

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Harrow Tuition Centre**

Harrow Middlesex

LEA area: Harrow

Unique reference number: 102180

Headteacher: Claire Nicholls

Reporting inspector: Alastair Younger  
23587

Dates of inspection: 24-27 January 2000

Inspection number: 182840

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE

|                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Type of school:              | Pupil Referral Unit                   |
| School category:             | Community Special                     |
| Age range of pupils:         | 5 –16 years                           |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                 |
| Centre address:              | 82 Gayton Road<br>Harrow<br>Middlesex |
| Postcode:                    | HA1 2LS                               |
| Telephone number:            | 0181 863 9146                         |
| Fax number:                  | 0181 861 5076                         |
| Appropriate authority:       | Local Education Authority             |
| Name of responsible officer  | Elaine Gardner (Adviser)              |
| Date of previous inspection: | Not previously inspected              |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members     |                      | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities  |
|------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Alastair Younger | Registered inspector | Science, religious education, art   | Achievement<br>Teaching<br>Leadership and management             |
| Judi Bedawi      | Lay Inspector        |   | How well the pupils are looked after<br>Partnership with parents |
| Tony Hill        | Team Inspector       | English, design technology, physical education, information technology  | Attitudes, values and personal development                       |
| Mary Vallis      | Team Inspector       | Mathematics, geography, history, modern foreign languages, music<br>Equal opportunities<br>Special educational needs<br>English as an additional language | Curriculum   |

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited  
51 St Andrew's Road  
Cambridge  
CB4 1EQ

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE**

The centre forms a part of a larger service operated by the LEA dedicated to the provision of education for pupils other than in school. Most of the pupils on the roll of the centre have been permanently excluded from school, others are at risk of this happening or have refused to attend. There is also a small population of pupils who are either pregnant or are nursing babies. There are up to 30 pupils on roll at any one time, receiving part-time education. During the inspection there were 22 pupils attending the centre only. Others spend time in school or college in addition to their time in the centre. Most pupils are in the final two years of their education but about 25 per cent are in Key Stage 3 and a tiny minority are even younger. Most pupils are white but about 25 per cent are from ethnic minority groups and two come from homes where English is not the main language spoken. Seventeen pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, this is above average for centres of this type. Very little is known about the attainment of pupils on entry to the centre because the records accompanying them from mainstream schools are often incomplete.

### **HOW GOOD THE CENTRE IS**

The centre has many good features. It is well managed on a day to day basis, there is good teaching and a good curriculum. Those pupils who attend regularly are receiving a good standard of education and are making good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Attendance, however, is poor and this impacts upon overall standards because about a half of what is being provided is not reaching the pupils.

#### **What the centre does well**

- Teaching is good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are very effective in the classroom.
- There is a good and varied curriculum. It concentrates on mathematics and English but includes a good range of other subjects as well.
- The headteacher ensures that the day-to-day running of the centre is good. She is well supported by key staff.
- Pupils who attend behave well in the centre and show interest in what they are being taught.
- The centre is a safe place and pupils are well looked after.

#### **What could be improved**

- Many pupils do not attend on a regular basis. This demonstrates their poor attitude to schooling.
- There is insufficient attention to the promotion of pupils' social and cultural development.
- Formal assessment procedures are not good enough.
- There is no curriculum policy relating to centres of this type in the borough and the admissions policy is weak; it is leaving too much in the hands of the headteacher.
- Too many pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are spending too long in the centre

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the local education authority.*

The main problem that the centre faces is that it has not succeeded in getting enough pupils to attend and in this area it is underachieving with regard to overcoming many pupils' deep-seated resistance to school. The failure to meet the specified provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs also represents underachievement. This is directly related to the weak admissions policy for which the appropriate authority is responsible.

### **HOW THE CENTRE HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The centre has not previously been inspected.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils are achieving in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the centre.

| Progress in:   | by age 16 | Key            |   |
|--|-----------|----------------|---|
| English  | C         | very good      | A |
| mathematics  | C         | good           | B |
| science  | D         | satisfactory   | C |
| personal, social and health education                    | C         | unsatisfactory | D |
| other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs* | C         | poor           | E |

\* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs

The problem of poor attendance impacts upon overall standards. Many of those who are attending regularly are producing good work but this is tempered by those who are producing none because they do not attend. Nevertheless, for those attending regularly, standards in speaking and listening are good because there is an appropriate emphasis in all subjects to promoting them. Pupils also show that they are writing for a good range of purposes. There is not enough emphasis on helping pupils to read better. In mathematics pupils achieve well when working with number. A good standard is achieved by pupils in their varied practical work which includes elements of design and technology. Not enough science is taught to enable all pupils to make sufficient progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the centre                | Those who attend show interest in lessons, though sometimes very little enthusiasm; many pupils arrive late and demonstrate a casual attitude to work.  |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | This is good overall, especially as many pupils have previously had problems in conforming.   |
| Personal development and relationships | This is unsatisfactory because pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop independence and show that they can accept responsibility. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and test the skills they are learning in personal, health and social education. |
| Attendance                             | The most significant area of weakness in the centre. In the week of the inspection only about a half of the pupils attended. Very few pupils attend regularly and although four pupils show a sustained improvement in their attendance there is an overall deterioration this year.                        |

There is a clear division between pupils who attend and those who do not, but the small core of those who are attending well and taking good advantage of the provision on offer is being outweighed by the majority whose attitudes to learning are poor.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Teaching of pupils:  |      |
| Lessons seen overall | Good |

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Sixty-four per cent of the teaching observed was good. Sixteen per cent was very good and 20 per cent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of English is good overall but insufficient use is made of teachers' recognised skills in the teaching of reading and this is a weakness. Mathematics is well taught. Very good subject knowledge is used well to plan lessons which are interesting and lessons are calm and productive. The four rules of number are particularly well taught. There is very little discrete science teaching. What there is is satisfactory. The teaching of PHSE is also satisfactory. The teaching of practical subjects is good as is that of physical activities. Occasionally, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils of differing ability can achieve and are not providing the most able pupils with sufficient opportunities to research and study on their own initiative.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE CENTRE

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Good. Whilst the main focus is on English, mathematics and PHSE there is also a good range of other subjects which include physical and practical activities and give access to history and geography, information technology and art                              |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | A large number of pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. These entitle them to the full National Curriculum and full-time education, neither of which they are getting at the centre. This is unsatisfactory.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | The very small number of pupils whose home language is not English nevertheless, good command of the language themselves and are able to make progress in line with other pupils.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | This is unsatisfactory overall because although personal, health and social education is good there are too few opportunities for pupils to improve their social skills and insufficient visits or visitors to promote an appreciation of their cultural heritage. |
| How well the centre cares for its pupils  | The centre is a safe and caring place but pupils' academic performance and personal development are not being sufficiently assessed and monitored.   |

The centre provides satisfactory information to parents but there are weaknesses as regards the effectiveness of the necessary partnership between the centre and parents to get pupils to attend. This results in many pupils not gaining sufficient access to the good curriculum and teaching that the centre has to offer.

## HOW WELL THE CENTRE IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher gives a good lead to the work and organisation of the centre. Staff with important responsibilities execute them well and the centre has developed a reputation for reliability and good practice with other educational establishments.  |
| How well the management committee fulfils its responsibilities   | The management committee is beginning to address its new responsibilities. In its previous role as an advisory committee it fulfilled its duties well. There is a weakness as regards the lack of a curriculum policy for centres of this type in the authority and the weak admissions policy is resulting in the placement of pupils who should not be in the centre for the length of time they are. |
| The centre's evaluation of its performance                       | There is insufficient assessment or monitoring of performance by the management of the centre   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Specific grants are used well to enhance the areas for which they are awarded.  |

The quality of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good overall. There is a good number of teachers with appropriate qualifications, the accommodation is satisfactory overall and resources for learning are good, especially as regards books and computers. The strengths of the headteacher have ensured that the weaknesses of the appropriate authority are not impacting unduly on standards but there are still too many pupils staying in the centre for too long. The centre directly manages a very small budget. It does this well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE CENTRE

Only two parents responded to the questionnaire sent out to all parents prior to the inspection and only two parents attended the meeting held prior to the inspection. One parent was very happy with the provision whilst the other was unhappy. The findings of the inspection are that the provision is working for about half of its pupils, those who attend.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The centre's results and achievements**

1. Pupils do not achieve as much as they should because they are given only limited access to the curriculum, an average of only twelve hours per week, and many do not attend. The comments below refer to the achievements of those pupils who have established reasonable patterns of attendance. Those who do not attend regularly are making no progress attributable to the centre. The very few pupils who do attend regularly make sound progress in their learning. For the majority, the poor attendance impacts most severely, making any progress in learning fragmented and minimal. It restricts the possibility of pupils achieving recognised accreditation or being able to move on to the good quality post-16 courses available at college or in work placements.
2. Very little information regarding the prior achievements of pupils is made available to the centre and many arrive from mainstream schools with no educational records to give an indication of what they have previously achieved. This is not the fault of the centre, but it is delaying the immediate provision of appropriate programmes in many cases and is an unsatisfactory situation. Most pupils have had an interrupted pattern of education for several years and although most are of average ability nearly all have underachieved in the past, usually because of poor behaviour and attitudes to learning.
3. Standards are very similar for all pupils, irrespective of age. A small group of girls who are either pregnant or nursing their babies achieve higher standards overall because their attitudes and attendance are better but otherwise there is little difference in the achievements of boys and girls. The very small groups enable all pupils to receive a lot of attention from teachers and this means that whatever their ability they achieve a satisfactory degree of success in most tasks. With support, where necessary, the small number of pupils whose home language is not English are able to make satisfactory progress. Only one Key Stage 2 pupil was in attendance during the inspection. This pupil also attends a mainstream school and consequently receives full-time education. The quality of provision for Key Stage 2 pupils is the same as for other pupils but there is insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards at this key stage.
4. At Key Stages 3 and 4, the standards in speaking and listening are good; they are satisfactory in writing, but unsatisfactory in reading. All pupils make good use of the many opportunities for discussion in lessons. Every subject makes an effective contribution to speaking and listening and staff manage discussions well, ensuring that pupils take turns and that contributions are valued, especially from those who find it difficult to put their views to others. For instance, in an English lesson they were able to discuss important issues in a sensible way and maintain a good level of discussion overall. They listened carefully to a video clip on the building and use of castles and were able to answer questions on it afterwards. The very good relationships between staff and pupils ensures that pupils are listened to and that they in turn listen to others. Where pupils benefit from individual tuition, they often show well-developed listening and speaking skills. A weakness with regards to speaking skills is that pupils do not always transfer what they do in the centre to formal situations such as job interviews and work experience.
5. Good examples of writing are on display and in pupils' files. A few pupils write sensitive, personal poetry and most gain experience in form filling and letter writing. Much use is made of information downloaded from the Internet and pupils are able to write their own accounts of events and reviews of books, films and TV programmes. Most are able to redraft their written work to improve it. The handwriting of girls is neater and more accurate than that of boys. Spelling and punctuation is generally weak. Opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English are not always taken and there is no structured programme for developing writing skills across the curriculum. Good opportunities are available for word processing, which helps to overcome the resistance many have to writing.
6. There are no records of books read or reading levels attained by pupils. Although there is evidence that even the most reluctant readers are encouraged to read in lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for them to read either for pleasure or information. There are many good

quality books available, most of them very suitable for these pupils. Very few were seen in use during the inspection. Classic texts are read in English lessons, but intermittent attendance and the reluctance to read weakens the impact of this good provision. The independent learning programme for literacy does enable pupils to tackle their reading difficulties, but it has only just come into use and is not yet making sufficient impact on reading standards.

7. Progress in mathematics at Key Stages 3 and 4 is satisfactory in relation to pupils' previous attainment. In numeracy it is good, with most pupils showing that they can handle number problems of increasing complexity with greater confidence. Pupils are extending their mathematical knowledge especially in data-handling and their understanding of algebra. By Year 11 pupils interpret and plot a variety of graphs, including scatter graphs and conversion graphs. They quickly convert °Fahrenheit to °Centigrade and recognise trends. They understand that correlation may be positive or negative. Mathematical language is developed and pupils are challenged to think. Practical opportunities for using mathematics are provided in such subjects as design and technology and cooking. Pupils gain national accreditation for numeracy and are supported with their mainstream school GCSE work.
8. Not enough science is studied and pupils are not achieving sufficiently well in the subject. At Key Stage 2 it is assumed that pupils will be taught science in their mainstream schools and therefore little science is taught in the centre. At Key Stages 3 and 4 most science is derived from either the PSHE curriculum or from cookery or physical education. Pupils' files show that a few have an understanding of healthy and unhealthy eating and recognise that food falls into three main categories: protein, carbohydrates and fat. Some pupils have studied the effects of pollution on the environment and one has shown a simple awareness of the human skeleton and circulatory system by correctly labelling diagrams. However, there is no systematic, overall coverage of any scheme and no identification of an absolute minimum of important scientific information that pupils should acquire.
9. The centre makes good use of a local sports and leisure centre to deliver its physical education curriculum. Pupils experience a good range of sporting activities, including basketball, tennis, football, swimming and badminton. Fitness training is well organised, with pupils drawing up their own programme on the computer and tracking their progress over the term. Pupils participate with success in outdoor activities, such as canoeing and climbing during the summer term. The physical education curriculum is linked effectively to the personal, social and health education programme. In the lesson seen and from the evidence in photographs and teachers' records, it is clear that pupils make good use of the opportunities available to them and appreciate how their overall health is improved by aerobic and muscle-building exercises. They use fitness training apparatus correctly and safely.
10. Information and communications technology is being well-developed at the centre. At present, the key area of computer use is in word processing and the independent learning programme for basic skills. Most pupils access the Internet and have a working understanding of the keyboard for word processing, database and spreadsheet work. They use 'clip art' to improve the presentation of their work and learn to narrow the field of focus for collecting data.
11. In personal, health and social education pupils make satisfactory progress. They study the struggle for racial equality, which involves the study of key historical figures such as Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. They listen to recordings of King's great speeches and discuss the issues around them with interest and understanding. A visit to the House of Commons to meet a prominent Member of Parliament deepened their understanding of the importance of healthy race relations in communities; it also served to stimulate some good examples of written work from higher attaining pupils. This project made a good and effective contribution to the development of pupils' moral, social and cultural development. In geography, they are able to locate major towns and rivers on a map of England, and in history a well-chosen video clip of the construction and use of castles from the 10<sup>th</sup> century supports the pupils' understanding of the early history of Great Britain.
12. Music is not taught regularly at the centre. However, younger pupils are sometimes calmed by listening to music. They enjoy the challenge of clapping rhythms and exploring percussion instruments. Older pupils will soon be able to experience music at a local school. There are no

opportunities to attend musical events and no musicians visit the school to broaden pupils' cultural development.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in line with their previous attainment and in relation to the targets set them on their Individual Education Plans. There is insufficient use, however, of specialist teaching which is available within the centre, especially for reading and spelling and this prevents progress from being better.
14. Progress made in practical activities including design and technology is good. Pupils of all ages follow recipes to cook and share simple food. Pupils in Key Stage 3 respond well to the challenge to design and make a vehicle to climb a slope. They can understand and follow a simple circuit in order to construct a 'steady hand' game. They are safety-conscious as they use tools that develop better motor skills. Customers and manufacturers are consulted before greetings' cards are designed and made. Very well planned work enables pupils in Key Stage 4 to construct and distinguish between systems and flow diagrams. A minority of pupils has the opportunity to use resistant materials and work with textiles when attending their mainstream school or college courses.
15. A little art is studied by Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils. Pupils have painted portraits and produced some good examples of wire sculpture, but there is not enough work to suggest that the subject has sufficient status in the centre. There is no evidence that pupils are gaining an understanding of different styles nor of them associating these styles with famous artists. A small number of pupils benefited from specialist pottery teaching last term.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

16. Overall, the attitude of pupils to learning is unsatisfactory. It is the large number of pupils who do not bother to attend, or who turn up late, which makes the overall picture unsatisfactory. The attitude towards learning of those pupils who attend the Harrow Tuition service regularly is generally good. The attitude of girls is more positive than that of boys. Pupils generally settle to work well and make good use of the short time they have on tuition. They are able to concentrate and produce some well-developed pieces of work. Pupils are pleased to show and discuss their work with staff and visitors. They are proud of their work on display and treat all displays with respect. This is an area that has caused many of the pupils' problems in the past.
17. The behaviour of pupils who attend is good. There is no evidence of damage to the building and all areas are treated with respect. Classroom behaviour is good and pupils generally work well alongside each other. For instance, in a lesson on home economics, a boy and girl worked well with the staff to prepare and cook muffins. They cleared up afterwards and then offered the cakes to staff and visitors. They are respectful of adults and courteous to visitors. Pupils behave in a mature and responsible way whilst at the public fitness centre and this supports their social and moral development. The good relationships between staff and pupils ensures that unsatisfactory behaviour can be quickly resolved. Although there are some recorded incidents of oppressive behaviour, none was seen during the inspection and the overall atmosphere was calm and supportive. There are no exclusions from the centre.
18. The personal development of pupils is unsatisfactory. Although provision for personal, health and social education is good there are insufficient opportunities for them to take responsibility for their own learning; even the independent learning system used to build up basic literacy and numeracy skills, is supervised by staff. The lack of social time provided for pupils prevents them from having the opportunity to test and exercise their social skills. It also restricts the time that is available for social interaction between staff and pupils outside of lessons. The breakdown of many work experience and mainstream integration placements, demonstrates the pupils' lack of responsibility and their unsatisfactory personal development.
19. The level of pupil attendance is poor. In the week prior to the inspection attendance averaged just over 50 per cent. In many lessons teachers had only one pupil present and very few of the pupils maintain regular sustained attendance. For the rest, attendance is spasmodic. There is a significant minority of non-attenders, most of whom had previous attendance difficulties in

mainstream schools. There has been improvement this academic year for four pupils; two of them no longer give concern about attendance. However, attendance is not as high as it was at the start of the academic year. This is a particular concern for Year 11 pupils.

20. Both authorised and unauthorised absences are unacceptably high. There is a considerable number of condoned absences and a high level of absence due to sickness, recorded in registers. Although some unauthorised absence is due to the chronic non attenders, or to pupils moving to other non-identified schools or boroughs, the level of unauthorised absence for other pupils is still far too high.
21. Punctuality is also a concern. Very few pupils arrive in time for the start of their comparatively short learning sessions. In a questionnaire completed by nine Year 11 pupils, they felt that "you can be late." Pupils who arrive up to one hour late are not uncommon and this impacts severely on the amount of teaching received.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

22. Teaching is good overall. The fact that good teaching results in only satisfactory standards is the outcome of the interrupted pattern of education experienced by most pupils as a result of their spasmodic attendance. In the lessons they attend the quality of teaching ensures that they achieve well and make good progress. Most teachers have specialist qualifications in the subjects they teach. This is good, it helps them to plan well, with a clear view of what they hope to achieve in lessons, and they are using their very good subject knowledge to answer pupils' questions and enter into good quality discussions to make lessons interesting. Classroom management is good, with teachers being quick to pick up on potential problems and preventing them happening. Teachers develop a good understanding of individual pupils by implementing effective, on-going assessment through questioning and getting feedback from pupils at the end of each lesson. They make good use of simple individual programmes in each pupil's file to help them plan appropriately and to emphasise to pupils what they have achieved.
23. A weakness in teaching is that despite there being staff having specialist qualifications, the teaching of reading is not systematically taught other than through a recently introduced computer programme. Many pupils experience difficulty in reading fluently so that this is an important area for improvement. Better emphasis is put on the teaching of number skills with a good, focussed discussion to ensure that nearly all pupils pass basic tests of numeracy skills.
24. Although most lessons hold the interest of pupils and occasionally make them inquisitive, teachers are not encouraging sufficient independent study or research and this reflects the occasional low expectations of the more able pupils. Pupils are often curious and ask sensible questions which shows they are listening to their teachers and occasionally to each other. The demands of teachers ensure that they are kept working at a good pace on purposeful activities despite the fact that some arrive at the centre with little enthusiasm. The good feedback that teachers give pupils helps them to understand where their strengths lie and also where they are going wrong. Overall, progress is satisfactory because pupils are learning well in lessons; but because of absence they often have gaps between subsequent lessons and as a result important things are either missed or forgotten, and this is slowing their progress.
25. Teaching in English is good. The teacher understands the subject well. Lessons are made interesting by varying tasks and interspersing them with good use of visual aids such as a video of the book they are reading at Key Stages 3 and 4. Because the pace of lessons is good pupils remain involved throughout. Pupils are well managed, they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge, and this helps to motivate them.
26. Teaching in mathematics is good. The teacher has good subject knowledge and plans lessons well to interest and extend pupils. The good pace in a Key Stage 2 lesson enabled a more able pupil to consolidate his previous knowledge and move on to new concepts. Focussed discussion accompanied the pupils' attempt to complete a mathematics puzzle that caught his interest and extended his concentration span. Good relationships with pupils ensure that even reluctant pupils attempt new work and make good progress. Lessons are calm and productive. Expectations of

good behaviour are well rewarded. All work is quickly marked and discussed individually with pupils. This good teaching ensures that pupils who attend regularly can maintain some contact with the work expected in mainstream schools. In this way, re-integration into mainstream school or colleges is more likely to succeed.

27. Teaching in design and technology is good and occasionally very good. Well-prepared resources and the good pace of lessons help to ensure that time is used efficiently. Lessons are enjoyable experiences. The teachers' very good subject knowledge and good interaction with pupils gives them the confidence to attempt new work. Self-confidence is raised because of the good progress being made. Opportunities are provided to complete challenging tasks. Time given for planning and assessing their own work gives pupils the satisfaction and responsibility of being closely involved in their own learning.
28. Only a very small sample of teaching of other subjects could be observed. Each subject being taught by the same personnel as the subjects already mentioned, and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' records suggests similar strengths and weaknesses are evident in these lessons and the overall standard to be good.
29. In most lessons pupils make good progress. They are often curious and ask sensible questions which show they are listening to their teachers and occasionally to each other. The demands of teachers ensure that they are kept working at a good pace on purposeful activities despite the fact that some arrive at the centre with little enthusiasm. The good feedback that teachers give pupils helps pupils understand where their strengths lie and also where they are going wrong. Overall, progress is satisfactory because pupils are learning well in lessons.
30. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Planning for individual needs and frequent referral to targets mean that work is set at an appropriate level. There is however a weakness in the lack of consistent teaching of basic skills, especially reading.

#### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

31. The quality and range of curricular opportunities provided by the centre are good. The curriculum is relevant in helping to meet the needs of the pupils. It meets statutory requirements, even in the absence of an LEA curriculum framework for pupils other than at school. The emphasis is on English, mathematics and PSHE. There is insufficient provision for science. Pupils have good opportunities to develop practical. The use of a local leisure centre provides a good range of opportunities for physical activities and a little history and geography are taught. Information technology is regularly used to support the curriculum. There is a limited amount of art and music, and this contributes to the unsatisfactory provision for cultural development. There are almost no extra-curricular activities, and this is a weakness.
32. At Key Stage 2, pupils do not follow the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. They have access to a computer program that gives practice in these basic skills but is insufficiently linked to the classroom curriculum. Opportunities to improve the skills of reading and spelling are insufficient. Continuity of the mainstream curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 3 is maintained by good support for those still attending school part-time. It is less successful for those only registered at the centre. The curriculum in Key Stage 4 includes opportunities for pupils to take examinations in basic literacy, numeracy and graphicacy. It is enriched by very good links with the careers service. Careers education and advice are good. Visits to the workplace and a small amount of work experience broaden horizons but only for a few pupils. Very good relationships built up carefully with local colleges and good support from centre staff are successful in providing a small number of pupils with good courses tailored to meet individual needs. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum but it does not fully meet the needs identified in pupils' Statements of Special Educational Need because provision is only part-time and the full National Curriculum is not taught.
33. The personal, health and social education programme is good. Health education is a particular strength. Outside specialists cover issues such as drugs and alcohol, sex education and personal safety. Relationships and responsibilities, which contribute to pupils' personal development and help to prepare them for life in the outside world, are addressed. Practical opportunities in the

kitchen focus on health and safety as well as cooking. Other lessons develop knowledge of food preservation and bacterial growth. Successful completion of the course leads to a nationally accredited Health, Hygiene and Safety certificate.

34. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Relationships between all associated with the centre are good. Respect is shown for the individual and for good work. Strong feelings and difficult issues, such as racism, are explored in depth. Good displays and opportunities for discussion encourage reflection. The weakness lies in the lack of planned opportunities for spiritual development. Staff and pupils do not meet together regularly as a community to look at life beyond the centre, to reflect and to celebrate success.
35. Provision for moral development is satisfactory. The strong PSHE programme provides a good framework for considering moral issues. There is time to consider the consequences of actions both personally and for others. Thought is given to rights and responsibility, including the right of others to hold opposing viewpoints. Opportunities to consider and address racial issues are a strength. The topic completed by one pupil has been developed into a unit of work so that others may benefit from this experience. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to take personal responsibility for regular attendance and good time-keeping. Pupils are insufficiently challenged about these issues. There is no reward system for good attendance or behaviour. There are appropriate sanctions for poor behaviour.
36. The provision for social development is unsatisfactory. The absence of shared break and lunch times prevents pupils meeting together informally. Group sizes are too small to allow pupils practise in areas that frequently proved challenging and sometimes caused exclusion from mainstream schools. Journeys to classes outside the centre and attendance at local colleges provide limited occasions to mix. The Open Day provides a rare opportunity for pupils to show initiative and to meet others.
37. The cultural content of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient compensation for the small amount of music, art and drama encountered in lessons. Pupils do not read enough. They have insufficient opportunities to explore their own culture or the cultures of other groups or countries. No visits are made to theatres, art galleries or museums. No artists, writers or musicians visit the centre. New links with mainstream schools are beginning to address the weak provision for art and music. Some displays celebrate the cultural achievements of men and women from a variety of cultures. Too few visitors representing the arts or minority ethnic cultures visit the centre.
38. The centre has very good relationships and credibility with neighbouring schools and colleges and with external agencies. This helps efforts to return pupils to full-time or part-time education. Many pupils are on the roll of the centre and also a mainstream school. Other pupils attend college either full or part time. Successful primary and secondary reintegration has taken place over the last few years. In the last twelve months the centre has seen 79 per cent of its pupils return to mainstream education or into employment. However, non-attendance by a significant number of pupils limits the success rate. Nine pupils have completed college courses in the last two years and four are currently attending college full or part-time. The continuity of school work within the centre is sometimes dependent on pupils' reliability in bringing the correct materials. The trust built up between parents and staff is very good. This was witnessed in a mainstream school where a pupil was successfully returned to the classroom by his father following a request from the centre teacher supporting him. Strengthening links with the Careers Service and with agencies supporting work placement have contributed to limited success in giving pupils the opportunity of personal development within the workplace. However, the number of pupils participating and maintaining a placement remains low, and this is an area rightly under review for expansion.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE CENTRE CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

39. The staff at the centre are successfully providing a caring, calm and supportive environment for the pupils who attend. Attention paid to child protection is good and staff are aware of health and safety in the classroom. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the

monitoring of academic progress, personal development and attendance are unsatisfactory. The monitoring of behaviour is good.

40. The quality of daily pastoral care provided by staff who understand and know their pupils well, is good and makes an effective contribution in developing pupils' awareness of good relationships and behaviour.
41. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. There is no effective system of assessment when pupils arrive at the centre. Information received from previous mainstream schools can be variable. Too often it is non-existent. This is not helpful in establishing the individual academic needs of pupils, many of whom need much support with basic skills in numeracy and literacy, including reading.
42. The staff have developed a good daily system of recording brief notes, in each pupil's file linked to work, behaviour and attitudes. Whilst this builds into a useful individual profile for every pupil, it is not used as a basis to help identify a medium or longer-term overview of the needs, strengths and weaknesses in academic progress, or to set academic targets for pupils. Some records are kept by individual staff, but there is no clearly-known, cohesive and consistently used system in place to bring all the acquired information together in an easily accessible and useable format.
43. For pupils attending college or part-time mainstream education, assessment and monitoring is better and more focussed. There is sharing of IEPs, and the centre receives academic targets from schools for the pupils to work towards. Careers education provides good opportunities for pupil self-assessment in their 'Career Action Plans'. These are generally of good quality and show that pupils are keen to do well in the future.
44. The assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. No base-line assessment is made therefore progress in basic skills cannot be measured. It is difficult to assess the social development of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties because of the small number of pupils in groups. The language used within statements is too generalised and is not sufficiently informed by reports from the centre.
45. The monitoring of behaviour is good. There is a clear behaviour and anti-bullying policy. Staff are consistent in their use of strategies to deal with any inappropriate behaviour or actions and remind pupils informally of the expectations of behaviour. Very detailed records are kept of all pupils, although it is not clear how these are used and reviewed. When difficulties arise there is access to a range of support services, if required. Parents and carers are informed of any problems.
46. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is unsatisfactory. Although staff relate to pupils easily and well, there is virtually no opportunity to nurture pupils' social skills and peer relationships in a supportive environment. Because attendance is poor, this often means that pupils only get the chance to interact with their teacher or perhaps one or two other pupils at most. As a result, pupils can lack confidence in wider social settings or in different, unknown surroundings. Many records kept largely relate to behaviour and past experiences; targets for personal development are often generalised, with no clear review system. In pupil reports, teacher comments indicate that there is a need for more development of pupils' social skills.
47. The monitoring of attendance is currently unsatisfactory. If pupils do not arrive, then after half an hour parents and carers are telephoned, but apart from alerting parents this does little to persuade pupils to come in. The centre offers no incentives to pupils as a way of motivating attendance. A log book is maintained for phone calls received to the centre about absence but ways of using this information in the individual pupil attendance sheets are unclear as reasons for absence and the termly totals are incomplete, hindering the monitoring process. Some reasons for absence are also recorded in the register. Authorised and unauthorised absence is very high and has yet to be reduced effectively.
48. Since September, there has been a very significant increase in support from the local authority. An educational social worker is now linked to the centre, focussing on the oldest pupils and the most severe non-attendance cases. Their attendance is now being closely monitored. A number of initiatives are being developed including a community youth service project for Year 11 pupils,

due to start very soon. Letters are sent to parents warning them of the consequences of their child's non-attendance, and there is a renewed commitment to taking legal action. Home visits are now established, and this is generally having a positive impact and is developing further ways of communication. Other means of improving pupil attendance, such as pupil incentives, are being discussed.

49. The renewed commitment from both the centre and the local authority to address the poor attendance is a very positive step. However, the new and developing initiatives have not yet had time to impact on improving attendance levels. Registers do not meet requirements. Data, such as pupils' birth dates, are not always entered. Changes made to marks in registers are not explained and can be unclear, and there is a lack of clarity about authorised and unauthorised absence.
50. The school has a clear policy on child protection. The designated teacher is trained, as are some of the staff, and training is regularly updated. All staff have access to advice and support and are aware of procedures to be followed. Slightly different procedures are in place for pupils receiving home tuition. There are a number of pupils on the register, or who are 'looked after'. Any sensitive records are kept separately and securely. An informal concerns book is also kept securely; this is good practice. The quality and access to both informal and formal advice and support from outside agencies is good.
51. Local authority health and safety policy and guidance is followed. Staff are aware of the importance of health and safety when teaching. Detailed risk assessment is undertaken. A few issues were noted and brought to the attention of the centre. There is currently no qualified first-aider on the staff, but a member of staff is due to receive training in May. The centre has not fully ensured that procedures for recording fire drills and for testing portable electrical equipment are undertaken on a regular basis.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE CENTRE WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Few parents visit the centre and the vast majority of contact is by telephone. Parents do usually attend meetings if requested by the centre. There are some good individual examples of parental support; for example, ensuring that pupils arrive to their part-time mainstream schools, or accompanying pupils having work placement interviews.
53. With the recent support of the local authority an educational social worker has been appointed to link with designated pupils and their families, with the main focus of improving attendance. Although at a very early stage, this is already starting to develop home-school links, parental partnership and confidence, through, for example, home visits. These offer the opportunity to emphasise the importance of attendance and allows parents to discuss any associated difficulties they may be encountering. A community youth service project is about to start, involving Year 11 pupils.
54. Parents are regularly invited to attend annual reviews and many do. They also receive letters keeping them informed about for instance, a young women's community group, individual meetings with teachers, or about the centre's Open Day held last July. This was successful with about ten parents, the majority with their children, visiting the centre and learning about its work. Another open day is to be held in March.
55. All pupils receive an annual report on their academic progress over the year. The quality of these reports is unsatisfactory because they do not clearly state what pupils know, understand and can do. Not all subjects taught are reported on; for example, science. Reports are often very general and similar for different pupils; for example "more practice with reading" or "maths is a core subject (he) will need to study for GCSE." The writing of the reports themselves is variable, with errors in spelling and grammar. There is no space for parental comment. This is also the case with annual reviews where insufficient record is made of input from parents, other than their attendance. The quality of these reports is not sufficient to inform decision-making usefully when Statements of Special Educational Need are being reviewed.

56. Parental involvement in their children's learning is very limited. A meeting organised for parents of year 11 pupils received a disappointing response. Homework is sometimes set for pupils who are able to take work home in homework folders. There is however no programme to support reading at home for the many pupils needing to develop this basic skill. Pupils themselves comment that there is less homework at the centre and not enough time for learning whilst they are in the centre.
57. There is increasing recognition from the centre that ways of extending and developing the quality of partnership with parents and carers need further exploration. The number of parents attending the annual review of statements is closely linked to good pupil attendance at the centre. A minority of parents attend termly reviews of targets on Individual Education Plans. Good telephone contact and some teacher attendance at mainstream parents' evenings increase opportunities for partnership.

### **HOW WELL IS THE CENTRE LED AND MANAGED?**

58. The headteacher is managing the centre well. She has a good understanding of how and why the provision has developed in recent years and a good vision of how it is hoped to move it on to meet its changing demands. A particular strength is that key individuals are given responsibilities that they are fulfilling well. Schools, colleges and support workers all speak very highly of the provision commenting especially on high professional standards and reliability. The open sharing of ideas and experiences between the headteacher and all staff helps develop a consistency of teaching which is high and there is an appropriate drive to identify possible links to further improve the curriculum.
59. The Local Education Authority is supporting the centre through the involvement of specialist support and advice, but it has not produced clear policy documents to guide and support the headteacher. For instance, there is no curriculum policy for the education of pupils other than at school nor has the Local Education Authority established precisely what the expectations of the centre curriculum will be. A further weakness is that although there is an admissions policy it does not sufficiently define who may or may not be admitted and who will make the final decision, nor does it include policy for the review and discharge of pupils. This latter point is leading to a build-up of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need who are not being moved on to provision that more accurately reflects the requirements of these statements. This is not to say that these pupils are not receiving a satisfactory education, but it is not the one to which they are entitled. A third weakness of the appropriate authority is that standards are not being monitored. Other than the statistics provided by the headteacher in her good end-of-year report there is no ongoing analysis of progress, either academic, behavioural or as regards attendance.
60. The quality of the day-to-day management, the high standard of teaching and the good curriculum is helping to minimise the impact of the lack of policy direction from the Local Education Authority and ensures that pupils do not suffer as a result. For instance, the lack of a curriculum policy does not stop the curriculum from being good. But the problem is that staff are increasingly being expected to work with pupils who should not be in the centre.
61. The centre does very little formal monitoring or evaluation of performance but nevertheless has a clear idea about its own strengths and weaknesses, which matches the views of the inspection team. It recognises the major problem as regards attendance and has recently secured the support of an Education Welfare Officer to help it to address the problem. In this respect it is being well served by the Local Education Authority. Regular meetings and briefings of all staff allow problems and triumphs to be shared and provide informal feedback to the headteacher as to the problems being experienced. All staff participate in the Local Education Authority's "continuous professional development scheme", which provides a good alternative to formal appraisal.
62. The centre has very little control over its budget, but it uses the small amounts of money it has at its disposal well. This includes monies for curriculum development and grants for the purchase of books and for staff enhancement. All expenditure is carefully monitored with good, clear systems in place. No cash is handled by the centre. The centre gives satisfactory value for money.

58. The staffing of the centre is good. There are enough teachers to ensure that groups remain small and teachers have a very good range of subject specialisms. This has a significant impact upon the quality of teaching. Support staff contribute well to many lessons, but in some their role is not made sufficiently clear and they are underdeployed.
59. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. It allows the existing curriculum to be taught effectively but it has its limitations. If every pupil attended it would be cramped. Whilst classrooms are of an adequate size for groups of up to six pupils there is no communal area suitable for larger groups nor facilities for recreation. This is one of the obstacles standing in the way of expanding the curriculum to include better social opportunities. The lack of a science area reflects the priority given to other subjects rather than the difficulties of providing one. Strengths of the accommodation include dedicated space for practical activities, a comfortable library area and bright, clean classrooms.
60. Resources for learning are good. The provision of a good range of interesting and appropriate books has been a recent, good development and there are also good and improving ICT resources, which are being increasingly well used by teachers and pupils to enhance learning experiences.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE CENTRE DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to raise standards the LEA and headteacher should now:

- Continue to address the issue of pupils' attitudes to attendance and work at the centre by:
  - Identifying appropriate incentives to encourage attendance and promptness then implement these;
  - Including specific targets for each individual in IEPs and monitor the progress towards these targets;
  - Pursuing a greater commitment from parents to ensure better attendance;
  - Rewarding those pupils who show enthusiasm for the work they are doing.

*Paragraphs 16, 19, 20, 21*

- Make better provision for pupils' social and cultural development by:
  - Introducing short periods during the centre day for pupils to gather together in larger groups to practise their social skills;
  - Encouraging those pupils who relate well to each other to use the library area for private study;
  - Arranging a programme of visits to local places of interest, including art galleries, museums and places of importance for people from other cultures;
  - Arranging a programme of visitors representing the arts' world and representatives of other cultures.

*Paragraphs 36, 37*

- Improve assessment procedures by:
  - Ensuring that each pupil is tested on entry to establish what he/she can already do;
  - Using this information to help plan the curriculum, establish precise targets and then assessing progress towards these targets on a regular basis.

*Paragraphs 39, 41, 42*

- Ensure that the LEA meets its statutory requirement by:
  - Producing a curriculum policy for the education of pupils other than at school;
  - Redrafting the admissions policy to prevent the possibility of inappropriate referrals and to include policy on the reviews of pupils and their discharge;
  - Monitoring standards more closely

*Paragraphs 59, 61*

- Address the issue of too many pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need spending too long in the centre by:
  - Reviewing the needs identified in each statement and ensuring that provision reflects these needs, especially with regards full-time education and access to the full National Curriculum;
  - Improving the quality of assessment and reporting to better inform the drafting of statements upon review.

*Paragraphs 32, 55, 59, 60*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 24 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 32 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 20        | 60   | 20           | 0              | 0    | 0         |

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the centre's pupils

| Pupils on the centre's roll           | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of pupils on the centre's roll | 29           |

| Special educational needs   | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 17           |
| Number of pupils on the centre's special educational needs register | 27           |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 2            |

### Attendance

| Authorised absence |    | Unauthorised absence |    |
|--------------------|----|----------------------|----|
|                    | %  |                      | %  |
| Centre data        | 28 | Centre data          | 29 |

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for last whole term before the inspection

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 6            |
| Black – African heritage        | 1            |
| Black – other                   |              |
| Indian                          | 2            |
| Pakistani                       |              |
| Bangladeshi                     |              |
| Chinese                         |              |
| White                           | 20           |
| Any other minority ethnic group |              |

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   |              |           |
| Black – African heritage     |              |           |
| Black – other                |              |           |
| Indian                       |              |           |
| Pakistani                    |              |           |
| Bangladeshi                  |              |           |
| Chinese                      |              |           |
| White                        |              |           |
| Other minority ethnic groups |              |           |

*This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y11**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 6.6 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 5   |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y11**

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 3    |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 82.5 |

### ***Financial information***

|                |        |
|----------------|--------|
| Financial year | 1998/9 |
|----------------|--------|

|  | £     |
|--|-------|
| Total income                               | 3,087 |
| Total expenditure                          | 3,087 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 100   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 0     |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 0     |

### ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

#### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 29 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 2  |

#### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

Only 2 parents returned the questionnaire. One parent was not happy with the centre and expressed dissatisfaction with every aspect of its work, whilst the other expressed satisfaction in most areas but did not feel sufficiently well-informed about how his child was getting on and would like more work to be sent home. The child of the dissatisfied parent no longer attends.