

INSPECTION REPORT

IPSLEY PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT

Redditch, Worcestershire

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 130987

Teacher in Charge: Mr S. Evans

Reporting inspector: Mrs C. Marsh
002113

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th April 2000

Inspection number: 215457

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school:	Pupil Referral Unit
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Unit address:	c/o Ipsley First School Oakenshaw Road Redditch Worcestershire
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Appropriate authority:	Worcestershire LEA
Name of responsible officer	Mrs S. Steel
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs C. Marsh	Registered inspector	Equal Opportunities.	What sort of unit is it?
		Science, Art.	How high are standards? The unit's results and pupils' achievements.
		History, Geography.	How well are pupils taught?
		Personal, Social and Health Education.	What should the unit do to improve further?
Mrs M. Kerry	Lay inspector		How well does the unit care for its pupils?
			How well does the unit work in partnership with parents?
Mrs E. Treacher	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs.	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
		Mathematics.	How well is the unit led and managed?
Mr G. Perkins	Team inspector	English, Physical Education, Information Technology.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Ipsley Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) serves the Northern Area of Worcestershire. It is part of the Local Education Area (LEA) wider support service, which is working with pupils to reduce exclusion from mainstream schools. It caters for pupils aged 4+ through to 11 who are at risk of exclusion. It can accommodate a maximum of 24 pupils at any one time. At the time of the inspection, there was one permanently excluded pupil. There were 16 pupils who were also attending their mainstream schools and who were on the roll of the PRU and 28 pupils who were being supported in schools. For an increasing amount of time staff are involved in outreach and preventive work in schools. No pupils were from ethnic minority backgrounds. One pupil had a statement of special educational needs (for emotional and behavioural or moderate learning difficulties). Attainment on entry is below average.

HOW GOOD THE UNIT IS

This is a very good PRU. Pupils are well taught and make very good progress. They achieve well in their work and show major improvements in their behaviour and attitudes. Their personal development is very good. The unit has strong links with the mainstream schools that pupils attend, in both the development of the curriculum and the management of behaviour for the pupils. The leadership and management of the unit is excellent, both within the unit and from the LEA. It is part of a wider support service. The unit makes a major difference to the pupils it works with and it is very successful in reducing exclusion. Resources are very well used and the PRU gives very good value for money.

What the unit does well

- The unit is very effective in helping pupils remain in mainstream school.
- The unit ensures that pupils' personal development is very good, including improving their behaviour.
- The teaching is good for pupils of all ages. There is appropriate emphasis on both learning and improving pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
- Links with schools are very good. What is taught in the unit, and the way pupils are managed, fits in with what happens at school.
- Partnership with parents is very good, and parents appreciate what the unit does.
- The unit is exceptionally well led and managed.
- Pupils make very good progress in their work and attain well.

What could be improved

- The tracking of individual pupils' attainment and progress is not systematic enough.
- Information Technology (IT) is not used nor taught often enough.
- There is no outside play area.

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

STANDARDS

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

Progress in:	By age 11	Key	
English	A	Very good	A
Mathematics	B	Good	B
Science	A	Satisfactory	C
Personal, social and health education	A	Unsatisfactory	D
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	Poor	E

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

Given their previous educational history, pupils achieve very well during their time in the unit. Thanks to effective teaching, they make very good progress in their work and achieve particularly well in English, science and in personal, social and health education. Pupils are learning to overcome problems of literacy and numeracy and show hard-won improvement. Pupils achieve the targets set in their individual education plans and show improving behaviour and attitudes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the unit	Very good. Pupils develop a positive attitude to their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behaved well during the inspection. Records show behaviour improves significantly for pupils at the PRU, and carries over into school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem. They learn to consider the consequences of their decisions and to understand how their actions affect others.
Attendance	Good.

The unit is very successful in helping pupils to develop a positive approach to their learning, to improve their behaviour and to developing good relationships with staff. Pupils' personal development while at the unit is very good. This helps them to remain in mainstream school. This is important in helping to reduce exclusion.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Good, and sometimes very 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.

Pupils are well taught. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons. In 45% of lessons it was good

or better. In 10% of lessons it was very good or excellent. The best teaching was seen in English and science. The mathematics teaching seen was good. Overall, literacy and numeracy are well taught.

Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. They make it clear that pupils must work hard, and relationships are firm but caring. The focus is on learning, as well as on improving behaviour. They know what individual pupils need and ensure that the work set meets these needs. Tasks and resources are interesting and help motivate pupils who learn well as a result. In those lessons where teaching was satisfactory, rather than good, some time was not used well, and some pupils could have been challenged more.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE UNIT

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good for pupils currently attending. Individually designed programmes of lessons fit in well with what pupils are doing at school. Overall, the curriculum is broad balanced and relevant.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Behavioural needs are very well catered for, and teachers also pay good attention to pupils' learning needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Cultural social and moral development is very well catered for; spiritual development is satisfactory. Many subjects including personal, social and health education (PSHE), together with the daily life of the unit make an important contribution.
How well the unit cares for its pupils	Very good at tracking and promoting good behaviour and personal development. The monitoring of individual pupils' academic progress is not systematic enough.

The unit works very well with parents. Teachers ensure that parents are very well informed about what is happening and the progress their child is making. The unit works well with schools, and makes sure that pupils' overall curriculum is as broad and balanced as it would be in full-time mainstream school. Overall the curriculum is good. The unit is very good at helping pupils learn, and improve their behaviour, but it needs to be more rigorous in the way it tracks pupils' academic progress.

HOW WELL THE UNIT IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Exceptionally good, helped by the LEA's clear vision for the purpose and development of its PRUs and a clear framework of policies and procedures.
How well the management committee fulfils its responsibilities	Well informed, with clear terms of reference. Its role in monitoring the effectiveness of the PRU is at an early stage.
The unit's evaluation of its performance	The wider service of which the PRU is a part has a good range of methods for evaluating how the PRU is performing. There is systematic, rigorous monitoring of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staffing is used flexibly. When teachers are not teaching in the PRU they are involved in support work to schools – always with the aim of reducing exclusion and keeping pupils in school.

Leadership and management are excellent. Teaching is effectively monitored on a regular basis and statutory teacher appraisal is in place. The centre internally is a welcoming and attractive place for learning, but there is no outside play area. Resources are adequate and are used wisely, improvements are well planned and carried out, and the service applies the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils' attitudes and behaviour improve and their confidence and self-esteem grow.• Teaching is good and pupils get on well with their work.• Teachers have time for parents and pupils, and communication is good.• Coming to the unit has made a big difference to their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The outside appearance of the unit.

Inspectors confirm parents' views about the unit and its work.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The unit's results and achievements

1. Overall, pupils' attainment is below average for their ages, and, in many cases well below average. They have major behavioural needs, and some have significant learning needs. Many come with low levels of literacy and numeracy. The standards of attainment in the unit are therefore below average for pupils' ages in both key stages. The PRU is not involved in national tests. Pupils take these at their mainstream schools.

2. Pupils achieve very well during their time in the unit. They learn and make very good progress in their work as well as in their personal development. This is due to effective management and good teaching, which ensures that pupils learn to think for themselves. Pupils are successful in learning to overcome problems in a range of subjects, but particularly in literacy, numeracy and science. Progress in lessons is very good, and they achieve well in lessons in all the subjects taught at the unit. During their time at the unit the attitudes and behaviour shown in lessons is always good and usually very good. The unit does well at raising pupils' levels of self-esteem and confidence as learners.

3. Almost all pupils achieve the targets set in their individual education plans. (IEPs) These targets are regularly reviewed to ensure that improvement continues. Most of the targets are appropriately behavioural and are aimed at changing pupils' attitudes and behaviour so that they can remain in mainstream school. This happens for almost all pupils and represents significant achievement.

4. The one permanently excluded pupil (excluded from mainstream school) who attends the PRU, is awaiting specialist provision following being statemented. All pupils are dual registered and attend both their mainstream school for part of the week and are taught at the unit for a number of lessons. These lessons are agreed with their mainstream schools as part of a process aimed to help them remain in school. Schools and the PRU work successfully together to improve pupils' behaviour so that, wherever possible, pupils can be fully integrated in mainstream education. This approach is very successful. The LEA and the unit has a strong commitment to inclusion, and an increasing amount of the time of PRU staff is spent in outreach, preventive and support work in schools.

5. In **English**, pupils make good and many make very good, progress. Pupils come to the unit with reading ages below or well below what could be expected for pupils of their age and with low or very low levels of literacy. With effective teaching, and good use of the National Literacy Strategy structure, pupils make good progress, especially in reading. Although their reading out loud is punctuated by pauses, and for some pupils this lack of fluency reduces their understanding of the meaning of the text, pupils' attitudes to books and reading in general shows very good progress. They are developing skills of word recognition and phonic awareness, which prepares them for a more rigorous interaction with text. Pupils at both key stages struggle to spell many high frequency words, but develop confidence in sounding out and recognising words when reading them. Although there is some work in using information technology (IT) as a learning tool, this is insufficiently developed at present. The unit acknowledges this and has appropriate plans to improve this dimension in the near future.

6. At Key Stage 1, pupils make very good progress in their understanding of phonics and sentence structure. Some pupils understand that speech marks in text indicate where a character in a story is talking. They make sound progress in developing their sight

vocabulary and are encouraged to develop the depth of the vocabulary they use in writing – developing adjective knowledge to profile characters, for example. They understand the terms “author” and “illustrator”. Pupils attempt to profile characters using a story frame, this is effective in developing understanding of story structure, but often, both spelling and handwriting are well below average for pupils ages.

7. At Key Stage 2, most pupils do not have a clear understanding of the structure of sentences, and many are struggling to develop the use of paragraphing. Poor reading skills limit pupils’ ability to understand and to make appropriate responses to texts. Word attack and decoding skills are at a low level, given pupils’ ages.

8. There are some good opportunities for extended writing and on these occasions pupils make good progress in developing an understanding of story structure and use of punctuation. Pupils’ work in basic grammar and punctuation in worksheet-exercises is improving, but they have not yet developed an ability to transfer this knowledge successfully to extended free writing. There are good examples of writing for other purposes, such as designing a poster to promote welfare of animals and a comparison between the lifestyles of a mother in Chembakoli village and a mother in Redditch.

9. In **mathematics**, standards in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are below average and for some pupils at Key Stage 2, well below average. However, all pupils make progress in mathematics, particularly in developing number skills, and many make good progress. In the lessons inspected, pupils had a good grasp of appropriate mathematical language. Work was well matched to pupils needs and, with good teaching, they make good progress in learning number facts. In aspects of work being covered by some pupils (on programmes of work negotiated with mainstream schools) standards are near to average. Pupils’ mental mathematics is improving.

10. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing competence in ordering numbers and completing simple sequences. They are able to add numbers up to 10 and do very simple subtraction. They are beginning to recognise and identify simple 2D shapes and can measure using hand-spans.

11. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show basic competence in addition, subtraction and multiplication of whole numbers. Some can identify acute, obtuse and right angles and can collect data through use of a tally chart. The most able are competent with a wide range of number calculations, know the properties of a rectangle, an isosceles triangle and an equilateral triangle and can round off successfully to the nearest 10 and 100.

12. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) is supporting the development of pupils’ mental calculation skills and is helping them to explain their calculations orally. It is providing them with an extended range of strategies for calculating solutions to mathematical problems.

13. In **science** lessons seen, at both Key Stage 1 and 2, attainment was below average and for some pupils well below average. In spite of this, pupils achieved well and made very good progress. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand how to ensure a fair test, for example in a practical lesson on floating and sinking, and can make some limited links between the results of their experiment with broader general scientific concepts. At Key Stage 2 they show a good understanding, for example of the differences between plants and animals, or the application of the forces of magnetism. Their grasp of the appropriate scientific concepts and terminology is helped by very clear focussed and relevant explanations, effective teacher led demonstrations, structured discussions and interesting practical work.

14. In other subjects, including **personal, social and health education (PSHE), physical education (PE), art and humanities**, pupils' make very good progress, in spite of low levels of literacy. As a result of skilful teaching, pupils are encouraged to reflect and analyse, and they learn how to manage their own behaviour more effectively, as for example in a lesson on road safety. They learn to evaluate their own work, attitudes and behaviour and to think through consequences. As they demonstrated in a PE lesson, they can, with adult support, take turns, share, co-operate, listen carefully and respond appropriately. They are developing their practical skills, for example in art where with the aid of skilled teaching, pupils are learning to work with a range of materials such as fabric, clay and paint. Techniques, such as modelling in clay are learned and related to the property of the material. Many however, find it difficult to talk about their intention or about the effects they are trying to create. In the one PE lesson seen, some pupils have good physical skills of ball control, and have developed effective hand-eye co-ordination, whilst others find this more difficult.

15. In **information technology (IT)**, most pupils show a basic computer literacy. They are able to use a mouse, open and close programmes, and enter and edit text. They make some use of word-processing, but there is too little opportunity for pupils to use IT across the whole curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. The unit is very successful in enabling pupils to develop more positive attitudes to learning, to improve their behaviour and to take responsibility for their own actions. Through good liaison with mainstream schools and with effective support for reintegration into mainstream schools, these improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which are evident when they are in the unit, are successfully transferred to the school situation. This is a real strength of the unit's provision and is greatly valued by headteachers in mainstream schools.

17. Pupils come to the unit with a wide range of behaviour problems and with challenging, and difficult behaviour. Through teachers' skilful behaviour management and consistent implementation of the unit's behaviour policy, pupils learn to moderate their behaviour and develop appropriate responses to work and to staff. This is successfully supporting pupils to learn the routines and expectations of mainstream classrooms.

18. As a result of teachers' positive and encouraging feedback to pupils and by the consistent respect shown to them, pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem. Through the daily interactions between staff and pupils and through the regular reviews of progress, pupils receive a high quality of support for their personal development. Pupils have learned to relate to adults in a friendly, relaxed yet respectful manner. This represents a significant improvement since they started attending the PRU.

19. It is clear from the unit's records that there are on occasions instances of very challenging behaviour. However, during the inspection pupils behaved very well, showing respect for both teachers and for one another. This consistently good behaviour allowed them to learn and to make very good progress in their work. All staff who work with pupils are skilled at managing them and because of this pupils are able to sustain their concentration for considerable lengths of time and are prepared to persevere even when they find the work difficult. There have been no pupils excluded from the unit.

20. Break times are used well to support pupils' personal development and to develop their social skills. Pupils play co-operatively with one another and with staff. They know what

choices are open to them and take part in the activities in a sensible and responsible manner. Although the unit has no outside play area, a good range of activities are provided for the pupils. In these less formal situations, pupils continue to behave well and relate positively to staff and to one another.

21. Levels of attendance at the unit are good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. Pupils in the PRU are taught well. The quality of the teaching is strength of the unit. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and in 45% of the lessons it was good or better; and 10% of lessons were very good. There was good or very good teaching in all subjects inspected.

23. There are examples where teachers' enthusiasm for their subject, such as science, captured pupils' interest and led to their active involvement. In other lessons, the teacher's calm, patient, insistent approach brought out the best in pupils. Caring relationships, underpinned by firmness, are a key feature of teaching in the unit. Teachers both give and expect respect, whilst building pupils' confidence and self-esteem. They insist on high standards of behaviour, attitudes, co-operation and effort, and, pupils respond positively to these expectations. Teachers are good at managing pupils' difficult behaviour and through the effective reward system, they teach pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Classroom routines and expectations are consistently reinforced and adhered to.

24. In all subjects there is a strong emphasis on developing subject skills and knowledge alongside the development of social skills and appropriate behaviour. Pupils are taught to think about the consequences of their actions, and to take responsibility for them. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.

25. There is an effective approach to managing learning alongside behaviour. Teachers are good at asking probing questions and at encouraging pupils to extend their thinking. Lessons are carefully planned and have very clear objectives, which are explained to pupils. This clear framework gives pupils confidence and reassurance.

26. Pupils are taught in very small groups, but with the same style and demands of a whole class teaching approach, in order to match what is expected in mainstream school. Teachers ensure that lessons have appropriate pace and pupils are made to work hard. They constantly refer to pupils' work and life in their mainstream school, so that pupils are clear that the reward for success in the unit is greater time and eventual full time in their mainstream school. Success in mainstream school is the clear goal at all times.

27. Teachers use a wide range of interesting resources, ideas and approaches to learning. On almost all occasions, methods and tasks are chosen to suit the learning needs of individual pupils. Teamwork between teachers and support assistants is good.

28. In lessons where, teaching and learning were satisfactory, there were never the less some weaker features. Sometimes, questioning was not challenging enough – for example, checking memory, rather than developing greater understanding. At other times, the pace of lessons slowed particularly towards the end. Some teaching did not focus tightly enough on exactly what individual pupils needed to do in order to improve their work and therefore failed to challenge them sufficiently.

29. In **English** the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, and there are examples of good and very good teaching. Teaching is at its best, in Key Stage 1, where the

teacher has very good subject knowledge and structures the use of the National Literacy Strategy very well. She selects texts, teaching methods and classroom organisation that are very good for the purpose of the lesson. Good, open questioning enables her to elicit responses from pupils which enable them to improve their knowledge and understanding, and which allow her to gain useful assessment and diagnostic information on the pupils' attainment and progress. The management of behaviour is very good, insisting on high standards and showing consistent expectations. There is clear differentiation to challenge pupils at all levels, as for example in the lessons where the use of the text "Oops" was well used. There is effective use of plenary times which enables pupils to reflect upon their learning and model what they have achieved as an example to others.

30. Where teaching in **English** is less effective, though still satisfactory, it is because use of some time in lessons was less effective and the lesson slowed towards the end. In other lessons, strategies to meet the needs of all pupils were less clear. Occasionally, the use of plenary time at the end of lessons is used for a sharing of work rather than reinforcing what has been learnt, or the lesson over runs and there is not enough time for this to happen meaningfully. In some cases, differentiation is planned to be by outcome rather than by targeting work sufficiently at pupils' level of prior attainment. This is particularly true for those pupils who are more able than others and are capable of accepting greater challenges. An example of this was in the note-taking/persuasive argument work at Year 6 where one pupil was clearly more capable in understanding than another but still completed identical work.

31. Without exception, the teaching of **mathematics** is sound or good. Teachers are successful in creating a supportive climate for learning. Lessons are very well planned and prepared. Practical equipment is well used to help pupils identify and practice number patterns and the teaching methods used are in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Good differentiated work is provided to meet the needs of individual pupils, who are well supported. The explanations teachers give are clear and their patient and encouraging relationships with pupils are key in helping them to develop a positive attitude to mathematics and in sustaining their involvement in the work set. They are skilful in managing pupils' behaviour to ensure they learn and make good progress.

32. The **science** lessons inspected were always satisfactorily taught and at Key Stage 2 very well taught. Here there were clear, focused introductions ensuring pupils remembered and used their previous learning, and a brisk pace was set which was maintained throughout the lessons. In all lessons, pupils were actively involved and interested in the varied range of activities, including well-timed and well-managed practical and oral work. Explanations and demonstrations were excellent. Feedback to pupils was perceptive and helpful. The necessary specialist language was taught systematically and carefully. Conclusions to lessons were effective in summarising with the pupils what had been learned. Pupils clearly enjoy science, work hard during lessons and make very good progress because of high quality teaching. At Key Stage 1, a wider range of differentiation strategies would ensure that all pupils, particularly the higher attainers, make as much progress as possible during lessons.

33. The limited teaching seen of other subjects was good, and often very good indeed for, example, in art and PE. In these lessons there is good use of time and a well-planned structure to the lesson with an appropriate balance between practical activity and teacher demonstrations. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attitude and enforce these consistently. In PE the teacher is very well supported by another teacher who acts in the supporting role, and also by a member of the unit's support staff. Together, they make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and select teaching methods that meet pupils' needs. It was only possible to observe a very limited range of subjects being taught but planning, recording and pupils work in their books

and an display show that that the work covered is broad and relevant and allows pupils to make good and frequently very good, progress.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

34. There are significant strengths in the curriculum, which is effective in equipping pupils to return to full time mainstream school. There is a clear a focus on evaluating and improving what is already a good provision.

35. Since the recent reorganisation of the PRU Service, which is part of the Worcestershire Support Service, there have been significant changes in the way this unit operates. Until recently, it catered mainly for pupils of upper primary and secondary age. It now caters for pupils at Key Stages 1, and 2. It aims to provide education for pupils who are at risk of being excluded from school and who attend the unit on a sessional basis while continuing to attend their mainstream school. The increasing thrust of the work of the PRU staff, as part of the LEA's wider behaviour and learning support service, is to work with schools to avoid the risk of exclusion. Much of their work involves outreach, preventive and follow-up work in schools. At the time of the inspection, there was one permanently excluded pupil in the PRU who was awaiting specialist placement.

36. The PRU curriculum therefore, represents only a part of pupils' overall curriculum, since all pupils are dual-registered and attend their mainstream school as well as the PRU. Through this arrangement, they all receive a suitable full-time education. The curriculum complies with the LEA's curriculum policy for PRUs.

37. Every pupil has a properly managed and co-ordinated learning programme, which is successfully helping them back into full-time attendance at school. Before any pupil is admitted to the unit, a clear plan is agreed between the pupil, parents, school, unit and other agencies who are involved, focusing on a prompt return to full time at school. This is managed very well. Responsibility for pupils' curriculum and for their achievement and progress is shared in an effective way between PRU and school. The combined provision is under constant review for each pupil as their integration to full-time mainstream education continues, but always tries to offer pupils the same range of learning opportunities as in mainstream school.

38. The unit has developed an effective approach to working in partnership with schools, which is clearly centred on helping pupils remain in mainstream education. This is positively affecting pupils' achievement, and their readiness for, and success in, returning to school full time.

39. Links between the unit and schools are very good. Local headteachers are supportive of the aims of the unit. They are clear about its value in the context of the national and local policy of inclusion. The staff of the unit work hard in pursuit of the same aims – to keep pupils in school. Discussions with headteachers during the inspection showed they value this partnership particularly in discussing pupils' progress, in both what is to be taught next, and in their behaviour and attitudes, and in evaluating the reintegration process. There is close liaison over curricular opportunities, and the work that pupils are doing in the unit is increasingly linked directly to what they are doing in school. The resulting curriculum package provided by PRU and mainstream school is carefully balanced for every pupil. There is regular contact with schools, over and above the more formal review meetings, and class teachers in schools value the aims and approach of the unit and are particularly thankful for advice and strategy suggestions made by the unit staff on outreach visits. This very good working partnership is a key factor in the successful implementation pupils' staged

reintegration to school. This is managed very well. Arrangements for preparing and supporting reintegration are very good. They are backed by the local authority's clear framework, with very good arrangements for co-ordinating the support of other agencies where appropriate.

40. A key strength is that the PRU curriculum is clearly planned with the aim of preparing pupils for a return to full-time in school – an aim that is achieved. Although pupils benefit from being taught in smaller classes and from receiving a great deal of individual help and attention, they are taught in ways which replicate those of the school. For example, the literacy and numeracy strategies are taught to the suggested structure and there are opportunities for whole class, group or individual work such as would be found in a mainstream classroom. Although PRUs are not required to follow the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum, teachers in the unit ensure that work is, in fact, firmly based on National Curriculum requirements and QCA schemes, just as in schools. They take good account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

41. The curriculum has a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and science, and on improving the personal and social skills necessary for successful reintegration. This is done to good effect. A high priority is given to personal and social development. This is entirely appropriate given the prior experiences and attitudes of pupils joining the unit. Records and teacher planning show that PSHE lessons make an effective and important contribution to pupils' personal development and help prepare them well for a return to school. High levels of successful reintegration are a testament to this. Sex education is taught by visiting members of the Worcestershire Health Education Trust. This is completed termly and is taught at appropriate and sensible levels. Pupils are also taught humanities, art, physical education and design and technology. There are some opportunities for pupils to use information technology in lessons though, opportunities for pupils to use IT as a learning tool are limited and there are no planned, discrete IT lessons. However, there are sound plans for this to happen in the future, once NOF training has been completed and assimilated by teachers. There is a good, useful software library and sufficient hardware for this to be successfully used once plans are implemented.

42. For pupils in both key stages the curriculum is good in both range and quality. Its breadth is assured by the unit's insistence on working together with schools to design appropriate study units in humanities, art, PE and design and technology. This has been deliberately done to value the contribution that these subjects in particular, make to pupils' skills and understanding of moral and social skills. Emphasis is placed upon the co-operative and teamwork elements of the subjects and this has a very positive impact upon pupils' personal development.

43. There are limited opportunities for links with the wider communities, but where they are available the unit makes good use of them. For example, involvement with the Worcestershire Health Education Trust makes a valuable contribution to both health and sex education. In addition, there are good links with a local Police Officer, who has acted as Schools Liaison Officer. He has worked with pupils on life skills and drugs awareness programmes which made a positive contribution to personal and social development.

44. Provision for pupils' special educational needs is good. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is drawn up for each pupil. Staff from both the unit and the school, as well as parents, are involved in agreeing the targets so that the pupil understands that all concerned are working together with the same aims. This is very helpful. Teachers in the unit are aware of the targets and take them into account in planning their work. IEPs are particularly strong on behaviour and attitudinal targets, with some reference to more academic targets in the skills, understanding and knowledge of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. These targets

could now be more sharply focussed than at present in order to provide a basis for measuring progress in attainment. Nevertheless, the targets for behaviour are very good and are having a positive impact. They are regularly and efficiently monitored and reported upon.

45. There are few extra-curricular activities planned by the unit itself. The unit, rightly, takes the view that these areas are the domain of the mainstream school and use them as an incentive for the pupils to want to return to school to take part. Where pupils are involved in clubs and activities at their school, the unit makes appropriate provision for them to be able to continue their involvement – arranging transport for a pupil to attend his school for football training, for example. The unit liaises effectively with schools to see that pupils do not miss important opportunities.

46. The PRU's policy on homework is that opportunities will be provided where they are appropriate. This is a satisfactory approach and enables pupils to take part in a very positive manner when they do complete homework. A Year 6 pupil, for example, was encouraged to take home a book to be read and reviewed by the following week. He agreed to this willingly after discussion with his teacher and support assistant.

47. The PRU makes good use resources from within and outside the unit to enrich the curriculum. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and develop their respect for the traditions, values and beliefs of others. All pupils benefit according to need from what the unit provides and there is clear equality of access to all curricular opportunities. There are no specific groups of pupils who do less well than others.

48. The unit does a great deal to cultivate and improve pupils' personal development and to help them to improve their attitudes and behaviour. The strategy of using "zone boards" to enable pupils to be constantly aware of their own progress and development is a particularly good one, especially when extended to use in school, and at home, as it frequently is. Provision for spiritual development is more limited but is satisfactory. Opportunities are taken, for example, in the personal and social education programme, and story time (Key Stage 1), to help pupils to develop self-awareness, to reflect on their own and others' views. There is a very strong and successful emphasis on moral and social development both in lessons and around the unit generally.

49. In PSHE in particular, but also in a range of other subjects such as PE , moral and social matters are approached directly. Values such as self-esteem, self-confidence, trust, honesty, empathy, respect and co-operation are actively promoted. Pupils are encouraged to acknowledge and accept the consequences of their actions. Teachers find good opportunities of giving them practice in working together, turn taking, negotiating and acting on behalf of a group. Good attention is paid to pupils' cultural development. Work in humanities, assembly, story time and PSHE help to broaden pupils' horizons and to appreciate the diversity of cultural and multi-cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

50. The unit provides very effective personal support for pupils, which helps them to raise their standards of achievement and enables them to reintegrate successfully into mainstream schools. Staff know individual pupils well, their backgrounds and their needs. They are very effective in meeting these needs through a consistent, supportive approach to pupils which has a strong emphasis on improving their behaviour alongside developing successful approaches to learning.

51. Staff of the unit are very successful in regularly assessing, tracking and monitoring pupils' achievements and progress in terms of their personal development and behaviour and

the monitoring of personal development is extremely strong. Targets for improvements in behaviour and in attitudes to learning are clearly identified in IEPs and shared with pupils. The regular reviews of individual pupils' progress are particularly good at monitoring their personal development, attendance and behaviour, in celebrating successes with pupils and their parents, and in setting targets for further improvements. The use of targets to improve behaviour in individual education plans, regular review meetings, feedback to pupils and parents and joint action with schools mean that progress is well-tracked and demonstrated. This gives encouragement to pupils who can see what their efforts are achieving, which further reinforces a positive cycle of improvement. The daily recording of pupils' success in meeting their targets coupled with the regular reviews of IEPs effectively helps pupils and staff to track progress on a daily and longer-term basis.

52. There is not however, the same clarity in monitoring pupils' academic attainment and progress and the setting of clear targets for pupils work. The quality of baseline assessment information varies across the curriculum. In some subjects, a good start has been made on establishing baseline assessment for example in reading, spelling, comprehension and mathematical skills. In other subjects, such as science, teachers are aware of what pupils know, understand and can do, even though this is not systematically recorded, and they use this information in planning work. In other subjects, such as art and information technology, little information is received on entry. In spite of this, individual teachers make good use of ongoing assessment to inform their short term planning. Overall however, the outcomes of assessment activities are not yet consistently used by staff to identify clear and precise learning targets in all subjects. This is a further development that is needed. This has already been recognised and planned for in future actions by the teacher in charge.

53. Very good behaviour is consistently expected and promoted by staff, both in the unit and on the journeys to and from the unit. The behaviour policy is successfully translated into practice in the daily life of the unit. As a result, pupils are able to learn good work habits and develop their behaviour and social skills in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, one in which individuals are valued.

54. Most pupils do not present any attendance problems, but where there are concerns the unit monitors the situation closely and works consistently and realistically to improve attendance for individuals. Strategies for monitoring and following up pupils' absences are effective. The provision of transport to and from the unit successfully promotes and supports good attendance. There is a close partnership with the education welfare service on both attendance and child protection issues. There are good, clear procedures for reporting child protection concerns and staff are aware of what needs to be done.

55. There is a health and safety policy in place, supported by good procedures for reporting and rectifying defects.

56. The joint approach with mainstream schools is particularly useful in enabling pupils to improve through consistent expectations. There is good support for reintegration, with continual emphasis on this as a goal. Parents are well involved in the efforts to help pupils improve, and there is good liaison with other agencies to support families. Through the daily example of staff, through their concern for and knowledge of each pupil and through effective liaison with a wide range of services, the well being of pupils is given a high priority.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. The high quality of the links with parents is a strength of the units' work. Parents are actively involved, with the unit staff with whom they have a regular dialogue. They are pleased with the work the unit does with their children. This appreciation was expressed through the

questionnaire and parents' meeting, but also through letters and cards expressing thanks for the time, care and support given to pupils by unit staff.

58. Parents receive very good quality and detailed information about their child's progress through daily home/school record sheets, which also invite them to comment on behaviour at home. Parents are also very well involved in frequent reviews, and are encouraged to work with the child at home in ways consistent with the unit's overall approach. This means that pupils receive coherent support on how to improve behaviour.

59. In addition, the very effective involvement of mainstream schools through regular informal contact, as well as in formal review meetings, means that all partners work together to help pupils. The forging and maintaining of these vital working relationships is a major strength of the unit's work, in which the teacher in charge plays a key role. The unit's partnership with parents is a vital and highly effective link, which ensure pupils receive a total package of support. Inspection evidence showed that the unit has a sensible policy on homework, working with mainstream schools to avoid overloading pupils with work.

60. Some parents felt concerned about the lack of a playground for break time. Inspectors agreed that the lack of a playground was a concern.

HOW WELL IS THE UNIT LED AND MANAGED?

61. Leadership at both LEA and unit level is purposeful, powerful and empowering. It gives clear educational direction to the unit's work and has successfully forged a strong team ethos with a shared commitment to preventive work in schools and to the successful full time reintegration of pupils into mainstream schools. This shared vision and unity of purpose is successfully supporting the development of both pupils' learning and their behaviour and is enabling them to achieve success in a mainstream school setting.

62. The teacher in charge maintains a clear overview of the work of the unit through regular supervision meetings with staff, through observation of their teaching, and through daily informal discussions with them. Monitoring of teaching is accorded a high priority, with teaching being observed by LEA inspectors and teachers from other PRUs, as well as by the teacher in charge. Consequently the teacher in charge has a clear insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching, and through feedback from observations identifies for himself and with individual teachers, both good practice and areas for development.

63. Planning for improvement is successfully embedded in the Service's structures, with areas for development being identified at the regular meetings of teachers in charge. Staff are appropriately involved in evaluating the unit's success in achieving its planned improvements.

64. The unit's success in improving pupils' behaviour is greatly valued by mainstream schools. There are a number of key contributing factors to the high regard in which the unit is held. These include the successful communication between the unit and the schools, the shared programmes of support for pupils, the successful work of the units' staff in the schools and the personal effectiveness of the teacher in charge. His leadership is energetic and visionary. He exemplifies the values and purpose of the unit to staff, parents, pupils and schools. He leads with good humour, ensures good relationships and values the work of the whole team he has created. He leads by example and successfully supports the staff in all aspects of their work. The teacher in charge ensures the successful day to day management

of the unit. He has put in place clear systems that are known and implemented by all staff. During a period of maternity leave a senior member of staff has very effectively taken on the role of acting assistant teacher in charge. His hard work, together with a friendly calm and efficient approach has done much to sustain the life and running of the unit.

65. The LEA has set in place appropriate terms of reference for the PRUs' management committee. It is still at an early stage, having only had one meeting to date, and its role in evaluating the quality of the unit's provision has still to be fully addressed.

66. There is sufficient staff for the numbers of pupils on roll and teachers have sufficient expertise to meet the demands of the curriculum. Teachers are very skilled and successful in managing pupils with behaviour difficulties. Good support is given for teachers' professional development, through appraisal, through team meetings and through appropriate courses. The induction for new support staff is particularly well planned and delivered and gives a very high level of support both before taking up post and when in post.

67. The accommodation, although externally unprepossessing, is internally an attractive and stimulating environment. The displays of pupils' work are attractive and celebrate pupils' achievements in a wide range of subjects. The lack of a designated outside playground restricts the opportunities for on-site PE and for break time activities for pupils. Curriculum areas are generally well resourced, though more books would be helpful to support the teaching of English with the youngest pupils.

68. The unit's budget is managed centrally as part of a wider service, within the authority's application of the principles of best value. Costs associated with this unit can be properly identified. A time-based apportionment of teaching expenditure related to support work is made, in order to arrive at a figure for the cost of a placement within the unit. This means that the service manager has a reasonable basis on which to assess the units' cost effectiveness.

69. The modest level of funding delegated to the teacher in charge is well managed. The allocation of additional funds at the year-end is also as effectively managed as possible, with a sensible strategy in place to ensure such monies are well spent. Additional resources can be made available for specific developments such as information technology, and this enables the teacher in charge to plan improvements not possible from devolved funds. Specific grants are effectively targeted to appropriate purposes.

70. The unit overall is very effective, and gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE UNIT DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. To build on what the unit does well and to improve things further, the teacher in charge and staff of the unit, working with the LEA, should:

- (1) **Set up a more effective approach to monitoring pupils' attainment and progress** so that:
 - pupils' attainment and progress is systematically monitored in all subjects (*Paragraph 52*);
 - this knowledge is used to track individual pupils' progress in the PRU

(Paragraphs 3, 44, 51, 52);

- the targets related to learning in pupils' IEPs are as focussed as behavioural targets *(Paragraphs 44, 51, 52)*.

(2) **Develop IT across the curriculum** *(Paragraphs 5, 15, 41)*.

(3) **Improve the accommodation** in particular by:

- seeking to provide an outdoor play area *(Paragraphs 20, 67)*.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	35	55	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 unit's pupils

Pupils on the unit's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the unit's roll	16 P-T

Special educational needs	No of pupils
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the unit's special educational needs register	16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
Unit data	5.7	Unit data	1.5

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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	16 P-T
Any other minority ethnic group	

102,194.47.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N.A.

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y1 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65.5

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	102,194.47
Total expenditure	102,194.47
Expenditure per pupil	3,904
Balance brought forward from previous year	N.A.
Balance carried forward to next year	N.A.

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

There were 7 returns to the parental questionnaire. 1 parent attended the meeting held by the Registered Inspector. At the meeting and in the returned questionnaires there was strong support for the work of the PRU. The parents indicated that being in the unit helped their children to improve their attitude and behaviour and build confidence and self-esteem. It was making a big difference. Parents feel that their children liked coming to the unit and that they were making good progress there, both in their work and in their personal development. The staff of the unit expected pupils to work hard and achieve their best, and the unit was helping children to become mature and responsible. Parents believe that the teaching is good. They feel well informed about how their children were getting on and felt comfortable about approaching the unit with any questions or problems. Parents felt the unit was well led and managed and worked closely with parents. A concern was expressed about the external appearance of the accommodation.