

# Summerfield Education Centre

Brackleys Way, Solihull, B92 8QE

**Inspection dates** 6–7 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Since the last inspection, the leadership of the centre has been strengthened and there is now a very cohesive stable staff team. This has enabled the highly effective centre manager to drive forward changes and secure improvement at a rapid pace.
- Teaching is good and the centre has improved the way it checks students' attainment and progress.
- Almost all students respond well to the chance of a fresh start. Their behaviour in and around the centre is good. Their attitudes to learning are good. This is underpinned by very effective positive adult and student working relationships.
- Most students attend the centre much more regularly than they attended their previous setting. This helps them to make good progress and overcome their difficulties. They feel safe and secure; they are cared for well.
- The curriculum is well planned to provide subjects that interest the students and ensure that they enjoy school. An increasing number have made a successful return to mainstream schools.
- Regular checks are made on students' progress. If necessary, individual and flexible supports are then put into place to ensure they gain worthwhile qualifications.
- An increasing number of qualifications are being offered both at the centre and at Evolution, the alternative provision that Year 8, 9 and Year 10 students attend once a week.
- The management committee has a very clear understanding of the quality of teaching and of how well students achieve. Members consistently challenge the centre to maintain and improve standards.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of students making outstanding progress is not yet high enough. This is because, in a few subjects, leaders are not clear enough about students' starting points on entry to the centre and so cannot demonstrate students' progress as securely over time.
- Not all curriculum leaders contribute to the school's development plans for the future.
- Students' use of numeracy in other subjects varies. Staff do not always ensure that students regularly practise and improve their skills in this area.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector checked students' learning in visits to eight lessons, all of which were attended jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, all teaching staff, two teaching assistants, the administrative staff, a group of students, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Management Committee and two local authority representatives.
- The inspector observed the centre's work, looked at assessment information, the analysis of students' progress, curriculum information, reports to the management committee and the minutes of its meetings. She also considered the school self-evaluation and development plan, and a range of students' workbooks in English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- The inspector checked records of students' behaviour and attendance since their entry to the centre as well as monitoring records of the quality of teaching and the students' activities. All records relating to safeguarding of students were scrutinised.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for the results to be displayed, but the inspector took into account the centre's own survey of parents and carers. The inspector also considered a student survey completed by Year 10 and 11 students, together with 10 completed staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Lynda Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Summerfield Education Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) that provides full-time education for up to 40 students aged between 11 and 16 who have been permanently excluded from school.
- Some students spend a day a week with the Solihull Youth Service taking part in their Evolution programme. Others benefit from work experience in a range of placements that are tailored to their individual career aspirations.
- Students arrive at the centre with a history of disruption to their education and often poor attendance. The centre aims to improve students' behaviour and attendance in order to prepare them either for return to mainstream school or for further education or employment.
- The proportion of students for whom the centre receives pupil premium funding (additional funding given to schools for students known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The centre does not receive Year 7 catch-up funding.
- There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection. The centre now has a stable staff team. A deputy centre manager was appointed in April 2014. The centre currently employs four instructors and is providing support to enable them to gain a teaching qualification.
- There are more boys than girls on roll.
- The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds.

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

- Increase the proportion of students making outstanding progress by ensuring staff accurately assess the starting points of students in all subjects so that they can demonstrate and evaluate students' progress over time.
- Plan more systematically the development of students' mathematical skills so that work in all subjects helps students to increase their competence and accuracy in numeracy.
- Ensure that curriculum leaders contribute fully to the centre's development planning and documentation.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Creating fields of opportunity and supporting second chances' is the mission statement created by the students at Summerfield Centre. This perfectly describes the vision and shared aim of the centre staff. This is to ensure that students learn so that they can return to mainstream education or move on to further education, training and employment with confidence and belief in their own abilities.
- The information, advice and support that students receive from the centre staff and from the careers service is good. Students who left the centre over the past two years are all still in further education or employment.
- Senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, administrative staff, the pastoral support leader and the site manager show real concern for the welfare and emotional well-being of the students. They work hard as a team to enable staff and students to work in a pleasant, supportive environment and everyone is challenged to do their very best.
- Since the previous inspection, the centre leader has established a culture of high expectations for both staff and students. She has been effectively supported by the deputy centre manager. Together, they have made determined and successful efforts to raise the quality of teaching and students' progress as well as improve students' behaviour. Staff feel valued, are very positive and morale is high.
- The work of teachers is regularly and rigorously checked, and the management of teachers' performance is increasingly effective. There is now clear evidence with which to judge the work of each teacher, instructor and teaching assistant. Procedures are in place to reward good performance linked to students' progress. All staff receive a good level of further training. Leaders are actively supporting and enabling instructors and teaching assistants to gain relevant and appropriate qualifications.
- The opportunity for each student to succeed to the best of their ability is fundamental to the centre's philosophy. There is no discrimination and all of the students have equal and sustained encouragement to do as well as they can. The centre checks carefully that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide helpful additional support, where needed. This ensures that eligible students make good progress.
- Senior staff robustly evaluate students' progress. They have recognised that some staff are not so skilled or confident in accurately assessing students' attainment on entry and using the information gained. Training is in place to support these staff. Leaders overview these teachers' assessments and judgements about progress carefully.
- Achievement and behaviour are tracked daily and leaders quickly adapt individual programmes for students to provide any additional support they may need. Parents and carers are fully involved in discussions about students' welfare and are generally supportive of what the centre is hoping to achieve. As one parent commented, 'Staff are very helpful in keeping me informed about the progress my son is making; staff are lovely, positive and supportive.'
- At present, no staff have middle leadership roles but teachers and instructors all have a curriculum responsibility. Links are developing with local secondary schools to enable curriculum leaders to share best practice and to check the standards of students' work.
- As a result of detailed checks, the centre's evaluation of its own success is accurate. Senior leaders have ambitious plans for developments in teaching and the students' achievement, which are already paying off. Although staff are also highly committed to these, the curriculum leaders have not yet had the opportunity to contribute their own subject evaluations to the overall school development planning process.
- The centre manager is very appreciative of the support and challenge she has received from the local authority School Improvement Partner to bring about improvements. Support from the local authority has reduced as the capacity of the leadership team to bring about further improvements has grown and the

centre has improved.

- Arrangements to keep students safe meet statutory requirements. Staff and members of the management committee closely follow clear procedures. The centre rigorously checks the progress, attendance and behaviour of students attending the off-site provision, as well as checking arrangements for keeping them safe.
- The centre prepares students extremely well for life in modern Britain. This is achieved through personal, social and health education courses delivered by the youth service, work-related learning, careers education and through the day-to-day interactions with staff. They learn about democratic institutions and the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. A prime aim of the centre is for the students to be active citizens and effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key aspect of their work.
- Relationships between staff and students are a key factor in re-engaging students with learning. Staff challenge negative attitudes and promote tolerance and respect. Students are given a 'real voice' and are involved in determining rewards and sanctions. They know that their opinions are listened to and acted upon.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. It is based on the interests and aspirations of students. Subjects studied in Key Stage 3 closely match those studied in mainstream schools, enabling these students to move back easily and successfully. The Evolution programme offered by the alternative provision and vocational placements enable older students to achieve a range of work-related qualifications.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The management committee is effective. It has wide-ranging expertise and the members use their considerable skills and educational experience to benefit the centre. They use this both to challenge the leaders of the centre and to give strong support. They are effective in helping to shape the future direction of the service provided by the centre staff.
  - An experienced Chair is now leading the group and is very active in forging links with the police, secondary mainstream schools, members of the education committee and other agencies in order to ensure that appropriate and relevant support is provided for the centre.
  - Members know the strengths in teaching and how performance is managed. They know that the best teaching is rewarded and underperformance tackled. They are very supportive of the centre manager's drive to enable instructors to gain their teaching qualification training.
  - Members of the management committee visit the centre regularly and staff and students are aware of their role. The centre manager presents the committee with regular and detailed reports. These keep the management committee in touch with the centre's work with young people, detailing their achievement and performance in formal examinations, when appropriate.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. They have excellent relationships with adults who 'listen to and understand us'. They feel confident to ask for help if they need it because the class sizes are small. They feel safe about making mistakes and are generally very positive about the help and support they receive.
- Students display very positive attitudes to learning; their work in books is well presented and they are proud of their achievements. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the centre.
- There has been a significant improvement in the way that behavioural incidents are recorded and tracked, so that leaders have a clearer overview of students' behaviour. The centre manager has improved systems for managing behaviour and has taken students' views into account. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with very quickly and calmly, and so there is minimal disruption. There has been a significant reduction in the number of exclusions since the last inspection.
- Students are very clear about the expectations staff have about their behaviour. They understand the

system of sanctions and respond very positively to rewards. Weekly monitoring reports are sent home to parents and carers who are very pleased with the positive changes they see in their children's behaviour.

- The pastoral support worker provides excellent support both to the students and their families. This has had a significant impact on the progress that students make in developing a greater degree of control over their feelings and behaviour. All staff work on the premise that 'every day is a new day' and this has a positive impact on the attitudes of the young people.
- Students behave well at the Youth centre. They enjoy taking part in the Evolution programme. Summerfield Centre staff closely monitor the attendance and progress that the students make.

### Safety

- The centre's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Carefully designed programmes help students to improve their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. These contribute well to developing their understanding of gang culture, as well as the risks of using drugs and alcohol. The centre has a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying and homophobic or racist behaviour. Students are fully aware of and are left in no doubt about the consequences of any such incidents. On the few occasions when these occur, they are dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- Almost all students improve their attendance during their time at the centre. Working closely with the education welfare officer, staff monitor attendance and punctuality at the centre, the Solihull Youth Service provision and vocational placements carefully. They take very rapid action to deal with any absence and quickly involve parents and carers. As a result attendance is now broadly in line with the national average.
- Robust risk assessments are carried out for both on-site and off-site activities, including those at the alternative provision. The centre provides a safe and secure environment for learning and, as a result, all students make good progress. There is a genuine feeling of mutual trust and respect among the staff and the students.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is now consistently good throughout the centre. This has ensured that standards have improved since the last inspection. Regular checks by senior staff help to ensure that all groups and years, including those who receive additional funding, achieve well.
- Trusting and supportive relationships between staff and students are key to the most successful teaching. Staff overcome the students' past negative experiences in school and re-enthuse them through the use of humour, kindness and patience. They also motivate students to want to learn by tailoring activities around their specific strengths and interests.
- Classes are small and students value the high degree of individual tuition and support they receive from adults. They told the inspector that they felt able to ask for help when they needed it because their classmates would not make fun of them, as sometimes happened when they were in their previous mainstream schools
- Teachers and teaching assistants are very confident and skilled in managing the challenge of engaging students in learning. Teaching is made relevant and enjoyable because teachers prepare interesting lessons and have high expectations of the students' success.
- Most teachers are specialists in their subjects. Literacy is promoted well across all subjects, and there is appropriate correction of spelling and grammatical errors to help students improve their skills. The same is not true for mathematics; staff are aware of the need to plan more systematically to ensure that students are given opportunities within every subject to apply and develop their mathematical skills.
- Teachers mark work very effectively. They give students clear comments on how to improve their work and, as a result, they make good progress over time. Students' work is very well presented. The students

are very proud of their achievements and were confident to talk to the inspector about their learning in class.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Students join the centre with levels of attainment which can vary widely but that are usually well below national expectations for their age because of a history of poor attendance, disrupted education and underachievement. They typically have negative attitudes to learning and some have been out of education for a significant period of time.
- As a result of good quality learning and effective support for individuals, achievement is now good, irrespective of individual circumstances or social and emotional needs.
- The school makes effective use of the pupil premium. It provides one-to-one tuition for pupils and gives them opportunities to participate in school trips and educational visits. Eligible pupils make good and often better progress than their classmates. In 2014, there were too few Year 11 pupils to comment on their attainment without risk of identifying them.
- Since the last inspection, rigorous systems for tracking students' progress have been introduced. Although a few staff are not fully skilled in using these, most use the information gained well to match work well to students' needs and to set challenging targets for them. This all supports students' improvement achievement. The school's own information about students' achievements, qualification results, students work seen during the inspection and inspectors' observations show that there is very little difference in the achievements of all groups of students.
- Although all students are tested on entry to the school in relation to their capabilities in English and mathematics, a few subject staff are not totally confident in accurately assessing starting points for students in their subjects. Consequently they are not always able to show the progress students make over time reliably. Leaders are aware of this a computer-based programme and training is now in place so that such assessments are more accurate and can ensure challenging but realistic targets are set for each individual.
- Students who are in the centre for short periods of time before being re-integrated into mainstream schools get back on track by re-engaging in learning, particularly in English and mathematics. The students who stay in the centre longer make the progress expected of them nationally. Those students who are comparatively more able do really well and make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- There has been an increased range of accredited courses on offer since the last inspection. All students leave Year 11 with a range of GCSEs including mathematics and English, as well as other nationally accredited subjects. The centre has recently started to enter Year 10 students for functional skills tests in English and mathematics. Most students have been successful in achieving these qualifications at either entry level 1 or 2. This has boosted their self confidence, so that they are spurred on to aim for higher qualifications and grades.
- All courses taken in the alternative provision at the Solihull Youth Centre are accredited and students achieve level 1 or 2 in a range of activities related to personal and social development. Similarly, students on vocational placements which are tailored to students' career aspirations gain qualifications that prepare them well for courses or apprenticeships when they leave the centre.
- The comparatively more-able students are also entered for Functional Skills in English and mathematics and science GCSE early so that they have the opportunity to obtain better grades when in Year 11. This has resulted in some students achieving the higher grades in both English and mathematics.
- Students are very well prepared for examinations. This was evident in both business studies and in English, where students were being taught examination techniques so that they could be confident in their ability to succeed. Those entering the centre late in Year 10 or in Year 11 are also given individual support to complete courses started in their mainstream schools so that they can be entered for GCSEs.

- The use of literacy skills across the curriculum has been a priority over the last year and has had a very positive impact on student progress in their reading, writing and communication skills. Senior leaders are aware that there is now a need to apply the same focus to developing numeracy skills across different lessons.
  
- Achievement in art is strong. Students' work has been displayed in the local library and local residents have been very complimentary about its standard.



## 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>	133531
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	462563

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 local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Philip Mayhew
<b>Headteacher</b>	Leah Beirne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 742 6505
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