbal feedback on learning so that pupils know how well they are doing in relation to their work and behaviour. Work is marked regularly but written

comments from a few teachers do not always make clear what pupils need to do to improve their work in order to achieve the next level.

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

- Behaviour is outstanding throughout the unit because of the high levels of supervision and the skills of adults in defusing potentially difficult situations.
- The behaviour of pupils in classes is outstanding because lessons thoroughly interest and engage pupils in learning.
- Behaviour improves dramatically throughout pupils' time at the unit because staff are consistent in the way they teach pupils how to behave. Pupils learn what good behaviour actually means. As one pupil reported, 'I know I can behave better here!'
- Mainstream schools report that these positive changes in behaviour are long-lasting. Schools praise the efforts of the unit's outreach team in helping them to devise strategies to manage difficult behaviour in their schools. The local authority greatly appreciates this and all other aspects of the work of the unit because of the impact it has on reducing exclusions.
- Pupils say they feel very safe here. Pupils know that bullying will be tackled swiftly. They understand the different forms that bullying can take, including that related to the internet. Staff take their responsibility to tackle all forms of bullying and promote respect for individuals very seriously. Behavioural logs show incidents are reducing because staff respond quickly and follow clear procedures when they arise. Pupils are helped to realise the impact that their actions have on others through their understanding of the 'rights and responsibilities' curriculum.
- Pupils' attendance typically improves rapidly during their time at the unit. For some pupils, the different learning environment gives them the confidence to change their attendance habits dramatically, from being a school refuser to being present in the unit every day.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The executive headteacher has demonstrated outstanding leadership in expanding provision and establishing the high expectations and common practices that are in place across the three provisions that form the primary pupil referral unit. This has ensured excellent outcomes for pupils who all move on to the most appropriate placement for their individual needs.
- Very thorough self-analysis systems that involve all leaders and managers have resulted in clear, meaningful targets for improvement. The school improvement plan correctly identifies how subject leaders need to develop their management skills even further.
- All school leaders are very successful in ensuring that policies and procedures are applied consistently by all staff. Consequently, the unit has evolved very quickly from three separate pupil referral units into a unified organisation with shared practice, ideals and ambitions.
- Leaders and managers constantly encourage and challenge teachers through performance management systems that include ensuring teachers reach expected national standards. Targeted staff training has been very influential in this respect. Leaders have raised the quality of teaching significantly by recruiting skilled practitioners and by improving the performance of some existing teachers. Teachers are only given increases in salary if they demonstrate that pupils are doing well.
- The outstanding curriculum provides excellent opportunities for pupils to catch up with their peers in mainstream, particularly in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and reading. The curriculum is enhanced by a great range of indoor and outdoor activities, such as gardening and cooking, as well as themed whole-school events, for example 'USA week' and 'Black History month', that widen pupils' views of the world and promote their excellent social, moral and cultural development. The use of alternative provision to provide pupils and parents opportunities to work with horses enhances the pupils' experiences.

- Excellent relationships with medical staff, 'home' schools, other outside agencies and the use of parent support advisers encourages close liaison between all of those involved in supporting pupils and their families to ensure a real 'team around the child' approach is in place.
- The local authority has provided highly effective support in assisting senior staff to combine these three units into one.
- Safeguarding and tackling discrimination are high priorities and practices meet current statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is outstanding because the local authority and management committee rigorously support and challenge the work of the unit, and have ensured that the new leaders and managers of the unit are right for the job. The management committee has undergone a wide range of training. This has ensured that all safeguarding and child protection aspects meet requirements. Management committee members regularly visit the unit, both formally and informally. They are fully aware of the quality of its work and make sure that all pupils have every opportunity to do equally as well as their mainstream peers. They check the pupils' achievement data and monitor the quality of teaching so that they can play a crucial role in the pay progression of staff. The management committee has a good understanding of the budget. It monitors spending to make sure that it has a positive impact on raising standards and that any gaps in different pupils' achievement are closing. Additional funds through the pupil premium are not currently made available to the unit.
-

## 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>	136684
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	400281

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	40
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Marion Clayton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stuart Cateridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	
<b>Telephone number</b>	01296 387300
<b>Fax number</b>	01296 339125
<b>Email address</b>	scateridge@buckscc.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

