

# Triple Crown Centre

Lode Lane, Solihull, B91 2HW

## Inspection dates

13–14 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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

- Students achieve well. Their levels of attainment are higher than expected, given their starting points when entering the centre and the severe levels of disruption most have experienced in their education.
- Teaching is good. Staff are skilful in giving students work that is not too easy and not too difficult. This engages them so that their learning is at least good.
- Behaviour is good. It is very well managed by the staff, and the calm and peaceful environment that has been established promotes good learning.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and with sensitivity. Responsibility and a desire to help others are promoted most effectively.
- Students' attitudes are positive. They enjoy their work, are keen to participate in the activities offered and many have greatly improved their levels of attendance.
- The school's procedures for keeping students safe and secure are good. Students feel safe and valued and parental satisfaction is high.
- Good leadership and management are helping the centre to improve. Actions taken by senior staff, the local authority and the management committee have improved teaching and students' achievement.
- The well-planned range of subjects enables all Year 11 students to leave with qualifications so that they can readily progress to the world of work, training or further education.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Assessment procedures used by staff are not applied consistently. Not all teachers make it clear to the students when marking their work what has been done well, what can be improved and how.
- Students contribute to the running of the centre through their student leaders and comment on day-to-day issues. They do not have opportunities to take more responsibility by being involved in planning some larger projects.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, involving eight different teachers, the majority of which were jointly observed with a senior leader, and saw various other learning activities.
- Meetings were held with the chair of the management committee, a representative from the local authority and staff. Two supportive letters were received from parents.
- Fifteen responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents and carers, were taken into account. Returns from nine questionnaires completed by staff were also considered.
- The inspector scrutinised examples of students' work and looked at various documents. These included the centre's self-evaluation and planning, information on students' academic progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- On the first day of the inspection, most Key Stage 3 students and those in Year 10 attended an off-site science fair at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

## Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Triple Crown Centre caters for up to 40 Key Stage 3 and 4 students who are unable to attend a mainstream school for health reasons most usually associated with anxiety and other emotional problems. At the time of the inspection, none of the students on roll were in Year 7.
- For those in Key Stage 3, the aim is to plan reintegration to mainstream education wherever possible. Reintegration to mainstream schools is less often attempted for those in Key Stage 4. For these students, the aim is to prepare them for life after school and ensure that they are fully and adequately prepared for employment, training or further education.
- All students are disabled or have special educational needs associated with their emotional difficulties. All students are supported at school action plus or have a statement for their special educational needs.
- At the time of the inspection, all students were of White British heritage, with none speaking English as an additional language. Considerably more girls than boys attend the centre.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government to help nationally underperforming groups such as students known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is small. At the time of the inspection, the centre did not receive the entire delegation of pupil premium funding from the local authority.
- The centre does not make any use of external learning facilities, though a personal development course is currently provided on site by an external agency. Regular and planned work is undertaken with other agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Major changes in leadership and management and staffing have been made since the previous inspection. The current headteacher has been in post for just over a year. The chair and other members of the management committee are new to their posts.

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

- Improve teaching and achievement by ensuring that when teachers mark students' work they clearly state what has been done well, what could be improved and how.
- Enhance students' responsibility by encouraging them through their own council to identify some large-scale improvement projects with which they can become fully involved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most students join the centre with attainment that is lower than expected for their age. This is because of the effect over time that disrupted education, poor attendance and difficulties in personal development has had on their ability to make progress in their learning. When many join the centre, they are at least a whole year behind in their education.
- All students make at least good progress academically and in their social skills and confidence. There are no discernible differences in the performance of boys and girls. This is because all are offered teaching that is consistently good and they receive considerable support and encouragement from the dedicated and caring staff.
- Key Stage 3 students are frequently enabled to return to mainstream education with more confidence. Key Stage 4 students progress to gain GCSE passes, with some performing at or above national levels. Key Stage 4 success helps students to face the next steps in their lives with greater confidence. Most students successfully move on to employment, training or further education.
- Achievement is good in both English and mathematics. Students' reading skills are developed well and most improve their writing skills considerably. Work seen during the inspection covering a number of subjects showed good improvements in writing over time.
- More-able students make good progress. This is witnessed through the selective and prudent use of early GCSE entry in mathematics for example. Some Year 11 students have already gained grade C in mathematics and are now working to secure higher grades. The overwhelming majority of students leave Year 11 with far better GCSE results than predicted when they first joined. More-able students leave with qualifications that are at least in line with national average GCSE grades.
- Though the school does not receive its full entitlement to pupil premium funding, the small number of students eligible for additional help make progress similar to that of their classmates in English and mathematics. This is because of the thoughtful and creative way such funds are used to boost skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- Confidence, social poise and skills in literacy and numeracy are developed well through the range of subjects offered. For example, the provision of GCSE religious education enables students to develop their understanding of many complex situations ranging from abortion to criminal justice and punishment. A personal development course funded by the centre, but delivered by an external agency, does much to boost their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. It also encourages responsibility, decision-making, negotiation and team working.
- During their time at the centre, students develop confidence in their own abilities: their self-esteem rises and concentration improves. These developments prepare the youngsters well for reintegration. Available data indicates that for the vast majority, the centre changes their lives and gives them the confidence and other skills they need to face the world around them.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is rarely less than good and it is occasionally outstanding. Well-planned teaching

ensures that learning is enjoyable. The students respond positively by behaving well and this further contributes to their good learning.

- Teachers' expectations are consistently high. This can be evidenced in a number of ways. For example, students' books consistently show that they take pride and responsibility. They are invariably well cared for, neat, tidy and well presented. The work contained in the books clearly shows good progress over time. Teachers set work that is not too difficult or too easy, and which provides realistic challenge. Teachers work consistently well to establish and maintain high standards in the students' work.
- Learning is especially good when students are encouraged to think creatively. This was amply demonstrated in subjects such as English, art and religious education. Particularly good learning was witnessed in a Year 11 GCSE religious education class. The students were presented with a number of challenging situations to analyse. They considered each one with maturity and sensitivity and their verbal answers were enhanced by references to concepts such as 'the sanctity of life', 'forgiveness' and 'retribution'. Learning was not only enjoyable because the subject matter commanded their interests, it was good because of the opportunities presented for the students to discuss, analyse and rationalise. Many of the comments made showed understanding and sensitivity.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is good. Some students have been entered early for their GCSE examination in mathematics. This has boosted their confidence and all involved have an opportunity to improve their grade further.
- Staff promote students' reading skills well. Students are offered frequent opportunities in different classes to read, including reading aloud. Many are initially hesitant to do so, but all students heard reading did so well and spoke clearly, even when presenting lines to their peers from a Shakespearean sonnet which contained some quite tricky phrasing.
- In some subjects, exercise books show work has been marked to a high standard and regularly, though this is not always the case. In the better examples, marked work is accompanied by a grade with clear indications about what was good about the work, but also how improvements might be made. This is not done with consistency, however. At times, though marking is good, the feedback offered is not to the same standard.

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

- The behaviour of students is good. The school provides a calm, welcoming and stimulating environment.
- Students themselves confirm that behaviour is good and that they feel safe. One student described the school as 'harmonious' and continued by saying that incidents of poor behaviour based on any form of bullying are rare. Students were adamant that if an inappropriate incident of any form took place, it would be swiftly and effectively handled by staff. The centre's incident logs confirm that incidents of poor behaviour are extraordinarily rare.
- Good behaviour is further reflected in the significantly improved attendance rates of most students. Most join the centre with poor attendance records. Improving the rate of attendance is a strong focus of the centre, based on the recognition that if students are not attending, they cannot learn and their safety might be compromised. Overall attendance is now close to the national average with some students boasting 100 per cent attendance rates. Some other students have improved their attendance from below 20 per cent in mainstream education to a level that now exceeds 90 per cent.

- The centre's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Every parent who responded to the inspection questionnaire confirmed that their child is safe and well looked after. Nearly all those who responded said that behaviour is good.
- Issues involving safety are given high priority. A problem with the internet identified during the inspection was immediately addressed. Within an hour, swift and effective action to close an inappropriate website had been taken.
- Students like attending the centre because they feel valued and supported and they appreciate the help and assistance offered by the dedicated staff. They feel consulted and acknowledge that through their student leaders, they have some say in how the centre functions. However, the centre does not make as much use as it could of students' ideas. For example, they would like to work in partnership with staff and governors on some longer-term projects such as establishing an environmental garden.
- Much emphasis is placed on students behaving well and taking personal responsibility. The centre extends the latter by encouraging the students to be reflective and to help others. Good quality daily assemblies, charitable efforts and thought-provoking teaching in various subjects, including religious education and the personal development course, all make a significant contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership for the centre. She has a clear vision and is determined to make the centre as good as possible. With the support of her effective and motivated staff and with the backing of the management committee, a number of key improvements have been made.
- Improvements since the headteacher took up post have led to better outcomes in terms of the quality of teaching and students' progress. Not least has been the improvement in the choice of subjects available and students' attendance.
- The leadership of teaching is good and staff morale is high. Staff respond well to the headteacher's high expectations and acknowledge the benefits they have derived from improvements in the leadership of teaching and learning.
- Considerable care has been taken to ensure that the range of subjects offered, especially in Key Stage 4, properly meets the students' needs. There is a successful emphasis on developing key skills, especially literacy and numeracy. Such developments reflect the determination of staff to help the students to thrive and flourish. A strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity underpins the school's endeavours.
- There has also been an emphasis on improving students' confidence, and giving them opportunities to take responsibility and develop resilience. The personal development course has helped in this respect, so too have other initiatives. During the inspection, a number of students attended a science fair at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. This meant that they had to mingle with hundreds of other students. They also had to travel to and from the centre by public transport. This potentially daunting episode was a great success and offered many new experiences that were hugely enjoyed.
- Senior staff and the management committee have a good understanding of the centre's strengths and weaknesses, and their self-evaluation is rigorous. A detailed development plan

outlines what needs improving. There is a steely determination to ensure that further improvements are made in the quality of the education and care offered.

- The progress students make in their learning and personal development is further aided by the quality of the school's partnership work. The school liaises effectively with many agencies such as CAMHS and with local schools.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to support students especially in developing their skills in literacy and numeracy. Though full funding is still being negotiated, the impact of the support that is provided is checked and monitored.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The centre receives good and wide ranging support from the local authority. Particularly good work is undertaken to ensure that the procedures for reintegrating students into mainstream education are applied fairly and that all parties, including parents and carers, are fully involved
  - Members of the management committee are experienced, knowledgeable and effective. Most are school and local authority leaders, and include headteachers from partner schools. This means that they have first-hand knowledge of how well the centre works. For example, they know about the quality teaching. Budgetary management is undertaken responsibly. Members of the management committee are fully involved in the headteacher's performance management and they ensure that the performance of all staff is linked to pay progression. They also ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet all current government requirements.

## 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>	104038
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	431584

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<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>	31
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Headteacher</b>	Eleanor Clarke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 709 0080
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 704 7181
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