

Victoria Drive Primary Pupil Referral Unit

78 Victoria Drive, London, SW19 6HR

Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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

- Excellent teaching and outstanding progress have been maintained because of the drive of senior leaders and the management committee to ensure that the quality of teaching continually improves.
- Pupils make outstanding progress across the school, particularly in the key skills of reading, writing and mathematics. They apply what they have learned in these subjects in all lessons.
- Teaching is outstanding because teachers get to know the pupils very well and plan work that is exceptionally well matched to their learning needs, interests and emotional states.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe because of the excellent care and support they receive at the unit. They are polite and considerate of others around the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the unit and their attendance is excellent.
- The curriculum provides highly positive, rich opportunities for learning.
- Partnership work with other schools, health staff and the local authority is outstanding. This means that many more pupils than those on site benefit from the expertise of staff.
- Partnership with parents, carers and families is outstanding and parents and carers say that they have been helped immeasurably by staff.
- The headteacher is highly effective in raising the achievement of pupils by constantly improving teaching and directing the work of the unit. This has resulted in pupils learning at a rapid rate.
- The management committee focuses closely on the needs of the unit. Members have asked searching questions and monitored the progress of pupils closely.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons and parts of lessons, approximately one third of which were jointly observed by senior leaders.
- Meetings and telephone conversations were held with staff and feeder schools, as well as with officers from the local authority, members of the management committee, pupils and the family therapist.
- The work of the school was observed and a number of documents were looked at, including the school's monitoring records, self-evaluation, data about pupils' progress, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, the school improvement plan and records of management committee meetings.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to give any information. However, the inspector spoke to two parents or carers in person. The inspector took account of the school's own surveys of the views of parents, carers and pupils, as well as questionnaires filled in by staff.

Inspection team

Sonja Joseph, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Victoria Drive is a small primary pupil referral unit, which 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.
- All pupils are considered to have special educational needs (school action plus) which are behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.
- Most pupils attend sessions, in the morning or afternoon, 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.
- Most pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and the large majority are boys. A few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government 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 two thirds of registered pupils were eligible. There are currently no pupils in local authority care or pupils from service families. However these additional funds are not made available to the unit.
- Staff from the unit provide training for staff and support for pupils in mainstream schools who are at risk of exclusion or who are in transitional return to mainstream schools.
- The management committee has recently been restructured and is responsible for other pupil referral units across the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the information collected on pupils' progress by producing reports that summarise the progress of different groups so that it is easier to see the progress of different groups.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- This whole-school focus on progress and achievement means that all pupils increase their reading, spelling, writing and mathematics skills at a much faster rate than expected nationally and make excellent progress because teaching is well matched to their needs and abilities.
- Reading is widely promoted in all subjects. Teaching includes, for younger pupils, the use of phonic strategies (sounds that letters make) for working out unfamiliar words, and attainment is high.
- Pupils' strong reading also supports their wider learning across the whole range of subjects. Daily opportunities to work closely with a teacher give pupils plenty of chances to practise their speaking and listening skills and, as a result, make outstanding progress. For instance, in a Key Stage 1 English lesson, younger pupils improved their language skills exceptionally well in describing how events were linked in their retelling of a fairy tale. In addition, there was a sharp focus on improving pupils' social skills, through taking turns and listening to one another.
- Progress in writing is accelerated because teachers keep a very close eye on how well pupils are doing on a daily basis and every opportunity is taken for pupils to apply the skills they have learned, for example, when writing letters of protest to the queen over the use of children as soldiers in war-torn countries.
- The unit uses data from schools on the prior attainment of pupils but also does its own testing when pupils start. This means that individual starting points for teaching and learning are known and used to ensure that high-quality teaching supports outstanding progress from individual starting points. Detailed tracking of this progress means that when they return to school pupils take with them a very clear statement of their strong progress and achievement.
- There are no significant differences in the rates of progress made by boys or girls, different ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language and all those eligible for pupil premium funding. In each case the school helps these pupils to leave the unit with a marked increase in their average point scores (a method of measuring attainment) so that the gaps between their attainment and that of their classmates are closing. This ensures equality of opportunity for all.
- Although there are currently no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, there was clear evidence from curriculum resources that provision for this age group is just as strong.
- Parents, carers and feeder schools strongly agree that the pupils make outstanding progress in the unit.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The high quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection confirms the judgements of the school's senior leaders. The high percentage of outstanding teaching, particularly in literacy and numeracy, has been maintained each year since the last inspection.
- Teachers' excellent subject knowledge ensures that they plan activities that interest, motivate and engage the pupils across all subjects. Pupils are inspired when they take on the role of war-time evacuees.
- Highly effective use is made of the stimulating learning environment at the unit where pupils are able to transfer the skills they have learnt indoors to the outdoor classroom which makes learning come alive. For example, pupils develop their understanding of money through costing and buying tools to use in the garden area. Scientific skills are promoted well through practical experiences such as planting and growing flowers, enabling pupils to understand how pollination occurs.
- At the start of lessons, teachers routinely recap on previous learning and make sure pupils understand what is expected of them by the end. Teachers use questioning very effectively to systematically check understanding as the lesson proceeds. They modify their plans skilfully in

line with this information to ensure that each pupil is achieving very well at all times. For example, in a history lesson a pupil was challenged to research further so that he could add detail to his answer.

- Teaching through the excellent use of topics sparkles and enthuses pupils to learn. For example, in a project on the Second World War pupils researched and designed their own air raid shelters. In another lesson, learning about the Vikings, pupils made their own longboats and Viking coins. Such techniques totally absorbed each pupil in the classroom and consequently all made excellent progress.
- Relationships between staff and pupils in the small groups are consistently strong. Pupils say that their teachers are very helpful, and always listen if they have a problem. As one pupil said, 'If you're in trouble with your work, they help you out of it.'
- Teaching assistants are very well deployed in lessons, and there is excellent teamwork with teachers, which demonstrates clearly to the pupils the benefits of collaborative effort.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. Pupils are almost always happy and relaxed and see the school as a safe and friendly haven. Senior leaders and staff provide very strong role models for the pupils in their empathetic approach in dealing with pupils who are becoming discouraged or anxious. Parents and carers speak often of their gratitude to the staff for helping them to restore order in their family lives and for 'turning my child's life around'.
- Although behavioural incidents are rare, there are a handful of pupils who find it especially difficult to settle into learning and school life. For these pupils, the school, alongside parents, carers and health staff, arranges very effective and detailed individual plans and strategies. Staff, well trained in defusing difficult situations, carry these plans out consistently and ensure that learning goes forward for everyone. As a result, the very few incidents are resolved quickly and classrooms are quiet and harmonious places.
- Relationships are outstanding and this is reflected in the pupils' excellent attitudes to their learning. Once settled at the centre, students take increased responsibility for their own behaviour, which supports their drive to make both social and academic progress. The change in self-esteem and confidence of pupils enables some to support their classmates in their mainstream schools.
- Pupils know that there are different kinds of bullying, including homophobic and cyber bullying and talked enthusiastically about work they had done in school on accepting differences in people and families. Pupils confirm that there is no bullying or harassment and that all staff would respond quickly should they need it.
- Almost all pupils attend exceptionally well because the school has trained staff who collect pupils from home and their feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition into their classes in 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 for every session.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's relentless drive and ambition, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, have led to continuing and sustained improvement, building further on the strengths identified at the previous inspection. The vision of supporting pupils to succeed in any school is shared by all. The work of the staff in the local authority to support pupils in mainstream schools is very extensive and highly successful.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher use performance management extremely well to develop teaching skills. They have an excellent understanding of the quality of teaching and use

lesson observations to identify high-quality practice and to strengthen it even further. Immediate action is taken to deal with any areas identified for improvement. High-quality staff training has led to outstanding achievement and excellent teaching taking place on a daily basis.

- The unit leaders check its work thoroughly and have an accurate understanding of what works well and what needs further development. Decisive actions result from this exercise and they significantly benefit all pupils. Leaders rightly recognise that they need to present summary information of the progress of different groups of pupils so that it is easier to check.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted through an outstanding curriculum which offers a range of rich experiences including visitors, trips and themed whole-school events. Leaders ensure that all groups of pupils have an equal chance to succeed. The unit does not tolerate any form of discrimination. Well-planned lessons enable pupils to learn about different lifestyles and beliefs, to share ideas and value the opinions of others.
- Excellent partnerships exist with parents and carers, feeder schools and a range of specialists and agencies. Input from the family therapist, CAMHS and the clinical psychologist is fundamental in supporting pupils and their families while they are at the unit. As one parent or carer commented, 'They go the extra mile' to support those going through a crisis for medical or psychological reasons. This ensures a real 'team around the child' approach.
- The local authority knows the school well and has high regard for its success in supporting pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school benefits from its effective support, particularly in its work to further improve the use of data.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management has reconstituted recently and now meets the needs of the unit even better. It contributes well to the leadership of the school because each member has expert knowledge, which they bring to bear on the improvement of the unit. This means that members are able to support the school well and ask searching questions of its leaders about its work. Members have a very clear picture of what is happening in school in terms of the quality of teaching and pupils' performance compared with all schools nationally. They fully understand the link between teachers' performance and their pay and any teacher who does not perform well is not allowed to move up the pay scale. The management committee together with the headteacher manage the budget effectively. Members have undertaken a wide range of training. This has ensured that all safeguarding and child protection aspects meet requirements.

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	132077
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	403820

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	65
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Sarah McDermott
Headteacher	Trish Press
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2010
Telephone number	020 87802360
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