

The Orchard Centre (Home and Hospital PRU)

Great Brickkiln Street, Wolverhampton, WV3 0PR

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress, despite the often exceptional difficulties they face.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. For many the centre is a lifeline and helps to develop their personal, emotional and social development excellently.
- The pupil referral unit provides very effective therapeutic support for pupils to help them come to terms with emotional and psychological issues and this puts them in a much better place to learn.
- Teaching is good. There are some examples of outstanding teaching, although this is not yet widespread enough across the centre.
- Parents value the service and for many it is a source of hope, that their child will be able to face the world confidently.
- The leadership and management of the centre are good at all levels. It is a complex service, but it runs smoothly and pupils' needs are paramount.
- Leaders including the management committee know the strengths of the centre and where it needs to improve. The new facilities are intended to extend and share more widely current good practice.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength. This does much to broaden and enrich pupils' experiences.
- The hospital education provision is outstanding as teaching is skilfully balanced with the medical needs of pupils.
- The centre works exceptionally well with a wide range of other professionals to the benefit of pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not always matched closely enough to pupils' different levels of abilities.
- Pupils' learning is sometimes too passive and at times there is too much talking by teachers.
- Questioning is too superficial and does not cause pupils to think hard enough.
- On occasions, lessons are mundane and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to carry out practical tasks or solve problems to make learning more interesting.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 10 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher/senior leaders.
- Aspects of the home tuition service were visited, as was the hospital education provision.
- Discussions were held with the chair of the management committee, senior leaders of the school and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of parents' responses from the school's own survey and met with a group of parents. There were no comments made on the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team looked at a range of school documentation including the school's data on pupils' progress, its self-evaluation, development plans and information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Frank Price, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joseph Skivington

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher leads and manages three pupil referral units which are federated and all share the same management committee.
- The centre educates pupils who are socially, emotionally and psychologically vulnerable. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, but most are of White British origin.
- The centre also provides a substantial home tuition service and hospital education service. Numbers fluctuate on a daily basis for the hospital provision.
- The proportion of students for whom the centre receives pupil premium funding (additional funding allocated by the government for certain groups of pupils, in this case, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and who are looked after by the local authority) is average, although the centre only receives this funding for pupils who stay longer than three months. No Year 7 pupils were eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The centre is due to re-locate to purpose-built accommodation in July 2013, which will bring services together on one site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so more pupils make outstanding academic progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers match their work more closely to different pupils' abilities
 - making learning active and interesting through the use of more practical and problem-solving activities
 - using questioning more incisively to extend pupils' thinking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress while they are at the centre, receiving home tuition or in the hospital. Pupils join the centre at various times in their school career. A number of students start in Year 11 and this gives them limited time to catch up. However, given their often low starting points, due to previous disrupted schooling and the relatively short time at the centre, they make good progress over this time span.
- Pupils' achievement in GCSEs is mixed. This is because many pupils find their levels of anxiety prevent them taking or performing well under examination conditions. The centre does not enter pupils early for examinations, as they need as much time as possible to achieve. Where pupils are able to complete modules for coursework, then they are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding more effectively.
- Over the last twelve months the centre has increased the targets it sets for pupils to make work more challenging and this is beginning to accelerate the progress of pupils, as expectations of pupils' abilities are raised.
- The centre has recognised the importance of improving pupils' literacy skills and there has been a strong focus on driving up reading and spelling ages, through specific programmes. This has been very effective and has resulted in pupils developing more confidence in their speaking, listening, reading and written skills. In English one pupil had made good progress in his spelling through the use of real objects, such as a variety of tools, and then was required to spell these words out. This not only enlivened learning, but also helped him to retain spelling more effectively.
- An indication of the success of the work of the centre is enabling pupils, for whom it is appropriate, to return to their mainstream school. The use of dual placements between the centre and schools enable pupils to maintain a close link with their original school and helps them settle back into school more easily.
- In mathematics, learning is sometimes too mundane, requiring pupils to work through a series of tasks, rather than using problem-solving activities, where they could apply their learning to real-life situations.
- All pupils, regardless of their background, gender or type of need, achieve equally well. Those pupils who receive the pupil premium have had additional support to help them with emotional and psychological difficulties as well as extra help with literacy. These actions have helped to improve pupils' mental health, attendance and confidence in literacy. It has helped to close the gap on achievements between themselves and other pupils in the centre.
- Pupils who are admitted to the hospital education service are assessed quickly and accurately and receive education on the ward or in the classroom as early as their first day of admission. The swift gathering of information from their initial school helps pupils to maintain their education and be able to return to school not having missed too much work.

The quality of teaching is good

- Where teaching is outstanding, it makes excellent use of practical activities to enliven learning. In a science lesson, pupils were highly engaged in finding out how the flight of a pterodactyl dinosaur was affected by the length of its neck and carried out experimental flights to test out their theories. Effective questioning caused pupils to make hypothesis and to think hard.
- Teaching is outstanding in the hospital education provision. Staff are quick to set up positive relationships with pupils, to put them at their ease. Pupils' level of learning is quickly established by gathering relevant information from the pupil's school. Staff are extremely flexible in their approach and work around medical procedures. Technology is being used increasingly so that effective learning can take place at the bedside. In one session a pupil who was unable to write due to a fractured arm recorded her views on a dictaphone.
- Where teaching is weaker, this is because work is not tailored sharply enough to the wide range of abilities in a group. At times, questioning is too superficial and does not require pupils to think more deeply and give fuller answers. Although teachers know pupils' preferred learning styles, not enough use is made of practical activities in some lessons.
- Following whole-school training, arising from the performance management system, teachers have become very skilled at using assessment to improve pupils' learning. Pupils are assessed when they enter the centre and this information is used to establish targets for pupils. They know their targets as they are contained in their work books and personal planners. At the end of lessons teachers check pupils' learning and in the best examples this allows pupils to demonstrate what they have learned in the lesson.
- Staff are superb at establishing excellent relationships with pupils. They are empathetic, but not soft. Pupils respond well to the warm and supportive relationships and this enables many of them to develop their self-confidence. One pupil commented that the staff had, 'done wonders for me'.
- Home tutors are very skilled in teaching pupils who are not yet ready to attend the centre or return back to school. They teach in a variety of settings, including pupils' homes or other suitable venues.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour and safety in lessons and around the centre are outstanding. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcome visitors. They say they feel safe and well cared for. This secure and positive environment does much to help pupils blossom. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils improves exceptionally well.
- Many pupils have a history of poor attendance at previous schools, but over time their attendance vastly improves. The centre does all it can to improve pupils' attendance including where needed, issuing penalty notices. A few, because of the severity of their emotional and mental health or serious medical illness, do not achieve the same high attendance rates, but they all have attendance targets to work towards.
- Lunchtimes can be difficult times for some pupils who have issues with eating, but the centre provides various options where pupils can choose to spend lunchtimes. The development of a cycle and skateboard track for use at lunchtimes has proved to be extremely popular and pupils

enjoy using this area for exercise and socialising.

- Pupils feel safe from all types of bullying. The school strongly and consistently stresses anti-bullying messages for pupils and as a result pupils have a good understanding of bullying, particularly cyber-bullying. They know what course of action to take should they experience bullying.
- The student council is an active body. It elects its members and provides suggestions as to how the centre can be improved. As a result pupils feel a strong ownership and affection for their centre and many are sad to leave at the end of Year 11.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well. There are numerous visits to places of cultural and religious interest and the staff and pupils combine to create a positive and harmonious atmosphere.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher gives very effective leadership and management of a complex organisation, providing education for pupils in a variety of settings, including two other pupil referral units. The headteacher has been keen to exploit the sharing of expertise and best practice across the other establishments. For example, common systems for pupils' assessment are shared and teachers have opportunities to pool their skills and learn from each other.
- The senior leaders have the confidence of staff, parents, pupils and the local authority. Parents particularly value the work of the centre. One parent commented, 'The staff are brilliant and helpful.' One pupil stated 'staff give you the opportunity to catch-up on work.'
- Since the last inspection there has been a greater delegation of leadership and management tasks to a larger group of senior and middle leaders. This has been beneficial in terms of developing their expertise and providing more extensive checking of the work of the centre.
- The local authority has offered excellent support for the centre. It has provided termly visits and advice to help to improve teaching and give the management committee helpful information on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The pupil premium has been spent appropriately on programmes and activities for eligible pupils. This money has been effectively used and has resulted in improvements to pupils' emotional and social development.
- The performance of teachers is closely monitored by a range of senior leaders. This process has identified areas for improvement, for example whole-school training has been undertaken on how to make best use of assessment for pupils' learning. There is a suitable link between performance and pay.
- The centre provides a rich range of subjects and experiences for pupils, which meets the diverse range of needs of pupils very effectively. For example, a trip to London requested by the school council was made possible by the centre.
- The centre works outstandingly well with a wide range of other people, such as health professionals, social services and schools, to ensure that the needs of pupils are met effectively and that hindrances to their learning can be minimised.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The management committee is knowledgeable and well informed through direct visits to all the different aspects of the work of the centre. This includes visits to check the quality of the service provided in both home tuition and the hospital. Members know about the quality of the teaching through both internal and external reports and through their visits. They have provided clear strategic development and worked closely with the local authority on the development of the new facilities. They have ensured a suitable link between salary of staff and their performance. Where teaching has required improvement they have ensured improvements have taken place. They check that pupils are achieving well by focusing on individual case studies, but also know that pupils achieve favourably when compared to similar settings. They know how the pupil premium has been spent and the difference it has made to pupils to enable them to make up lost ground. The management committee has received training with regard to safeguarding and performance management of staff.

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	104288
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	403773

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The Local Authority
Chair	Tim Gallagher
Headteacher	Joanne M Wood
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2009
Telephone number	01902 555947
Fax number	01902 558858
Email address	jowood@wolverhamtoncyp.org.uk

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