

# Enterprise Learning Alliance

Westwood Centre, Westwood Industrial Estate, Enterprise Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4JA

## Inspection dates

5–6 June 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders and staff of the Enterprise Learning Alliance are united in their clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve. Together, they succeed.
- The pupil referral unit (PRU) is successful in re-engaging pupils in education. Referral to this PRU usually improves pupils' likely future prospects at the age of 16.
- The ongoing success of the PRU is testament to the notably longstanding dedication and considerable commitment of the senior leadership team. It works tirelessly in the best interests of the vulnerable pupils.
- The small senior team is keenly supported by the combined strength of teams across all centres. Leaders and staff at all levels are rightly proud of the difference they make for pupils.
- Despite being spread over a wide geographical area, there is a helpful consistency of practice across the five centres.
- Teaching is usually good. The professional development of staff at all levels has a high priority. As a result, pupils make good progress in a range of areas and start to get back on track with positive and purposeful learning.
- An impressive proportion of pupils that access the PRU at key stage 4 return to mainstream school to complete this stage of their education.
- The proportion who sustain education, employment or training when they leave at 16 has risen dramatically this year, bringing it significantly closer to the national average for this age group.
- Careers advice and guidance are strong for the oldest pupils but are less well developed for younger pupils.
- Although attendance remains low, there is clear and sustained improvement compared with pupils' historical rates. Nonetheless, ensuring that pupils come to school as often as possible remains a rightful priority.
- Taking everything into account, pupils' behaviour is good. The PRU is routinely successful in promoting pupils' personal, social, emotional and communication skills. This secures improvements in their conduct and behaviour.
- Leaders' work to develop the PRU's curriculum remains ongoing. Reflective and well informed about what does and does not work, leaders know that there is more to do to improve aspects of the curriculum and ensure that it is implemented to a consistently high quality.

## Full report

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

- Improve attendance by ensuring that the very highest expectations of attendance are embedded and tenaciously pursued at all levels.
- Strengthen curriculum leadership so that the curriculum:
  - sets out precisely the full range of learning and development that the PRU intends for its pupils across all ages
  - is implemented to a consistently high standard.
- Offer high-quality, age-appropriate careers guidance to all pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders are ambitious, determined and sustain tireless enthusiasm to make the PRU a haven for its pupils. Senior leaders have relentlessly high expectations. They are tenacious in their pursuit of doing the very best that they can for pupils.
- Despite the impressively long service of senior leaders at the PRU, they remain fresh, alert and constructively self-critical about what is going well and what could be improved. Leaders readily back up their assertions and beliefs with meaningful statistics and other objective evidence to show that their self-evaluations are reasonable and realistic.
- Leaders' work to improve the consistency and quality of teaching has been successful. They have a secure understanding of its strengths and relative weaknesses. Capacity for leading improvements in teaching across the PRU has strengthened since the previous inspection. This has helped increase the consistency of approach between the centres. The capacity within each centre to sustain and build on this work is growing.
- Morale is high. Staff, including teachers, are positive about the leadership and management of the PRU. They are confident in the improvements that have been made since the previous inspection. Staff feel that they are well supported by leaders in managing pupils' behaviour. Rightly, they recognise leaders' investment in staff training and development, noting how this is prioritised and valued.
- Leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is secure. In partnership with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), staff are alert to any undiagnosed or misdiagnosed needs that may be the cause of pupils' disengagement or behaviour. Recognised screening checks and assessments inform appropriate actions and next steps for individual pupils.
- The curriculum is designed and adapted to meet the needs of specific pupils, including both high prior-attainers and low prior-attainers. It enables pupils who remain on roll at the end of Year 11 to leave with recognised qualifications that they may otherwise not have attained. Additional enrichment activities, visits, outside speakers and engagement in schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, contribute well to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Typical of their restless and reflective determination to secure continuous improvement, leaders have tried different approaches to the curriculum in recent years. They have a much clearer idea of what does and does not work in the context of the PRU as a result. Leaders have identified correctly that there is more to do to ensure that the curriculum consistently supports the intended outcomes for pupils of all ages.
- The PRU receives very little pupil premium as this funding is mostly retained by the referring schools. However, all that the PRU does is aimed at improving the life chances of pupils who are disadvantaged or at serious risk of being disadvantaged in some way. Leaders' analysis of the difference made by particular strategies is used well to continue, modify or change what is offered to each pupil.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is very strong. The majority of the management committee is made up of headteachers whose schools refer pupils to the PRU. It also includes representation from the local authority.
- Governors share a clear vision for the role of the PRU and the reintegration of pupils that it aims to achieve. This helps them to make decisions for the benefit of pupils across the locality. Like those involved in the day-to-day running of the PRU, governors are rightly proud of what Enterprise Learning Alliance achieves.
- The commitment of referring schools to pupils, shown by retaining them on their own rolls, is a vital feature of this partnership and collaborative approach. This is just one example of how governors form a central part of the strategic development of the PRU. The robust debate, when making decisions about reshaping the curriculum, is another.
- The management committee, in partnership with the local authority, is effective in keeping a strong oversight of the PRU's work and holding leaders to account for the quality of the provision. To do this it uses a wide range of means that befits the complexity of the provision. Governors and the local authority maintain a constructive balance between challenge and support. Their visits to the PRU are sharply focused and align well with its improvement priorities and statutory duties.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture of safeguarding is very strong. Leaders and staff are keenly aware of the potential risks to pupils, including those whose situations make them highly vulnerable. Thorough and effective processes for assessing and reducing risk help ensure the safety of pupils both on and off site. Leaders follow the statutory guidance on the safer recruitment of staff closely. The single central record of pre-employment checks is comprehensive and up to date.
- Staff consistently reflect and act on their knowledge of the PRU's systems and processes to safeguard pupils. From the point of induction, staff receive appropriate training, covering an ever-increasing range of safeguarding elements and potential risks that might jeopardise pupils' safety or welfare.
- Record-keeping across this complex provision is of high quality. Systems are known and used well. The role of the designated safeguarding lead and those of the deputy leads are clearly established. They ensure that the wealth of information gathered about each pupil over time is joined up effectively to inform the overall assessments of pupils' safety and well-being. Concerns are acted on promptly. The tight use of the systems means there is a clear trail of what action has been taken and what has happened as result, revealing the PRU's strong links with parents and other agencies.
- Leaders understand well the additional vulnerabilities in the context the PRU works. Leaders and staff have additional training in specific areas. They are vigilant and act appropriately on the concerns they then spot as a result. For example, staff are alert to the potential implications of what pupils say and do that might indicate a risk of radicalisation or extremism. Staff are consistent in their challenge of extreme views and promotion of fundamental British values.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching is well planned. Teachers' careful preparation enables lessons to get off to a positive start and progress smoothly. Teachers are mindful of the need to capture the interest of the PRU's pupils quickly. They plan suitable tasks for the starts of lessons in order to do this.
- Teachers think carefully about the needs of the specific pupils in each group. In most cases, teachers routinely anticipate where additional support or extension is needed, thinking through the steps to achieve this and executing them well.
- The partnerships formed between teachers and teaching assistants are so strong that they often appear intuitive. Adults typically dovetail seamlessly in lessons. This close teamwork supports both pupils' learning and behaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants alike mostly exhibit strong subject knowledge. They encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes, rather than providing them instantly with the answers.
- Very well-established routines, adults' high expectations and timely reminders, and effective strategies to correct unwanted behaviour, all contribute to the positive atmosphere. As a result, learning can take place. Teachers' relationships with pupils are suitably firm but relaxed and respectful. This calm, focused approach encourages pupils to be positive and to focus on their work.
- Teachers draw effectively on pupils' prior learning to help them understand and make links in their learning. Teachers plan appropriate tasks to enable pupils to progress. Their explanations and demonstrations are clear and precise. Links between subjects are sometimes used well to consolidate learning in literacy and numeracy.
- Where the focus is most sharply on the intended learning rather than the task, teachers promote pupils' recall of prior learning well. Occasionally, adults place too much focus on the task itself so the intended learning is unclear or becomes lost. Some teachers are not fully adept at meeting pupils' different needs. Where some or all of these factors exist, pupils sometimes opt out of tasks, take time out of the lesson or do not attend at all.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults are very positive. They are warm but respectful. When willing and able to engage in lessons, pupils take pride in the quality of their written work.
- The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum provides pupils with suitable opportunities to develop their social and communication skills. It is aimed at better preparing them for future career paths and effective citizenship. A wide variety of units cover important topics, from diversity and prejudice to applying for jobs and sexual health.
- Pupils say that they feel safe when attending the PRU. They know who to go to should

they need support and are confident that they will receive it. Important e-safety teaching is included in the PSHE curriculum and both pupils and staff are mindful of the key messages.

- Pupils are able to reflect on similarities and differences between cultures, outlooks and faiths. They are very confident that teachers always pick up and tackle issues such as racism and homophobia. Even though pupils report that some peers do not consistently moderate their views or behaviour as a result of adults' interventions, they are satisfied that staff never give up challenging discrimination and reinforcing messages of tolerance and inclusion.
- The PRU's work to prevent and tackle bullying is very successful. It has earned the confidence of pupils, parents and staff alike. Bullying records show infrequent issues across all sites. Any bullying concerns that do arise are investigated thoroughly and tackled to resolution.
- Careers advice and guidance have been significantly strengthened for Year 11 pupils. They are also improving, more recently, for Year 10 pupils. The PRU has forged closer links with colleges to support smoother transition. This has been supplemented with better links with a bigger range of providers to introduce possibilities to pupils such as apprenticeships, training and other options. Although the PSHE programme covers various elements linked with careers for younger pupils, it is less well developed. It does not always help younger pupils to develop the sense of purpose, ambition or aspiration that it could.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The PRU's behaviour policy, procedures and strategies are clear, consistent and systematic. They are effective in both encouraging positive conduct and attitudes, and tackling unwanted behaviour. Staff use systems effectively to identify the triggers for undesirable behaviour, predict when this may occur, and plan successful avoidance strategies and responses.
- Pupils and staff have mostly positive views about standards of behaviour. Lessons are typically calm, purposeful occasions. Suitable strategies are in place to prevent the behaviour of individuals disrupting the learning of others. Where pupils are struggling to apply themselves to the task in hand, adults' patient but determined approach and relentless focus on the work, rather than the distracting behaviour, often pays off.
- Pupils' conduct and behaviour during the lunchtime and transition times are mostly orderly and controlled. Pupils' occasional bad language is not tolerated and always challenged by adults.
- While pupils typically get into much better habits while attending the PRU, overall, they still do not come to school often enough. There are individual examples of phenomenal improvements in attendance, but this remains a very mixed picture, varying from pupil to pupil. This is despite the considerable effort of staff who work closely with those pupils with the poorest attendance and their families. However, not all staff share the same unwavering and very highest expectations of attendance. Sometimes, staff do not delve as deeply as they could into the reasons for pupils' absence in order to identify specific strategies to tackle it.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils take important steps re-engaging with education. There are examples where the difference this is likely to make to both their post-16 and future life prospects is significant.
- The vast majority of pupils start with attainment levels on entry that are well below expectations for their ages. They often arrive mid-year. Many pupils are known to, or involved with, external agencies such as social services, the police and youth offending teams. A significant number of pupils have emotional, social or behavioural difficulties that are barriers to their learning. For some pupils, previous negative experiences of school can impact markedly on their attitude towards learning and school generally.
- Pupils make strong progress in a wide range of subjects, skills and other attributes. Their progress and improvement are very visible in pupils' books. Outcomes on vocational courses are very positive. Some pupils' artwork has been exhibited locally. Pupils also develop and strengthen their social and communication skills. This includes factors that will increase their employability, for example being punctual, following instructions and being polite.
- Teachers create a safe space where pupils feel able to ask questions or volunteer to read aloud in class. Increasingly, pupils are introduced to and encouraged to read high-quality texts. Pupils who need it benefit from additional reading assessments and targeted support, and usually improve their reading ability as a result.
- The proportion of pupils who successfully reintegrate back into mainstream school, particularly at key stage 4, is testament to the PRU's success. Of those who still attend the PRU at the end of Year 11, the proportion not in education, employment or training the following year has improved dramatically. Although it is still higher than the national average, it has reduced by approximately three quarters.
- For some pupils, poor attendance remains a significantly limiting factor, preventing them from fulfilling their potential.

## School details

Unique reference number	135466
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10094750

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of the management committee	Andrew Somers
Executive headteacher	Micheala Clay
Telephone number	03000 658 500
Website	<a href="http://www.ela.kent.sch.uk">www.ela.kent.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:MClay@ela.kent.sch.uk">MClay@ela.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	19–20 November 2014

## Information about this school

- The Enterprise Learning Alliance is a PRU that consists of five different centres: the Westwood Centre is in Margate; Northwood and Project 15 are in Ramsgate; Southwood is further away in Walmer; and, finally, Dover Skills, is in Whitfield. The number and organisation of these centres have changed over time.
- The executive headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, oversees provision across all of the centres. Each centre also has its own manager.
- Pupils referred to the PRU also remain on the roll of the referring school, using a process of dual registration.
- Around one third of pupils have been identified with SEND.
- A high proportion of pupils are disadvantaged.
- The PRU does not make use of other alternative provision for its pupils.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all five centres to observe them in operation, visit lessons and speak with leaders, staff and pupils. All observations during lessons were carried out with a senior leader.
- The inspection team met with the senior leadership team at different points throughout the inspection. Formal meetings were also held with centre managers, staff, pupils, the management committee and a representative of the local authority.
- The team took account of the views expressed in one response to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as 27 confidential survey responses from pupils and 48 from staff. Inspectors also noted the points made in a letter to the team from a parent, and several questionnaire responses on paper submitted by parents.
- Inspectors observed during lunchtimes and transition times between lessons.
- While they visited lessons, inspectors took the opportunity to review work in pupils' books. An inspector also scrutinised a range of pupils' work across different subjects.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of the school's documents and records, paying particular attention to those relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Bosley	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Bzikot	Ofsted Inspector

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