

Summerfield Education Centre

Brackleys Way, Solihull, B92 8QE

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Some students in Years 7 to 11 are not progressing rapidly from their starting points and are not doing as well as they could in GCSE subjects.
- A significant number of students are not attending regularly enough to achieve well.
- Not enough teaching is good. Teachers do not always match learning tasks to the different abilities of their students. As a result some students find the work too easy and other find it too hard.
- Students are not always told how to improve their work when their books are marked.
- The pace of learning in lessons sometimes slips, and this leads to disruptive behaviour.
- Proposals for strengthening the leadership team have not yet been implemented.
- The plans to improve the systems for tracking and recording students' progress have yet to be implemented.
- A few pupils are inappropriately placed at this pupil referral unit (PRU) and this affects their achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The majority of students are making good progress from the time they enter the PRU.
- Exclusion rates have reduced by 50% in the last year and attendance is steadily rising.
- Artwork is good in Key Stage 3.
- Students feel safe and most are improving their behaviour.
- The headteacher is providing strong leadership and a clear sense of direction with good support from the local authority and management committee. As a result the quality of teaching is steadily rising.

Information about this inspection

- Seven lessons were visited and all teachers were seen teaching. Three of these lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at samples of students' work.
- Informal discussions took place with a few students and meetings were held with staff, a local authority adviser and two members of the management committee, including the Chair.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the PRU's recent survey of parents' views and through telephone discussions with four parents.
- The inspector observed the PRU's work and looked at a range of documentation including, minutes of the most recent management committee meeting, policies to safeguard the interests and welfare of students, records of incidents, attendance figures, the PRU's development plan and self-evaluation summary, and records of students' progress in the PRU and at the Youth Centre provision.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Summerfield Education Centre is a PRU that provides education for four days per week for up to 40 students aged between 11 and 16 who have been permanently excluded from school. Students at the PRU spend one day per week with the Solihull Youth Service.
- Students arrive at the centre with a history of disruption to their education and poor attendance. The centre aims to improve students' behaviour and attendance in order to prepare them for either return to mainstream school or for further education and employment.
- Nearly all students are supported at school action plus and a few have a statement of special educational needs for their behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties.
- Just over a third of students are eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding given to schools for students known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or from families where a parent is in the armed forces). None of the students in the PRU have a parent in the armed forces. There are no students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up programme.
- Since the last inspection there has been significant staff turnover. A new headteacher was appointed in May 2012 and a new management committee were formed in March 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so much more is at least good by ensuring teachers always:
 - match learning tasks to the different abilities of students so that their work is neither too hard nor too easy
 - tell students how to improve their work when marking their books
 - teach at a brisk and lively pace and use lesson time effectively so that students remain focused on their learning rather than disrupting the lesson.
- Work closely with the local authority to reduce the rate of persistent absence by 50% by the end of the next academic year and ensure all students are appropriately placed.
- Develop leadership and management by implementing:
 - the proposals to strengthen the leadership team by October 2013
 - the plans to improve the tracking and recording of students' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students enter the PRU with low attainment. They have had previous disruption to their learning and poor attendance, and are often disaffected with school. A significant number do not make good progress, mainly because their attendance is poor. A few pupils do not make enough progress because they are inappropriately placed and the PRU is unable to cater for their needs.
- Students who receive additional support through pupil premium funding make less progress than their classmates because they have higher rates of unauthorised absence.
- The few students with a statement of special educational needs make less progress than their classmates because a higher proportion of them are persistently absent and some are inappropriately placed.
- The majority of students at Key Stages 3 and 4, who attend regularly, make good progress from their starting points. In 2012, the majority of students achieved at least three GCSE grades A* to G. A few students with good attendance made exceptional progress gaining between five and seven GCSE passes including English and mathematics.
- Art is a strength within Key Stage 3. Here some students gain levels at least in line with and sometimes above those expected nationally for their ages.
- Most students, those who regularly attend the Youth Service 'Evolution' programme, make good progress in their personal development. They gain unit awards in at least five subject areas including tall ships sailing, music studio, magic, residential experience, horse riding, animal welfare, cookery, fishing, golf, hairdressing, fitness, martial arts and boxing. Those who regularly attend the Evolution programme successfully complete the bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The school's accurate self-evaluation shows that not enough teaching is good. This is consistent with inspection findings where almost half of the teaching seen required improvement.
- Sometimes teachers do not match learning tasks sufficiently to the different abilities of their students. As a result some find their work too easy and others find it too hard. In every lesson, requiring improvement, including some lessons aimed at improving basic skills, students of different abilities were all doing the same task.
- Although marking has improved recently with positive comments which show students how well they are doing, teachers sometimes miss the opportunity to inform students how to improve their work, when marking their books.
- Where the pace of teaching slowed, pupils became distracted and occasionally disrupted learning by calling out or moving out of their seat as they disengaged with learning.
- The teaching of the basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy across different subjects is variable, ranging from outstanding to requiring improving. In an outstanding lesson, students read a menu accurately and followed it step by step to produce spicy chicken wings,

promoting literacy well. The teacher promoted numeracy well by challenging students to calculate the cost of preparing one home-made chicken wing with the cost of buying a pre-prepared one in a fast food outlet.

- In the good or better lessons seen, the teacher used a variety of well-chosen resources and activities to stimulate learning. As a result students focused on learning throughout and tried their hardest. In an art lesson, Year 9 pupils were working on splitting images and repositioning them to create cubist pictures in the style of Picasso. The teachers used the interactive whiteboard, display and a variety of drawings to illustrate and generate ideas on cubism and enabled students to choose a drawing from a wide range to create their own artwork.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for students by clarifying any misconceptions, carefully explaining any technical words and providing examples as models for solving problems.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Students' behaviour and safety requires improvement because, although incidents of disruption are decreasing, there is still some inappropriate behaviour in lessons and around the PRU. During the inspection, a few students were seen entering the headteacher's office without permission and on occasion students showed disrespect.
- Exclusion rates in 2012 were high but have reduced by half during the course of this year as a result of the determination of the headteacher to re-engage students with learning and ensure the safety of all students.
- Attendance is below average because a significant number of students are persistently absent, despite the best efforts of the PRU in rewarding and celebrating good attendance. The poor attendance of these students in many cases reflects their negative attitudes to learning, and some are also not achieving well enough in lessons.
- There are a few students have stopped attending the PRU and together with the local authority the PRU has used every means in their power to improve their attendance, without success. These students are inappropriately placed, because the PRU cannot effectively meet their needs if they do not attend. A very small number of students are waiting for a statement of special educational needs to be placed elsewhere and an equally very small number are suffering from depression and with medical advice are waiting for an alternative placement
- Nevertheless, the majority of students make good progress in their behaviour and attitudes to learning and improve their attendance well during their time at the PRU. This is because they respond positively to the well thought-out systems of rewards to promote attendance and good behaviour.
- Where lessons are good or better, students' behaviour is also good because they respond well to the consistent management of their behaviour by all staff.
- Parents who completed the PRU's recent survey and those whose views were sought in telephone discussions confirmed that behaviour and safety requires improvement. However, they were pleased with the progress their children had made in behaviour and attendance since joining the PRU.
- Students also confirmed that they were making progress in their behaviour and attendance and

said that that they feel safe in the PRU.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not sufficiently improved the quality of teaching and learning to the point where they are both good. The headteacher and the new management committee recognise that leadership needs strengthening. They have agreed proposals for the appointment of a deputy headteacher and a clear leadership structure that has the support of the local authority, although these have yet to be implemented.
- The school's data on students' progress over the last three years is incomplete. This limits the depth of analysis that can be made about how well they are doing and fine-tune development planning. New systems for tracking progress of individual students from the time they enter the PRU to the time they leave have been designed, but are not yet in place. Nevertheless, self-evaluation is accurate and has been used well to establish the right clear priorities for improvement.
- The headteacher has worked effectively with good support from the local authority to improve teaching and raise students' achievements, and has significantly improved the attendance of the majority of students. The headteacher and management committee recognise the need to continue to work closely with the local authority to reduce the rate of unauthorised absence and also to ensure all students are appropriately placed.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and direction for the staff, and this is reflected in their overwhelmingly positive responses about leadership in their questionnaires.
- The systems for ensuring the effective management of teachers' performance are improving with regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and the setting of clear targets for improvement. This has resulted in the elimination of inadequate teaching and a steady rise in the proportion of good or better teaching, which is having an impact on students' achievement.
- There are good opportunities to engage students' interest through a wide range of examination courses including GCSE. There is a clear expectation that all students will enter for GCSEs including mathematics and English. The PRU works closely with the Youth Service to ensure a wide range of vocational courses are available to improve their personal development including their spiritual moral social and cultural development. The Evolution programme also delivers a well-thought out programme of personal, social and health education.
- Good links with local colleges, businesses and the Connexions service ensure students have a range of work-related experiences that they enjoy and benefit from. As a result nearly all students move on to further education, training or employment.
- There are good opportunities to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students learn to respect and appreciate other cultures, through for example considering the life of Nelson Mandela in assembly. They learn the difference between right and wrong through the programme of rewards and sanctions, the good role models for behaviour provided by staff and through topics such as the criminal justice system.
- The headteacher is developing strong links with parents, who said they receive useful information from the PRU about their child's progress and feel better informed.

- The PRU has established good links with a local secondary school and is developing stronger links with other secondary schools in the authority.
- The local authority is providing good support in regularly monitoring the work of the PRU closely and setting clear challenges for improvement with good support for staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management committee works closely with the local authority to support the work of the PRU. It ensures all legal requirements, especially for safeguarding, are met. The members are holding the school to account for its spending, particularly on the use of pupil premium funding. They understand the data available about progress, and have worked closely with the headteacher in identifying the need to provide more accurate data to show students' achievements during their time in the PRU. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching through first hand visits as well as receiving detailed reports, including about performance management. They have made sure teachers have had opportunities to observe good and outstanding teaching in secondary schools.

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	133531
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	402577

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	19
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Leah Beirne
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2009
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