

Cotelands Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123976
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	340462
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Bill Stoneham

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vacant
Headteacher	Ms Jennifer Adamson
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection looked at classroom learning and other learning activities in the unit and in the nursery. Five lessons were observed featuring five different teachers. Meetings were held with staff, students, past students and a member of the management committee. The inspectors observed other aspects of the unit's work including its nursery and scrutinised documents including the unit's development plan and all policies relating to safeguarding, student safety, behaviour and attendance. Six parental and carer questionnaires were received and the unit offered evidence of its own surveys of stakeholders.

The inspection team looked in detail at the following:

- how the unit is endeavouring to raise attainment for students who have been reluctant to attend school
- how effectively the provision for care, guidance and support meets the complex individual needs of each student
- how effectively the curriculum is personalised to meet the complex individual needs of each student
- how well the nursery is led and managed and how well it helps young mothers to balance their child-care responsibilities with their education.

Information about the school

Cotelands is a pupil referral unit (PRU) for teenage mothers and mothers-to-be. It also provides for school refusers with emotional difficulties or mental health problems. Although the unit caters for students aged 11 to 16, at the time of the inspection all the students were aged 14 to 16. The unit's provision also includes a nursery for children aged up to three and outreach community work is offered to all teenage mothers living in the London Borough of Croydon. This outreach service, however, did not form part of the inspection.

Most students are White British but there are several Black British students of Caribbean background and a few from mixed ethnic backgrounds. All have special educational needs and/or disabilities; two have statements of special educational needs. There is a varied and complex range of needs including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Most of the students have had serious disruption to their education. Many of the students with emotional difficulties or mental health problems have missed considerable amounts of time from school, sometimes amounting to more than a year. Several students are in foster care or are looked after by the local authority.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Cotelands Pupil Referral Unit provides outstanding education and care. Many aspects of its work are outstanding, reflecting the dedication and commitment of the staff who want to change and improve the fortunes of young people who have often faced severe difficulties and traumas in their lives.

Most students join Cotelands with exceedingly low levels of prior attainment, reflecting significant disturbances in their education. In addition to the long periods out of school endured by some, others face significant barriers to learning including health, social and behavioural difficulties. In these highly exceptional circumstances, the progress they make in their education and their social and emotional development is staggering. Outcomes for all groups of students are far in excess of what might be expected given their starting points.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and are based on detailed and accurate assessment of individual need. Excellent partnerships involving education, care and health professionals ensure excellent outcomes. Extensive work is done to promote healthy and safe lifestyles and the safeguarding arrangements, in both the PRU and the nursery, are outstanding. Other outstanding features include the engagement of parents and carers, the quality of the curriculum, especially the way it is personalised to meet individual needs, and the work to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. Considerable effort is spent showing the students that despite their problems they can succeed. For many, Cotelands provides life-changing experiences. The outstanding provision made by the nursery is a key feature in enabling young mothers to succeed in their education.

The students' progress is further helped by consistently good teaching. Assessment procedures are good, including some use of peer and self-assessment, and the students are set challenging and realistic targets. However, opportunities are sometimes missed in lessons to reinforce key skills, especially literacy, and to consolidate students' learning through the greater use of peer and self-assessment.

Since the previous inspection there have been notable improvements in achievement, attendance and behaviour. The unit is highly successful in reintegrating its students, especially into college placements. This track record of sustained improvement amply illustrates the ambition and drive of the excellent leadership team. Rigorous self-evaluation enables strengths and areas for development to be identified and appropriate plans made, reflecting well an outstanding capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise levels of attainment for all students by ensuring:
 - more consistency in the way that key skills, and especially literacy, are promoted in lessons
 - that the students are given more opportunities, especially in lessons, to peer assess their work and undertake self-assessment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Students are keen to learn and the excellent progress they make is helped by their consistently good behaviour. Student questionnaires showed that most really enjoy their education. In lessons, the students are involved in their learning and respond with great determination to the challenges set. They are clearly enjoying their learning and many are making rapid progress in extending their knowledge and understanding and are achieving far more than expected. Students who have previously been school refusers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including ADHD and ASD, concentrate well and make excellent progress. Standards remain low because of the significant disruption that most have experienced to their previous education. The service is successfully enabling students to return to school or to progress to college at the end of Year 11. Data provided clearly show that students reintegrated into full-time education return with improved attainment as well as being better equipped emotionally to cope with school life. Students who stay in the unit until the end of Year 11 leave with a wide range of qualifications. The nursery provision enables most of the teenage mothers to continue their education and gain more and better qualifications than expected prior to their PRU placement. Most manage their child-care duties successfully, enabling them to enjoy their education and make rapid progress. Outstanding partnership work helps the most vulnerable and emotionally disturbed students to make excellent progress towards their challenging targets. Outcomes are quite remarkable, including students not only gaining GCSE awards, but some gaining grades at C or above. Some students are entered early for some GCSEs and have gained A grades, representing exceptional progress.

Relationships are good, students feel safe and they display respect for each other. Responsibility is encouraged well, enabling young mothers to successfully care for and nurture their babies. They design healthy menus for themselves and their babies and prepare the food. The school council organises support for the wider community, including fundraising for a medical charity in Malawi. Sport is timetabled and this has given some emotionally challenged students the confidence to join outside sports clubs. The successes that students experience equip them satisfactorily for their future education and beyond.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Students learn well because they are well taught by staff with detailed subject knowledge. The working relationships between staff and students are very good. Students are encouraged to work independently, but opportunities for reinforcing key skills and for peer and self-assessment are not always taken. Students' progress towards their targets is rigorously monitored. The students reported that they are well taught; a view echoed by parents and carers.

The curriculum, including extra-curricular provision, is outstanding. A key strength is the way the curriculum is personalised to meet individual needs. Memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high-quality learning, personal development and well-being are provided. Breadth is reflected in activities such as visits to art galleries and museums as well as music and drama workshops. These activities are significant in boosting confidence and helping the students to determine their future direction, as well as making a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The unit provides an outstanding, caring and supportive environment. Effective induction methods and excellent partnerships with support agencies enable students to settle quickly into the daily routines and to understand the high expectations that the unit has of them. Outcomes are further helped by the unit's very effective procedures for reducing absence. The attendance rate is average, but many students, especially former school refusers, can now claim significantly improved attendance, with some averaging over 95%. The sustained improvement in the nursery has enhanced provision and outcomes for the young mothers.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The excellent leadership of the headteacher, combined with the dedicated support of staff, has resulted in a clear focus on successfully driving improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the management committee, are fully committed and involved in securing improvements.

The unit fully involves parents and carers in its work and keeps them well informed. Partnership work is excellent. The service maintains strong working relationships with many external agencies enabling significant enhancements to be made to the curriculum, as well as ensuring excellent and individualised health and social care, guidance and support, especially in terms of promoting personal well-being. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. The detailed risk assessments are thorough. There is a very strong determination to ensure that the students enjoy a varied and exciting education but in a safe setting; leaders and managers have been most effective in achieving this. Academic outcomes are improving because the management of teaching and learning is strongly focused on raising standards. An emphasis on respect, rights and responsibilities underpins much of the unit's work and makes an excellent contribution to the promotion of equality and tackling discrimination. Good efforts have been made to promote community cohesion. The students make a good contribution to their own community and work with external agencies and charities further supports community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The nursery provides a warm, welcoming, stimulating and safe environment. Staff provide for individual needs extremely well, promoting excellent progress and development in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. When the children move on to the next stage most are well in line with the expectations for their age and some exceed these. Staff track children's progress meticulously, using the information to plan the next steps and sharing it with parents and carers. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is particularly strong. Staff work hard to establish warm and secure relationships. Children are happy, settle quickly and respond well to the clear and consistent routines, enabling them to become more confident and independent. They learn about the importance of personal hygiene, for example learning to wash their hands at appropriate times. The older children enjoy playing with the wide range of toys and equipment. Outstanding partnerships with the unit itself and other agencies contribute strongly to the children's development and provide excellent support for parents and carers, especially for young mothers who are encouraged to resume their education. The local authority uses the nursery as an exemplar for other settings. The nursery meets all the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leadership is excellent and the staff constantly evaluate the effectiveness of what they do and work to secure improvements. The management committee is well informed and involved in monitoring and developing provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A small number of replies to the questionnaire were received and responses were almost all positive. This view is reflected in the unit's own parental and carer surveys. The two

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exceptions were answers to two individual questions. In both cases, the respondents gave positive replies to all other questions. The overwhelming message to emerge is that parents and carers believe that Cotelands is making a significant contribution to enhancing life chances, helping the young people to overcome their problems and anxieties.

The positive views expressed by parents and carers reflect the inspectors' judgements of the quality of the unit.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cotelands Pupil Referral Unit to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received six completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	0	0	5	83	0	0	1	17
The school keeps my child safe	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	2	33	4	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	0	0	6	100	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	1	17	4	67	1	17	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	33	4	67	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	2	33	4	67	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	1	17	5	83	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



20 January 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Cotelands Pupil Referral Unit, Croydon CR2 8JJ

My colleague and I thoroughly enjoyed our recent visit. I wish to thank you for making us so welcome. We have fond memories of our visit. We enjoyed talking to you and learning about your views of Cotelands. You told us about the high quality education you receive and we are pleased to say that our visit confirmed your opinions; you receive an outstanding education. You are making significant strides in your education and personal development. Your staff help you to do this but you also help by attending regularly and behaving sensibly in lessons and in the social areas. Cotelands has many strengths and you particularly benefit from an excellent curriculum and the outstanding care, guidance and support you are given.

We believe that although your work is improving, there is room for further improvement. In order to achieve this we have asked your staff to help you do even better by ensuring that:

- there is a more consistent approach in lessons to boosting your key skills, especially literacy
- in lessons you are offered more opportunities to assess your own and each other's work.

You can help by keeping up all your hard work.

Thank you again for making us so welcome. We enjoyed meeting you and would like to wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Bill Stoneham

Lead inspector

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