

# Impact Sefton Secondary Pupil Referral Unit

Daleacre Campus, Daleacre Drive, Bootle, Liverpool, Merseyside L30 2QQ

<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The recently appointed headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has wasted no time in implementing plans for school improvement.
- Staff morale is high. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders. They appreciate the positive difference regular training has made in enabling them to do their jobs well.
- Staff skilfully help pupils overcome difficulties in their lives, so that they successfully return to mainstream school or gain the qualifications they need to move on to college, training or employment.
- Pupils treat adults in school and each other with respect. These positive relationships help build pupils' resilience and self-worth.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils' learning. They continually assess pupils' learning and behaviour, skilfully intervening as appropriate so that lessons proceed without disruption.
- Teachers give every pupil the help they need to make good progress from their different starting points.
- All eligible Year 11 pupils in 2014/15 progressed on to education, employment or training.
- Many pupils arrive with a history of poor school attendance. The zeal of the attendance officer ensures that the overwhelming majority significantly improve their attendance.
- Pupils and staff agree that pupils are safe and well cared for. The school's excellent partnerships with other services ensure that pupils and their families are well supported.
- Parents receive frequent updates about how well their child is getting on at school. Many parents, who were initially reluctant for their child to attend the school, speak very highly of the positive difference the school has made.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Governors are not making best use of the time they allocate to their duties, particularly visits to the school, and so are not having as much impact on school improvement as they could.
- Leaders are aware that the school's system for tracking pupils' academic attainment and progress needs improving and their plans to address this need to be accelerated.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of the work of governors to increase their impact on the school's performance by:
  - making better use of the time each governor can allocate to the role so that all activities have a clear purpose
  - using a range of evidence, including the views of staff and pupils, to inform meetings with school leaders
  - keeping up to date with developments in education
  - developing opportunities to learn from best practice in governance.
  
- Further refine systems so that assessment and tracking of pupils' attainment and progress:
  - clearly link to the new national curriculum so that they inform teachers' planning, ensuring that pupils are fully prepared for the new GCSE examinations
  - provide meaningful information for pupils' mainstream schools
  - provide leaders with up-to-date information about the progress of pupils from their different starting points (to include individuals, different groups such as the most able, departments and types of provision) so that any underperformance is swiftly addressed.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The strong partnership of the recently appointed headteacher and established deputy headteacher has brought a renewed sense of purpose to the school. These leaders have already reviewed some of the systems and procedures and made improvements. Staff appreciate leaders' high visibility around school and the professional autonomy they are giving staff. As a result, in a short space of time, leaders have gained the confidence and support of staff.
- The commitment of staff to helping these pupils to be successful is at the heart of the school's success. Staff celebrate every step pupils take towards their successful transition to the next stage of their education, training or employment. The recent awards afternoon gave pupils, their families and their mainstream schools an opportunity to celebrate pupils' achievements at the school. This is a significant milestone for pupils, most of whom have experienced failure in their school lives up until this point.
- Senior leaders have acted quickly to address the vacancies in the English and mathematics departments. They have appointed strong, temporary teachers who deliver the high standards demanded by leaders. The senior leaders have taken over responsibility for these key subjects during this period of turbulence. The new head of English is not joining the school until September, but is already developing plans for the subject with the headteacher.
- Leaders' investment in training for staff has made a positive difference. Teachers keep up to date with developments in their subject. Support staff ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to respond to the wide range of needs presented by pupils. As a result, staff are effective in their roles and enthused by leaders' commitment to supporting their career plans.
- Leaders, including governors, do not shy away from addressing staff performance which falls short of the high standards they demand. A systematic approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning enables leaders to identify best practice as well as where additional support is needed. The new headteacher has already identified ways to strengthen the performance management process further.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have pinpointed the areas which need prioritising and have already made inroads into resolving these. Despite the gaps in the middle leadership team, the rate of improvement has not slowed. The school has effectively addressed all the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and demonstrates a good capacity to improve.
- Although the school has some difficulties in securing the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, leaders have made sure that it is used to provide excellent pastoral support for this group. Leaders are now focusing on making even better use of the funding so that more of these pupils achieve higher level qualifications, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The curriculum is particularly well developed at key stage 4. The leader responsible for off-site and alternative provision makes sure that the programmes complement the academic courses available. Consequently, pupils secure high-value qualifications, including English and mathematics, which stand them in good stead for whatever they plan to do in Year 12.
- In key stage 3, staff focus on preparing pupils to go back to mainstream school. Staff use a comprehensive assessment when pupils join the school, to identify the additional support pupils need. This includes help to improve pupils' reading skills, strategies to manage anger or awareness of risky behaviours such as carrying knives. As a result, the majority of pupils have successfully moved onto another school this year.
- The curriculum for all pupils is enhanced by a wealth of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities. Pupils speak positively about the visitors to the school, including a professional boxer, as well as cultural visits to galleries and museums. Leaders are aware that further work is needed so that the curriculum fully prepares pupils for the new GCSEs in English, mathematics and science.
- Leaders recognise the need to accelerate their plans to put in place an assessment system which underpins the new curriculum at both key stages. The current system is not fit for purpose; it fails to provide pupils, teachers or leaders with the information they need.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors are passionate about making sure that pupils are given the best possible chance of success. They put a high priority on ensuring that staff have the skills and experience necessary to meet the needs of pupils at the school. They have carefully considered senior appointments to make sure they have the right people in key posts. Governors have not shied away from challenging

underperformance by staff.

- Governors have used findings from an audit of skills to review the membership of the governing body. However, despite identifying the need to recruit someone with up-to-date, first-hand knowledge of educational policy and its effective implementation, they have been unable to recruit a suitable person. While current governors attend training, governors recognise that this appointment is a priority if they are to provide the best possible support and challenge to school leaders.
- Governors do not always make best use of the time they allocate to their duties. Some governors gain an incisive knowledge of key aspects of the school's performance informed by a broad range of evidence. However, governors do not always make their visits to school as purposeful as they could, limiting their impact on improving the school's performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has robust systems and procedures. These systems are consistently applied. Frequent, high-quality, relevant training for all staff, including those working for alternative providers, makes sure that everyone knows their role and responsibilities. Excellent relationships with parents, carers, pupils' mainstream schools and other agencies enable the school to respond quickly to any concerns. Highly skilled staff, including counsellors, support pupils and their families well, so the pupils know how to keep themselves safe from risks such as, for example, gang culture and child sexual exploitation. Pupils have high levels of trust in adults so that they are confident to share any worries. Staff, pupils and parents are unanimous in their agreement that pupils are safe and well cared for.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. In all subjects, pupils make strong progress and develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers and support staff gather key information about each pupil when they join the school. They skilfully use this information to plan interesting and purposeful lessons which encourage these pupils, many of whom have developed a negative view of school, to value their education and enjoy learning.
- In most subjects, teachers assess pupils' skills and knowledge before starting each new unit of work so that they do not waste time re-teaching pupils what they already know. The strong end-of-unit assessment results are testament to the good use teachers make of the short time many of the pupils stay at the school. Teachers ensure that pupils make commendable gains in their skills and knowledge.
- Despite the fact that many pupils do not always join the school as willing and eager learners, teaching staff rapidly rebuild pupils' confidence and self-belief. Teachers and support staff pay close attention to pupils during lessons, frequently reshaping tasks to maximise pupils' learning. As a result, pupils say that they exceed their own expectations of what they can achieve.
- Pupils' books demonstrate the positive difference that teachers' marking makes to their learning. Pupils pay heed to the feedback their teachers give them, refining and improving their work as a result. Teachers' prompts remind pupils to take pride in their presentation and care with their handwriting. Almost all pupils take good care of their exercise books and files.
- Teachers and support staff work seamlessly together in the classrooms so that pupils' learning proceeds without interruption. They provide the support and encouragement their pupils need to become successful learners. They swiftly bring pupils back on task when pupils get off the point and intervene when pupils' behaviour distracts themselves and their peers.
- Pupils like their teachers. Pupils appreciate the time teachers take to get to know them, the efforts made by teachers to make learning interesting and the respect they show them. As a result, pupils generally arrive punctually to lessons, respond quickly to their teachers' instructions and persevere with tasks even when they are tricky.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge helps them to plan lessons which engage and enthuse pupils. They link learning to real life wherever possible, for example explaining the process of gas chromatography in the context of drug testing in sport. Teachers' effective questioning to probe pupils' understanding and deepen their knowledge makes sure that pupils make good gains in their learning in almost all lessons. Teachers do not shy away from setting most pupils work which is challenging, skilfully designing the tasks to secure pupils' success.
- Teachers plan a range of opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills. In English, teachers ensure that pupils have more frequent opportunities to write at length across a wide range of genres. Across the different subjects, teachers insist that pupils maintain the school's expectations for

presentation and handwriting.

- Although in most lessons teachers use a range of approaches to make pupils' learning interesting, on occasion the over-reliance on workbooks limits opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to think for themselves and take greater responsibility for their learning.
- While teachers are highly skilled in meeting the needs of the less able and middle ability pupils, too often teachers miss opportunities to set work for the most able which would help them achieve the higher grades.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school carefully assesses and tracks pupils' attendance, welfare and behaviour. This enables staff to identify the issues which have limited pupils' success in their mainstream schools so that targeted support can be put in place. The school's own data shows the improvements pupils make during their – often short – time in the school. The tracking system is used well by all staff so that leaders can pre-empt any emerging issues. This system ensures that, despite the multiple sites and providers, staff are very well informed about how well pupils are achieving and are able to give frequent, accurate updates to parents.
- Pupils treat each other with tolerance and respect. They are confident to challenge each other appropriately when they consider behaviour is not acceptable, for example swearing. Pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that racist and homophobic name-calling and bullying were almost unheard of. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school.
- The school offers pupils a wealth of support to address their individual health and well-being needs. Staff quickly identify pupils' needs and build bespoke programmes of support to improve pupils' health and well-being, including smoking cessation and sexual health and drug awareness. This support makes a positive difference to pupils' engagement in education.
- All pupils take part in sporting activities as part of the curriculum. During the inspection, groups of pupils were away on camp, taking part in outdoor and adventurous activities.
- Key stage 4 pupils use the recently installed kitchen to learn how to make healthy, home-cooked dishes. In this way, the school helps to prepare pupils for their future lives.
- The school prepares pupils exceptionally well for the next stage, whether that is a move to school or college, employment or training. Staff listen closely to pupils' views and help them make the right choices for their future. Displays around the school celebrate the achievements of previous pupils, promoting a culture of success.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils who join the school have been permanently excluded or at risk of permanent exclusion from their previous school as a result of their poor behaviour. Staff very quickly establish good relationships with pupils which are built on trust and mutual respect. These good relationships mean that, for the most part, pupils conform to the high expectations of school leaders for pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand the school rules and accept the sanctions for any poor behaviour. The school's assessment and tracking of pupils' behaviour clearly demonstrate the improvements pupils make when they join the school.
- Most pupils arrive with a history of poor attendance in their previous schools. The attendance officer is relentless in her determination to ensure that every pupil attends school regularly. She promptly follows up on any pupil's absence. Parents and pupils are left in no doubt as to the school's expectation of regular attendance. While the school offers high levels of support to help parents ensure that their children attend regularly, penalties are imposed if there is no improvement. As a result, almost all pupils make huge improvements in their rates of attendance from joining the school. At key stage 3, pupils' attendance is catching up with the national average.
- Staff provide high levels of support to ensure that pupils maintain high standards of behaviour, both in lessons and in moving between classrooms and at breaktimes. Staff recognise the need to encourage further pupils' self-regulation of their behaviour so that they are even better prepared for life outside school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## are good

- School leaders clearly articulate the measures of success for the pupils in their school. There is a sharp focus on securing the necessary skills to be successful wherever pupils move on to next, whether that be education at school or college, employment or training. Leaders carefully track pupils' progress against these measures of success, which include regular attendance and positive behaviours as well as academic achievement.
- Improvements in teaching and learning, higher expectations of senior leaders and increased aspirations of pupils have secured better pupil outcomes across key stages 3 and 4. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving five GCSEs at grades A\* to G is now well above that achieved by pupils in similar schools.
- Despite a number of pupils joining the school with literacy and numeracy levels well below those expected for their age, almost all pupils in key stage 4 gain at least a qualification in English and most gain a similar level of qualification in mathematics.
- Almost all pupils move successfully onto education, employment or training when they leave the school at the end of key stage 4. The staff help pupils choose the best route for them. They make sure that pupils have the right experience and qualifications to access their preferred destination and support them at interviews, for example by helping pupils make travel arrangements. Some pupils have secured unconditional offers of places on college courses because of the very high standard of work they have presented at interview.
- Pupils make strong progress from their different starting points. No time is lost in settling pupils into the school. Many of the pupils are successful in gaining a place back in a mainstream school. Over the past two years, almost all of the pupils who have moved on have successfully maintained their new school place.
- Pupils in key stage 3 make good progress in English, mathematics, science and computing. Although often pupils only attend the school for a few weeks, clear evidence was seen during the inspection to show that most make rapid gains in their knowledge and skills.
- In English, teachers make some judicious choices of texts which engage and enthuse pupils. For example, pupils read contemporary reports of the Hillsborough tragedy and compared them to reporting of the findings of the recent public enquiry. Pupils carefully weighed up the evidence to form a view on the accuracy of newspaper reports and the power of the press in influencing public opinion.
- The school provides intensive support for pupils with reading skills below their chronological age to catch up quickly, building their confidence to use those skills across the curriculum. However, leaders are aware more needs to be done to ignite a passion for reading in all pupils.
- Pupils achieve good outcomes in art. Pupils are proud of their achievements and embrace the opportunities to share their successes, for example through the art exhibition being held at the Daleacare Campus in the next few weeks. Many of the pupils gain a GCSE qualification at key stage 4 and an AQA Unit Award at key stage 3.
- The school offers a wide range of courses leading to qualifications in addition to English, mathematics, science and computing. Furthermore, the school endeavours to deliver any course a pupil was studying when they were excluded, so that pupils are not academically disadvantaged.
- Pupils who attend vocational placements achieve well. All these pupils complete qualifications in English and mathematics. For many pupils, these vocational placements reignite their engagement with education and for some they are the springboard to a college course.
- The school's own data, work in books and observations of teaching demonstrate the high standards of achievement by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nearly half are on track to gain five GCSEs. Almost all will achieve a qualification in English and mathematics. These pupils make strong progress during their time at Impact as a result of the teaching they receive, informed by comprehensive assessments.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least the same progress as other pupils attending the school and a number of these pupils make even greater gains in their learning.
- The school recognises the need to provide further challenge for its most-able pupils. Staff make sure that pupils continue to access the high number of courses these pupils were often studying before they were excluded. However, leaders recognise that they need to put more measures in place to help these pupils achieve the higher grades of which they are capable.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104849
<b>Local authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012151

This inspection 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>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Bernice Harvey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Wendy Corless
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 924 8128
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18–19 June 2014

## Information about this school

- The school has two main sites which are seven miles apart. In addition, pupils are taught at a further two centres and in a range of community facilities, including children’s centres and libraries.
- The school caters for boys and girls who have been permanently excluded from school or who are at risk of permanent exclusion.
- A very small number of pupils have an education, health and care plan. A number of pupils are in the process of assessment for a plan.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium is above the national average. A small number are looked after by the local authority. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Eighteen alternative providers are used to complement the education provided by the school.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- Inspectors observed a selection of lessons across the school.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work during visits to classrooms; scrutinised samples of pupils' work displayed on walls around the school and talked with pupils about their work.
- Inspectors observed behaviour around the school, including observing pupils as they arrived at school, during break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including self-evaluation by leaders, the school's improvement plan, information on attendance, documents used to record behaviour and safeguarding concerns, information relating to pupils' progress, case studies of pupils and external reports on the work of the school.
- Inspectors visited the four school sites as well as four alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors met with members of the management committee and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with two large groups of staff, took account of responses by four staff to the Ofsted questionnaire. They spoke both formally and informally to individual pupils, took account of the results of the school's own surveys of parents and pupils and the one parental response to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector  
Jonathan Smart

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Ofsted Inspector



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