

# St Edmund's House

Ray Mill Road East, Maidenhead, SL6 8SB

**Inspection dates** 4–5 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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 because:

- Most students make good progress in developing English and mathematical skills which leads to them achieving GCSE accreditation.
- The rate of students' progress has increased markedly since the previous inspection. Students successfully follow a wider range of GCSE subjects and have increased opportunities to gain vocational qualifications.
- Teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers know their students' abilities and interests well, and effectively adapt work to meet individual learning needs.
- Students are well cared for. They feel safe and secure in the PRU and in outside placements. Parents and carers confirm this.
- The staff manage behaviour skilfully, and students respond well. They generally develop positive attitudes to learning and have good relations with staff and other students. The attendance of most students is at average levels, although the attendance of a minority is far below average.
- The headteacher and teacher in charge lead the PRU effectively. They are well supported and consistently challenged by the local authority strategic support group to provide the best for the students. The senior team has rigorously monitored and improved on teaching standards since the previous inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to enable outstanding achievement.
- There are occasional inconsistencies in the way students' progress is tracked and measured. This means that individual students' learning targets are sometimes not sufficiently focused and relevant, and this can slow down their progress.
- The attendance of a few students is poor and this affects their rate of progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four lessons, three of which were joint observations with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with teachers, support staff, senior leaders and the chair of the local authority strategic support group.
- The inspector took into account the PRU's survey of parent opinion in which five parents took part. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent view) to be considered. The inspector also looked at the 10 completed staff questionnaires.
- The PRU's work was observed, although most students were absent due to exam timetabling. The inspector looked at a range of students' work, teachers' planning, and assessment and performance data. Records of students' behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and well-being were scrutinised as well as monitoring reports on the quality of teaching and the curriculum.

## Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The PRU provides full-time education for pupils in Years 7 to 11 who have been permanently excluded from school. A very large majority are in Years 10 and 11. There are very few girls. A few pupils are placed on a temporary basis at the PRU and remain on the roll of their mainstream school.
- The pupils have behavioural, social or emotional needs. Almost all are from a White British background. A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A small proportion of pupils are entitled to pupil premium funding, which is provided for pupils who are eligible for free school meals, are in local authority care or the children of service families.
- The headteacher also leads another primary-age PRU in the local authority. She is responsible for the overall management of the PRU together with the 'teacher-in-charge'.
- Students follow courses which are accredited and delivered off-site by other providers such as a local college.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring consistency in the monitoring and tracking of students' progress so that work is set at the right level of difficulty
  - providing consistency in the creation of focused and challenging targets to accelerate the pace of learning.
- Improve attendance levels for a minority of students by:
  - ensuring the students are motivated to attend better by a curriculum which is always tailored to their abilities and interests
  - strengthening support to students and their families.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students almost always enter the PRU with low standards of attainment. This is because they have had sometimes considerable periods out of previous schools due to poor attendance, exclusion or personal circumstances and difficulties. Most students enter the provision in Years 10 and 11, often with relatively little time left in which to gain qualifications.
- From these low starting points, the students in most cases make good progress. Almost every student gains GCSEs, albeit at lower grades, in English and mathematics, and in a small number of other subjects. The number of GCSE passes and improved grade levels has increased steadily since the previous inspection. Inconsistencies in the procedures for the regular tracking of students' progress have, however, slowed the rate of improvement.
- Students are able to choose from a growing range of vocational courses, the great majority of which are delivered off-site by other providers. Most students achieve appropriate qualifications in these subjects, such as City and Guilds, BTEC and NVQ accreditation. The students also apply their growing literacy and numeracy skills effectively while following these courses. As a result of their success, the students are motivated to continue their education, and almost every student goes on to a college course or into training when they leave the PRU in Year 11.
- The majority of younger students in Years 7–9 are successful in reintegrating into mainstream schools because they have made substantial academic progress while at the PRU, combined with good development of their personal skills.
- There are no differences in the performance of different groups, including those eligible for pupil premium support. The very small minority of students at the early stages of learning English make good progress due to effective teaching and a very high level of support. The PRU has used pupil premium funding successfully to strengthen outdoor education courses to promote the self-confidence and motivation of the students. The PRU has a strong commitment to the equal opportunities of all students and there is no discrimination.
- Students overwhelmingly make good progress in improving their attitudes to education and study because they are well taught and given a high level of individual support. As a result, the students' growing self-confidence motivates them to apply themselves effectively, to re-engage with education and, in most cases, to continue this in further education courses.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has consistently improved since the previous inspection. This is because of robust monitoring by senior leaders, accompanied by regular, relevant training for all staff. As a result, teaching is good overall with occasionally outstanding practice.
- Teachers accommodate well to the unresponsive attitudes and lack of self-esteem which many students display on entry to the PRU. They adapt resources and activities well to match students' abilities and needs, and usually inspire them to believe they can succeed. This has a significant impact on their motivation and results in the good progress which many students make. Most students, including those eligible for the pupil premium, become interested and engaged in learning.
- Adults provide a very high level of individual tuition and support for students. Lessons are conducted with very small groups, and often with one student. Teachers maintain good relationships with students and they are skilled in making small adaptations to activities to meet the students' ongoing learning needs. They have high expectations of their students' success and this gives the students the confidence to try hard and make occasional mistakes.
- The teachers are specialists in their subject. They plan interesting and well-paced lessons, and use questions effectively to reinforce learning and stretch students further. This was seen, for example, in a Year 10 design technology lesson where the student was asked to make a load-bearing structure from cardboard. By skilful questioning, the teacher successfully encouraged

the student to find his own solutions to problems and to make a structure which worked well.

- The high levels of individual attention enable teachers effectively and consistently to show students how to improve their work. Students' work is marked in detail, and written comments supplement the feedback from teachers to students on how well they are making progress and what to do to make their work better.
- The assessment of students' progress through marking and oral questions is good. Teachers know their students well. On some occasions, the students' progress is not recorded often enough or consistently. On these occasions, assessment data are not used effectively enough in providing specific and focused targets, and this can slow down the pace of learning.

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

- Students respond positively to the excellent support and individual attention they receive, and they have generally good attitudes to their learning. This is a significant improvement when compared to the difficulties they have had in the past and with which many students continue to struggle.
- Students' behaviour is generally good. After a rise in exclusions at the beginning of the year as several new students entered the provision, this exclusion rate has diminished considerably and there was none in the previous term. Records show that students make good progress in taking responsibility for their own behaviour. They develop tolerance and friendships with other students and with staff.
- Students, and their parents and carers, are confident that they are in a safe environment and that their behaviour has significantly improved. There are high standards of care and safeguarding at the various outside placements and courses. The boundaries of acceptable behaviour are made very clear and the students respond well to the high expectations of their conduct. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness develops well. The PRU is a positive and harmonious place of learning.
- The PRU manages behaviour effectively. Staff are well trained in de-escalation techniques, and policies are consistently applied. There is an effective system of rewards and sanctions which students understand clearly and subscribe to. Students, where appropriate, have comprehensive risk assessments and detailed behaviour plans to support their progress. Personal, health and social education is an important aspect of the curriculum and makes a good contribution to the students' personal development and well-being. There has been no recorded bullying or incidents of racist behaviour for several years.
- Students' attendance improves significantly when they enter the provision. Most students attend regularly, although a minority continue to have high absence rates. The PRU works strenuously with a range of professional outside agencies to support these students and their families but their low attendance has a negative impact on their achievement.

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

- The headteacher and teacher-in-charge lead the school successfully. Together with the small, committed staff, they have demonstrated their determination to raise standards of students' progress, behaviour and self-esteem, and this has driven the PRU's continuing improvement.
- There are good systems to monitor students' progress in monthly review meetings. PRU leaders and the local authority are aware that assessment and target-setting procedures could be improved further.
- Senior staff have established robust monitoring procedures. The PRU evaluates its own performance rigorously and benefits from a strong relationship with the local authority which provides close monitoring and support. Teaching standards and the rate and scope of students' progress have improved since the previous inspection. The improvements already made show there is a good capacity to maintain this upward trend.
- The performance of teachers is well managed. Teachers are regularly observed in classrooms

and regular review of their performance helps to maintain improvement while supporting staff through further mentoring and training. There are a few areas for improvement remaining, such as the inconsistency in tracking procedures. Teachers' performance is linked appropriately to salary progression and levels of responsibility, and any underperformance is tackled robustly.

- The curriculum is well organised. Younger pupils in most cases are able to return in time to mainstream schools because they follow a mainstream curriculum. Older students benefit from the emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills, which are well taught and lead to GCSE qualifications. A strength is in the continuing expansion of vocational, leisure and community-based courses, usually taught off-site by outside providers. Their work is effectively monitored.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 follow tailored programmes which are well linked to their interests and career aspirations. A small minority with poor attendance have proved resistant to these curriculum choices and the PRU is striving to establish an even greater variety of options to motivate these hard-to-reach students.
- There are positive relations with parents and carers, who express satisfaction with the PRU's teaching and standards of care. One parent commented typically, 'This school has been a lifesaver for my daughter and myself.'
- Safeguarding arrangements are excellent and fully meet statutory requirements. The PRU takes reasonable steps to ensure behaviour and safety when students attend off-site provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the local authority strategic support group, which acts as the Management Committee, are well informed about students' progress, including school performance data, and the management of the performance of teachers. They are fully involved in how good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance tackled. Members maintain supervision of pupil premium funding and regularly check the impact on the students' progress and well-being. The strategy group are fully involved in the school's self review, target-setting and monitoring processes. Nominated members are well informed, for instance, about health and safety matters and the safeguarding of students.

## 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>	131596
<b>Local authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	402486

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Pupil Referral Unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<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>	Michael Rosen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandy Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 December 2009
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