

Fordway Centre

Stanwell Road, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 3DU

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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:

- Teaching overall is not good enough as teachers' guidance does not always correct pupils' mistakes or show them precisely how they can improve their work. The monitoring of pupils' achievements in lessons has not been good or effective enough for them to make fast progress.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding do not make as much progress as their peers at the centre.
- Members of the management committee have not previously fully understood the new arrangements for managing pupil referral units and as a result have not challenged leaders sufficiently to ensure all pupils are making the best possible progress.
- Systems for analysing information on pupils' progress are not rigorous enough.
- The range of subjects on offer does not always promote pupils' enjoyment of learning to enable them to achieve well.
- Staff do not always set high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they are capable of achieving.
- Teachers do not always receive useful feedback on their teaching with clear targets for improvement.
- Pupils do not attend regularly enough. Their attitudes and behaviour are not always well enough developed to support their learning.
- Leaders and managers have not secured good enough teaching to enable all pupils to make good progress.

The school has the following strengths:

- The newly appointed headteacher has already made an impact by promoting a positive ethos and setting high expectations. She makes it very clear that she wants all pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- During the last year over 50% of pupils who attended the centre were reintegrated into mainstream schooling.
- Exclusions have reduced significantly this year.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited seven lessons, all jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Informal discussions were held with groups of learners, and included listening to pupils reading.
- There were no submissions to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector took account of the centre's own surveys of parents and carers, and 10 staff questionnaires.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Management Committee, the headteacher, members of staff and three representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector evaluated documentation, including information on the students' current progress, the curriculum and development plans, as well as procedures and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fordway Centre caters for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 who have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools or who are at risk of permanent exclusion.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (those eligible for free school meals, those in care and those with a parent or carer in the armed services) is above average. There is one pupil at the centre who is in the care of the local authority or from a service family.
- Two thirds of all pupils are supported at school action plus, with five having a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, and there are more boys than girls.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic heritages is well below average, as is the proportion of the pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are at the early stages of learning English.
- There are three pupils who are involved with the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) usually as a result of their behavioural needs.
- In 2012/13 there were 34 children who attended the centre.
- The centre does not make use of any alternative provision.
- Following the local authority's review of pupil referral unit (PRU) provision across Surrey, the future of the centre for the academic year 2014/15 has yet to be finalised, but a decision is expected to be made by April 2014. The management committee assumed responsibility for the centre from April 2013.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2014, and has already made some staffing changes. The Chair of the Management Committee was appointed in January 2014, having previously been the vice chair.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement through consistently good or better teaching by:
 - ensuring that pupils' progress in lessons is closely monitored to pick up and correct any mistakes and misunderstanding pupils might have
 - raising teachers' and pupils' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - paying close attention to the progress of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium and ensuring the gaps in attainment are closed rapidly
 - providing more detailed feedback so that each pupil knows precisely how to improve.
- Improve pupils', behaviour, safety and attendance by:
 - working more closely with parents, carers and pupils to reduce absences
 - ensuring that everyone understands the importance of not missing school and by following up absence swiftly and rigorously
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and use the school's new procedures for managing behaviour.
- Strengthen further the impact of leadership at all levels, including members of the management committee, by:
 - developing comprehensive systems for analysing and evaluating information about pupils' progress in lessons and over time
 - providing a suitable range of subjects that challenges and stimulates pupils' enjoyment of

learning

- providing teachers with precise feedback about their performance and coaching with clear targets to improve their teaching
- providing further training to ensure all members of the management committee have a full understanding of the new arrangements for the management of PRUs so that they can ask searching questions that challenge senior leaders to raise pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too few pupils make rapid enough progress over time due to interruptions in their schooling and weaknesses in teaching.
- A significant number of pupils do not attend regularly enough and this affects their attainment. This is sometimes because the curriculum is not sufficiently stimulating to enable pupils to learn at a brisk rate.
- Pupils do not receive the full amount of schooling to which they are entitled. However, as a result of decisive action taken by the new headteacher and the Chair of the Management Committee, pupils will receive their full entitlement from the spring half term.
- Pupils generally have poorly developed skills in language and communication when they arrive. They make steady progress in reading because of good opportunities to accelerate their skills through small-group and one-to-one support. Progress in writing is slower because teachers do not always reinforce spelling, punctuation and presentation skills across all subjects. Progress in mathematics is also slower than in reading because sometimes adults intervene too early when pupils are trying to work out calculations.
- Because of the complicated nature of the centre in which pupils stay for different lengths of time, it is difficult to evaluate closely the progress of different groups. However, last year, girls made faster progress than boys. Pupils who were known to be eligible for additional support through pupil premium funding made less progress than their classmates, particularly in mathematics. This is because additional resources had not been targeted specifically enough to improve their performance in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action plus made the fastest progress in reading due to the many opportunities they have to practise reading aloud in class and in small groups.
- The longer the pupils attend the centre, the faster their progress accelerates. In 2012/13, just over half of pupils were successfully reintegrated into full-time mainstream schooling, with a third being reintegrated into special schools.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable, and there is not enough that is consistently good to ensure all pupils make good progress in all classes and subjects.
- On too many occasions, staff do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons and do not always pick up quickly on errors or correct misunderstandings. As a result, pupils make less progress than they are capable of.
- Learning was best where staff used a range of activities to exploit opportunities for pupils to practise and apply what they had previously learned. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 cookery lesson, pupils took great delight in making dinosaur bone breadsticks. During the course of their preparation, they practised using words to describe what they were doing, which they had learned earlier in the day, in their literacy lesson.
- Teachers often miss opportunities, both in lessons and in marking, to give more detailed 'small-step' feedback to pupils. As a consequence, pupils do not always have a clear idea of how to improve quickly.
- Classroom displays celebrate pupils' work and help to support learning by providing opportunities for pupils to write at length about characters in books that they read, and to know the sounds that letters make or to use key words in their writing.
- Teaching assistants provide helpful and effective support. They generally work closely with the teacher and help pupils manage their behaviour and learning. Occasionally, they intervene too quickly or give too much support, and this slows pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement

- Standards of behaviour require improvement and are not yet good because where teaching is less effective, behaviour deteriorates as pupils become bored and 'switch-off' from learning. Also, because of pupils' inconsistent patterns of attendance their attitudes to learning are not as good as they should be.
- Pupils arrive at the centre with a range of emotional and behavioural issues and although their behaviour improves there are still lapses of concentration by a few pupils in some lessons, sometimes linked to the slow pace of learning. Many pupils improve their behaviour once they have spent some time at the centre. Many parents and carers are pleased with how their children's behaviour and attitudes change.
- The centre's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. Safeguarding practices are now in place and staff take the necessary steps to ensure pupils are safe.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection say they feel safe and increasingly enjoy coming to the centre, but reported, 'sometimes lessons are boring'.
- Exclusions have previously been high but have reduced significantly. Despite this reduction too many days are lost due to exclusions. A new behaviour policy has been written and introduced specifically designed to improve pupils' behavioural, emotional and social skills, by helping them adopt more positive coping strategies for when they are feeling angry, hurt or upset.
- Some teachers set the bar too low in terms of the behaviour that they expect from pupils. For example, pupils' use of inappropriate language is sometimes not challenged sufficiently or consistently.
- The overall pattern of attendance and punctuality is erratic. The headteacher is the aware of the need to improve overall attendance at the centre. Nevertheless, pupils make improvements in their levels of attendance when compared with those at their previous school.

The leadership and management require improvement

- In a very short period of time the new headteacher has demonstrated through her approachability and determination a clear vision for the future of the centre. Staff have welcomed her thoroughness of approach and commitment which is reflected in their overwhelmingly positive responses about leadership in their questionnaires. Nevertheless, leadership and management require improvement because they have not secured good enough teaching to enable all pupils to make good progress.
- In January 2014, the headteacher discovered that arrangements for safeguarding were not secure. Immediately, she and the local authority acted decisively to resolve the issues raised. These have now been rectified and confirmed by officers from the local authority.
- Senior leaders and the management committee have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are now securely in place and meet statutory requirements. They have also put in place rigorous procedures and protocols to monitor child protection arrangements regularly and robustly, following the local authority's recommendations. Leaders effectively promote equality of opportunity for all members of the centre and are proactive in tackling all forms of discrimination.
- The school's information on pupils' 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 hinders the fine-tuning of development planning. New systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils from the time they enter the centre 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.
- Recent staff training to improve the quality of teaching has been well received by staff. However, teachers have not always received clear feedback about their performance in the classroom and have not been set clear targets for improvement.

- Systems to check and improve the work of teachers and support staff and award pay rises have recently been revised. However, decisions about staff pay rises have not been linked to pupils' progress.
- The sports premium funding has been used to buy in specialist support to lead sessions with pupils and to train staff in coaching techniques related to sport.
- The range of subjects on offer has not been sufficiently adapted to meet the challenging needs of the pupils, in order to stimulate their enjoyment of learning.
- The centre has worked well with the local authority following the reorganisation of special provision in the county. It has also received invaluable support, training and advice from the local authority's advisers together with their chosen school improvement provider. A recent review of the centre by the local authority highlighted the need for a comprehensive package of support which has been agreed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Previously the management committee were not effective in holding the centre to account. During the last year much of their time has been taken up with discussion concerning the reorganisation of pupil referral provision and the future of the centre. In the past they have not always had sufficient involvement in asking searching questions so that they fully understood the issues, particularly information on pupils' progress, how it compares with similar settings, and the quality of teaching. However, more recently, the management committee has acted decisively in swiftly rectifying issues relating to safeguarding and the correct amount of curriculum time the centre should offer. Committee members have a sound overview of the centre's financial resources to drive its priorities forward. This includes directing appropriate funds for pupils attracting the sports and pupil premium to make sure that individual learners are supported and helped in lessons. However, the impact of strategies supported by this funding has not been evaluated. They are now working closely with the headteacher in developing an effective system for checking the performance of staff which rewards good teaching and will begin to address weaknesses in teaching. In order to gain an overview of the quality of teaching a planned programme of visits is in place. Members are committed to ensuring pupils are safe; they have undergone specific training in safeguarding and budget delegation. The new headteacher has already taken steps to secure the management committee's full involvement in reviewing the centre's journey to improvement.

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	124916
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	432090

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Pam Ridgwell
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2011
Telephone number	01784 243365
Fax number	01784 423664
Email address	info@fordway-centre.surrey.sch.uk

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