

Phil Edwards Pupil Referral Unit

17 Sylvan Road, Croydon, SE19 2RU

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
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| 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.

- Students make good progress during their time at the pupil referral unit (PRU), particularly in English and mathematics. All are prepared well for the next stage of their education or reintegration into mainstream or mainstream special schools.
- Year 11 students follow a range of GCSE courses and achieve well.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are planned well and there is a lively range of activities to make learning interesting.
- Students say they feel safe at the PRU and appreciate the opportunities they are given to help them move on to the next stage of their education.
- Students' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are particularly positive in lessons. The PRU has high expectations and is effective in managing behaviour throughout the day.
- The headteacher and his senior leaders have ensured that the restructuring of the PRU has gone smoothly in order to continue supporting students to move on successfully to the next stage of their education.
- The Saffron Valley Federation management committee has got to grips quickly with the new regulations for governance of PRUs introduced in April 2013 and is providing effective support following the restructure of the PRU.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking is inconsistent because students' next steps in learning are not always clearly stated and comments written about the quality of students' work are not always followed up.
- Too many students are late for the start of the school day at 9.00am.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 6 lessons taught by 5 different teachers. Three of the lessons were observed jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with a small mixed-aged group of girls and a small group of Year 11 boys. Meetings were also held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, others with posts of responsibility, the Chair of the Management Committee and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own recent parental questionnaires, a sample of student exit surveys and 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the PRU's practice and looked at a range of documentation, including its checks on how well it is doing and improvement planning, information on students' progress, documents used by senior leaders to check the school's work, and management committee documentation, as well as records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

James Bowden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Phil Edwards Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) for students in Key Stages 3 and 4 who have been permanently excluded from mainstream school. In April 2012, the PRU was restructured and became a part of the Saffron Valley Federation of Croydon PRUs, which has a shared management committee. A new Chair of the Management Committee was elected in September 2012. The PRU also hosts a support and assessment group (SAG) in a separate on-site classroom. This offers short-term placements for students who are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream schools.
- Since October 2013, the PRU has taken on the duty of care for Key Stages 3 and 4 students in Croydon who do not have a permanent placement in a mainstream school. These students are solely educated at John Ruskin College and dual registered with the PRU.
- Currently, most students are boys and there are only a few girls. There are similar proportions of students of White British, Black and mixed backgrounds. This year there are a very few younger students from families where English is not the home language. Almost all students are supported through school action plus and none has a statement of special educational needs
- Students join the school at different times during the year. A few students are in Years 7 and 8 but almost all are in Years 9, 10 and 11.
- The proportion of students at the PRU eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children from service families, is well above the national average. Currently, there are none in local authority care.
- The school uses alternative provision for two students full-time, with one attending Educational Excellence and the other the RISE provision, both of which are in Croydon.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and make it all as good as the best by making sure that:
 - the quality of marking is more consistent in making sure students know what their next steps in learning are
 - teachers always check that students have responded to comments about improving the quality of their work.
- Work more closely with parents to ensure all students arrive on time at 9.00am each day.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- For almost all students, attainment on entry to the PRU is well below that of their classmates in mainstream schools and many have been underachieving. This is as a result of missed schooling, often because of exclusion. As a result of their negative experiences, many have found it difficult to settle comfortably into mainstream school life.
- All are tested on entry to the PRU, particularly in relation to their abilities in English and mathematics. Good progress is made in these subjects by students from all ethnic backgrounds, as well as in the other subjects they study, including science. This supports well Key Stage 3 and Year 10 students' continuing re-integration into mainstream or mainstream special schools. Key Stage 4 students all study for GCSE qualifications in English, mathematics and science, plus an increasing range of other subjects. Results at the end of Year 11 are improving over time, and the proportion of those achieving higher grades remains steady.
- Since the previous inspection, all those leaving at the end of Year 11 have continued into further education or training and sustained their placements. Students who attend off-site provision achieve well.
- Good quality teaching and support for all means there are no significant differences in either English or mathematics in the rates of progress made by boys and the very few girls or those supported by pupil premium funding. School data confirm that students known to be eligible for free school meals achieve as well as others. The extra resources provided help these students make good progress, in line with their classmates.
- In almost all lessons, progress is at least good and there is effective support for students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. In a history lesson, students wrote down and discussed their definitions of 'heaven' and 'hell' with the teacher and teaching assistant, as well as amongst themselves. There was added challenge when the teacher asked them to discuss differences in Christian definitions of heaven and hell between the Middle Ages and contemporary Britain.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching throughout the PRU promotes good learning for all. Teaching in English and mathematics is good. Where appropriate, students are asked to read aloud and do so competently and confidently. In an English lesson, where students were analysing Act 1, scene 3 of 'Romeo and Juliet', learning was enlivened by opportunities to work as both individuals and pairs to find the equivalent 'modern text' posted around the walls to match the actual text used by Shakespeare. Students were particularly intrigued by the fact that in Shakespearean times, girls aged seven could be promised for marriage by their parents.
- Teachers are skilful in using questions to test students' understanding and the progress they are making. This was evident in an art lesson where students were preparing their own collage based on Picasso's 'Guernica' painting. At the same time, they were involved in discussions about war and strife, including in contemporary Syria, as part of a cross-curricular project.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are effective in managing students' learning. This they do calmly and purposefully, which keeps them on task and makes sure they are making progress towards the learning intentions made clear at the start of the lessons. This was evident in a mathematics lesson where all students were working at their individual levels to complete a range of different tasks to prepare them for their GCSE examination.
- Students' work is marked promptly and written comments provided. However, comments about students' next steps in learning are often brief and lack clarity. This means students are not clear about what it is exactly they should do. In addition, teachers often write comments about the quality of students' written work but are inconsistent in checking whether the students have responded to them.

- Older students say that teachers make sure they understand the work and respond to their requests for help. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and say their children are taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour overall is good as a result of effective management of students' behaviour throughout the day. High expectations are consistent. Students are 'scanned' on arrival with a hand-held metal detector, in line with the PRU's policy of zero tolerance on weapons, and hand in their mobile telephones to be collected at the end of the day. In addition, all have a school uniform check. On-site mentors offer one-to-one sessions for students who request help and officers of the South Norwood Safer Neighbourhood Police often visit the PRU informally at break times to listen to and share concerns.
- Typically, behaviour over time can vary depending on particular cohorts of students. There are still instances where students have not been allowed to go to school for short periods of time because of poor behaviour. However, there have been no permanent exclusions since the previous inspection, very few recorded instances of racism or bullying and no recorded instances of homophobia.
- Students told the inspector that they feel safe at the PRU and that there is no victimisation or bullying. All said they felt confident in approaching a member of staff if they had a problem they wanted to share. When asked about the impact of small number of girls compared with boys, one girl commented, 'It could be intimidating but isn't, people get on.' Internet safety has a high priority in the school and access to social networking sites or inappropriate sites is not possible.
- Attitudes to learning in lessons are generally positive. Older students rekindle their interest in education and want to do well. One told the inspector that one of the best things about the PRU was that they could study for GCSEs. Currently, all the Year 11 students are intending to apply for further education courses when they leave. Students in the SAG class benefit from their short-term stay and return successfully to mainstream education.
- Attendance for many improves considerably at the PRU compared to that in their previous mainstream schools. A very few remain persistent in their absence despite the PRU's best efforts, including the support of the Education Welfare Service.
- Almost all parents say their child is happy at the PRU, feels safe and is well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and his leadership team are committed to sustained improvement, including the recent introduction of new procedures to enable teachers to track more carefully the progress being made by individual students and set clear targets for academic success. The issues identified for improvement at the previous inspection have been dealt with successfully. Staff have a strong commitment to supporting the best outcomes possible for all students.
- Self-evaluation is undertaken regularly and is used effectively to plan for further improvements. Teaching is checked by senior leaders and is used to make decisions about how well teachers are working, plan for training opportunities and to recommend additional responsibilities and pay awards.
- The PRU makes best use possible of its accommodation, a large converted Victorian house with two temporary classrooms, recently added in September. As a result, the subjects and topics students study are the same as in mainstream schools. This provides equal opportunities for all to succeed and the extra support and guidance students are given underpin well their good all-round personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, regardless of their circumstances, all students make good progress and are very well prepared for the next stages of education or re-integration into mainstream or mainstream special schools.
- Close links are maintained with the alternative provisions and Ruskin College in order to make

sure students are safe.

- The PRU works closely with parents, one of who commented in feedback to its own questionnaire, 'There is good communication – they have gone out of their way to support my child.' The great majority of parents are supportive of provision, with just 50% responding to Parent View.
- The local authority has provided appropriate support for the PRU since the previous inspection, as well as throughout the restructuring of PRU provision in Croydon and potential changes that may occur as a result of an on-going and further review of provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management committee provides effective contribution to the governance of the PRU under the new regulations introduced in April 2013, including management of the delegated budget. It carefully oversees the use and impact of pupil premium funding. This is currently being used to provide extra support to ensure that all students, regardless of their circumstances, make the best possible progress in English and mathematics, as well as science, particularly at GCSE, where achievements have improved. The management committee is improving its role in challenging leaders to ensure continuing improvements in all aspects of the PRU's work, including performance management of teaching staff. There is a member with responsibility for safeguarding, which ensures procedures and protocols are robust and effective.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 131266 |
| Local authority | Croydon |
| Inspection number | 425576 |

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

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| 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 | 21 |
| Appropriate authority | The local authority |
| Headteacher | Peter Jones |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11–12 January 2011 |
| Telephone number | 020 8771 5603 |
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