

Inspection of Tameside Pupil Referral Service

Globe Lane, Dukinfield, Cheshire SK16 4UJ

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils attend Tameside Pupil Referral Service because they have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools or because White Bridge College is the named provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Pupils told inspectors that teachers at the school help them to get back into learning and improve their behaviour and attitudes. Pupils know that leaders and other staff expect them to do their best and to follow the school's guidance about behaviour. Consequently, most pupils succeed in gaining useful qualifications or rejoining mainstream schools to continue their education.

Pupils explained that staff keep them safe in school. Pupils enjoy attending. They know that there is always an adult who will listen to them and give them help if they have any worries.

Pupils behave well most of the time. There are occasions when misbehaviour happens, but pupils said that teachers are good at sorting it out. Pupils also told inspectors that there is not much bullying and that leaders deal with it well if it occurs.

Pupils enjoy a range of activities outside the classroom. They complete educational programmes in places such as the zoo. They also have opportunities to be involved in sports, such as learning how to play rugby with a professional rugby club.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders analyse the underlying causes of pupils' needs and difficulties effectively. Leaders use this information to provide a curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. There is a range of subjects to support pupils in improving their life chances and strengthening their self-esteem. For most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the content of the curriculum and the order in which to teach it. However, in a small number of subjects in key stage 3, the order in which pupils need to learn the content of the curriculum is not as clear as it should be. As a result, it is sometimes uncertain how new knowledge builds on pupils' previous learning.

Teachers typically have good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. Leaders provide teachers with support if they need it. Staff explain clearly to pupils what they need to learn. In most subjects, there are effective ways of checking that pupils remember what they learn. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers do not use assessment strategies as effectively as possible to check pupils' understanding or to plan the next steps in their learning. As a result, teachers do not help pupils to embed what they learn in these subjects as securely as they could.

Most pupils achieve well during their time at the school. The majority of pupils who stay until the end of Year 11 leave with qualifications that help them to move on to further education or employment. Other pupils have short-term stays in the school.

Leaders and other staff work with them to enable them to improve their behaviour and their attitudes to learning. These pupils usually make a successful return to mainstream schools.

Reading is a priority and leaders provide opportunities to help pupils to become more fluent and confident readers. These include daily reading sessions with a member of staff. Pupils typically read well, with fluency and accuracy.

Staff are well trained in managing pupils' behaviour. As a result, the school is an orderly environment. When there are behaviour incidents, staff deal with them effectively and calmly. Teachers successfully use gentle insistence to persuade reluctant pupils to take part in learning.

There are various activities which leaders provide to support pupils' development beyond the classroom. For instance, pupils take part in the work of The Prince's Trust in order to boost their confidence and self-esteem. Leaders have appointed a counsellor to support pupils' mental health needs. Pupils also receive effective guidance and advice about careers.

Leaders have clear and effective processes for identifying the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders skilfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that all pupils have access to the learning. Leaders also provide extra support activities for pupils who need them. Leaders involve parents in the decisions that they make about how to support their child. Pupils with SEND achieve as well as possible as a result of leaders' strategies.

Staff who spoke with inspectors said that leaders are approachable and supportive. They do all they can to keep teachers' workload at a reasonable level. Leaders are considerate of the well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. For example, leaders carry out careful checks on pupils who are absent from school to ensure that they are safe. Staff receive regular training and updates about how to identify safeguarding concerns. Leaders log reports of concerns in detail and provide the help that pupils need promptly. They understand the processes regarding allegations against staff. When required, leaders engage well with other professional agencies to make sure that pupils are kept safe.

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education contributes to ensuring that pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the content and sequencing of the curriculum are not as coherent as they should be. This means that pupils do not know how new knowledge builds on what they have previously learned. Leaders must ensure that, across all subjects, it is clear what pupils will learn and in what order to ensure that pupils' knowledge develops sequentially.
- In a small number of subjects, teachers do not use assessment strategies as effectively as possible to check pupils' understanding, in order to identify misconceptions and plan their next steps in learning. Consequently, pupils are not able to embed knowledge and develop their understanding as firmly as they could. Leaders must make sure that there are effective assessment strategies across the whole curriculum which enable teachers to plan for future learning and help pupils to develop their understanding more securely.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137322
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10226174
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Elaine Horridge
Headteacher	Anthony Benedict
Website	www.tprs.tameside.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and other staff have been appointed.
- The school formerly consisted of three sites but is now situated on two sites. Elmbridge School offers provision for pupils in key stage 2 and key stage 3. White Bridge College offers provision for pupils in key stage 4.
- There are currently no pupils below key stage 2.
- Leaders use three registered alternative providers. Leaders also make use of offsite leisure and fitness facilities to support pupils' and students' education.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: English, food technology, mathematics and PSHE education. In each subject, they met with the subject leader and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at features of the curriculum in other subjects and held discussions with subject leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, members of the governing body, other school leaders, the school's improvement partner and two representatives of the local authority. The lead inspector also had telephone discussions with a number of headteachers of secondary schools whose pupils have attended Tameside Pupil Referral Service.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding policy and related policies and documents. They checked the school's records of the suitability of staff to work with pupils. They talked with staff and pupils about safeguarding matters, pupils' personal development and pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They looked at a range of other policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and their education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors evaluated responses to Ofsted Parent View and the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Dawn Platt

Ofsted Inspector

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