

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE STUDY CENTRE
PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT**

Ealing

LEA area: Ealing

Unique reference number: 131753

Headteacher: B McDonagh

Reporting inspector: G K Kayembe
2901

Dates of inspection: 12 - 15 June 2000

Inspection number: 215472

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the unit. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the unit must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school: Secondary support centre

School category: Pupil Referral Unit

Age range of pupils: 11-16

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Unit address: Longfield Site
9 Longfield Road
Ealing
London

Postcode: W5 2DH

Telephone number: 0208 991 9590

Fax number: 0208 566 8538

Appropriate authority: Local education authority

Name of responsible officer: Hilda McCafferty

Date of previous inspection: 2 March 1998 – Longfield Site
18 May 1998 – Park Site

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Gulshan Kayembe	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of unit is it? What should the unit do to improve further? The unit's results and achievements. How well are pupil's taught? How well is the unit led and managed?
		Information technology	
		Modern foreign languages	
Suzanne Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the unit work in partnership with parents?
John Godwood	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well does the unit care for its pupils?
		Art	
		Music	
		Equal opportunities	
Carmen Rodney	Team inspector	English	
		Design and technology	
		English as an additional language	
Donald Innes	Team inspector	Geography	
		History	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Open Book Inspections
6 East Point
High Street, Seal
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN15 0EG

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 11
Information about the unit	
How good the unit is	
What the unit does well	
What could be improved	
How the unit has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the unit	
How well the unit is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the unit	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12 - 19
The unit's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	19 - 20
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	20 - 24
HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	24 - 27
HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	27 - 28
HOW WELL IS THE UNIT LED AND MANAGED?	28 - 30
WHAT SHOULD THE UNIT DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	30 - 31
PART C: UNIT DATA AND INDICATORS	32 - 35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

The Study Centre is based on two different sites. The Longfield site in Ealing caters for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and Park site, based in Southall, for pupils in Years 10 and 11. In the previous inspection, the two sites were inspected separately. There are currently 97 pupils on roll, 41 at the Longfield site and 56 at Park site. Pupils are placed in the Study Centre if they have been excluded from a mainstream secondary school, if they are at risk of being permanently excluded, or if they are school refusers or poor attenders. About half the pupils on the Longfield site and about four at Park site are also registered at a mainstream secondary school. All pupils on roll have special educational needs, the majority for emotional and behavioural needs. However, many also have learning needs. Eleven have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The attainment on entry is well below average. Just over half the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is high. Eleven do not have English as their first language although none is a beginner in English. The majority of pupils are boys.

HOW GOOD THE UNIT IS

Within the constraints of the limited accommodation and the not inconsiderable distance between the two sites, the centre provides high quality education for its pupils and gives good value for money. The good quality of teaching throughout the centre results in pupils making good progress and the majority achieve well given their poor academic performance in mainstream education. Virtually all leave with some form of accreditation. Clear-sighted leadership and good management ensure that the centre plays a pivotal role in successfully supporting those at greatest risk of failure. Establishing a good working partnership with local schools has been a key factor in achieving this success.

What the unit does well

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and effectively promotes pupils' learning.
- There is a well-established programme to reintegrate pupils in mainstream education and the centre's success is founded on the very good relationships it has established with partner schools and institutions.
- Good leadership and management ensure that there is a common understanding of the centre's values and aims and that these are well reflected in its work.
- Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. As a result, in their everyday practice, they focus well on the development of pupils' personal and social skills as well as their academic skills.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their relationships with one another are well developed.
- Procedures for establishing good behaviour and encouraging regular attendance are very thorough.
- The key tutor role at the Longfield site is carried out successfully.
- Very good use is made of the local and wider community to enrich the curriculum.

What could be improved

- Accommodation difficulties currently restrict further development of curricular provision and improvement of the centre's efficiency.
- Assessment procedures are not comprehensive enough to identify and meet pupils' needs fully.
- Attendance for pupils at Key Stage 4, although improving, is not yet high enough.
- The use of literacy, numeracy and information technology across subjects is not fully developed.
- Although no risks to safety were observed, clear and routine procedures are not in place for checking that equipment and buildings meet safety standards in all respects.

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

HOW THE UNIT HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement overall since the previous inspection. The serious weaknesses identified at that time have been effectively tackled. The centre is continuing to work towards full-time provision for all pupils, and there has been a substantial increase in the teaching time. Procedures for reintegrating pupils in mainstream schools are good and have resulted in a good level of success so far. Much work has been done on improving attendance and this has had a reasonable measure of success, although attendance levels remain below national averages. Provision for pupils' personal development is now good: effective attention is paid to pupils' welfare and guidance and monitoring of their progress. Whilst further work is needed on assessment, procedures currently in place are satisfactory, with some good use being made of assessment information to guide future planning. Financial planning and monitoring of spending now ensure that funds are efficiently used. Teaching has improved substantially and is now consistently good. As a result, pupils make good progress overall, including good progress in areas where weaknesses were identified at the time of the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

When pupils start at the centre, their performance in mainstream school has usually been poor and their prospects for achievement in public examinations are equally poor. By the time they leave, almost all achieve some form of accreditation and those who successfully reintegrate into mainstream education do even better. Although attainment is well below national averages, and this is confirmed by public examination results, pupils achieve well given their low standards of work and wide gaps in knowledge across most subjects when they start at the centre. Whilst low when compared with national averages, pupils' performance in the national tests for 14 year olds in mathematics, and in GCSE art, is particularly good compared to their performance in other subjects. The quality of artwork seen during the inspection was often lively, creative and interesting. Pupils' practical skills in food technology are also strong, although the depth of their knowledge and understanding is weaker.

As indicated by the table above, pupils make good progress as they move through the centre. Pupils make very good progress in physical education and reach standards that are in line with national norms. The addition of a computer suite at the Longfield site has resulted in pupils in Years 7 to 9 making rapid progress in developing their information technology skills so that they are not far behind where they should be. Progress in information technology for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory, but not as good as for pupils in Years 7 to 9 because they have less access to computers.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the unit	Good. The majority of pupils are well motivated and keen to do well. They are usually interested in their work, and are often curious about aspects of it and confident enough to ask questions. Most pupils respond well to rewards and those in Years 10 and 11 are keen to achieve well in public examinations.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well. All know the code of conduct and try to observe it. It is rare to see pupils deliberately misbehaving, although there are instances where some do not pay enough attention to their work. Overall, behaviour improves over time and pupils behave well with increasing consistency.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are polite and friendly. The majority make good progress in developing their social skills and there are good examples of collaboration and co-operation over tasks in lessons. However, pupils rarely show initiative in their learning and are often too dependent on their teachers. Relationships with teachers are very good and this contributes to the good attitudes to learning.
Attendance	Although attendance is below the national average, and well below for pupils in Years 10 and 11, there has been a steady improvement since the previous inspection with further improvement since the published rates for the 1999-2000 academic year. Pupils' attendance is better at the centre than it was when they were in mainstream school, particularly for those who dislike school.

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.

The overall quality of teaching is good. In 78 per cent of the lessons seen, teaching was good or better, and in 22 per cent it was very good. None was unsatisfactory. Teaching was good in English, mathematics, science and personal and social education. The quality of learning closely matched the quality of teaching, but was occasionally not as good because, in some instances, pupils were not prepared to put enough effort into their work, or one or two misbehaved, which slowed down the pace of teaching and learning. Overall, though, pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Teachers prepare their lessons well and have high expectations. This often results in challenging work that pupils find interesting and relevant. Overall, teaching meets pupils' individual needs well, though not enough attention is paid to making pupils less dependent on the teacher. A key feature of teaching is the extent to which all teachers are aware of the need to promote pupils' social and personal development and the skill with which they do this while at the same time developing pupils' subject knowledge, skills and understanding. In many lessons, teachers successfully promote literacy and numeracy skills, for example drawing graphs in science or geography lessons. However, there is no formal strategy for teaching these skills and there are missed opportunities. Teachers have good subject knowledge for their main subject, but not all are confident about using computers as part of their teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE UNIT

Aspect	Comment
--------	---------

The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory in range and breadth, and very good in terms of additional activities. The reintegration programme is well developed and the very good relationships with schools contribute to its success. Very good use is made of colleges and the local community to extend and enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and much improved since the last inspection. IEPs are in place for all pupils and reviewed regularly. The targets set for improvement provide useful main aims, but are too general to guide precisely pupils' step-by-step development. Transition plans to help pupils take the next step in their careers after leaving school lack precision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good; it is satisfactory for spiritual development. The wide range of additional activities currently organised on a rotational basis promotes pupils' cultural and social development well.
How well the unit cares for its pupils	Very good attention is paid to improving pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance. The role of tutor is well developed at Longfield, but is not as well developed at Park. Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough. Some good use is made of assessment information. However, there is insufficient testing of pupils on entry to the centre and not enough analysis of assessment data.

The centre makes considerable effort to work in partnership with parents and carers, including those of looked after children, and does all it can to involve them in children's work. As a result, parents and carers make a satisfactory contribution to their children's education.

HOW WELL THE UNIT IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The centre is well led and managed by the head of centre and by the heads of each site. The headteacher is very successful in providing a clear educational direction for the work of the centre. Thus, there is very good implementation of aims and policies and staff on each site work well as a team, but there is not enough collaboration on curriculum planning between sites. There is a reasonably good level of delegation of duties to teachers.
How well the local education authority (LEA), as the appropriate authority, fulfils its responsibilities	The local education authority fulfils its responsibilities well and keeps a close check on the work of the centre. There are good procedures at Borough level, such as the pupil placement panel, to ensure that pupils in need are placed at the centre quickly and appropriately. However, the LEA has not established clear procedures for regular checks on the safety of buildings and equipment.
The unit's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. There is generally good informal monitoring of the centre's performance. The heads of site and the head of centre have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision. However, formal methods of checking on the work of teachers are not yet in place.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are used well. Financial planning and management are good and the centre makes satisfactory application of the principles of best value.

A major drawback to further improvement is the nature of the split site and the lack of appropriate accommodation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Behaviour management is good. Staff are approachable. Children like school. The teaching is good. The centre's expectations of pupils are high.	Homework is not regularly provided. Parents would like to see full-time provision. There is not enough information about progress. There are not enough activities outside lessons.

Inspection evidence supports parents' and carers' positive views and also some of their concerns. Staff have tried unsuccessfully to ensure that homework is done regularly in the past. They are aware that new strategies are needed to encourage pupils to do homework. Written information for parents and carers gives a clear picture of pupils' personal development but not of their academic progress. Whilst the centre does not run regular after school clubs, it does provide a very good range of activities as an extension to the curriculum. The centre is working towards full-time provision, which becomes a requirement in 2002. It has been very creative in tackling this issue and has managed to provide modular courses at local colleges for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and additional activities off-site for all pupils. These will continue to be available next academic year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The unit's results and achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry to the centre is well below average. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are weak in most cases. For example, results of reading tests taken by pupils joining the Longfield site show that on average their reading skills are 3 years behind their chronological ages. Pupils' performance in mainstream schools has usually been poor and they arrive at the centre with wide gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills in all subjects of the curriculum. This is often as a result of poor behaviour or attendance, or both, whilst in mainstream education. Under such circumstances, pupils' future prospects for performance in public examinations are very limited. Given this poor start, the majority of pupils make good progress and achieve well even though, overall, by the end of Year 9 and Year 11 the attainment of pupils at the centre remains well below average. This is reflected in the results of public test and examination results. However, these results do not take account of the attainments of pupils who are successfully reintegrated into mainstream education and whose performance in public examinations is on the whole much better.
2. In 1999, pupils' performance in the national tests for 14-year-olds was well below national averages in English, mathematics and science, although in mathematics it was far better than in English or science. Inspection evidence indicates that results in science are likely to be better this year due to greater stability in staffing at the Longfield site. GCSE results in 1999 were low, but better in art than in other subjects. The majority of pupils in Year 11 achieve well, and gain at least some accreditation through recognised courses, such as Certificate of Achievement courses in food studies and science and basic literacy and numeracy certificates. Current Year 11 pupils show improved results in basic numeracy and literacy from those who took the examinations last year, that is in 1999. Their results in the Certificate of Achievement in English have also improved from the results of 1999. The success of the reintegration programme does mean that the centre's examination results do not reflect the good progress being made by pupils as some of the ablest pupils have gone back to school.
3. From lesson observations and examination of pupils' written work, good progress is evident in English, mathematics and science although attainment is well below average by the end of Years 9 and 11. Pupils also make good progress in food technology and art where their attainment improves to below rather than well below average by the end of Year 11. Pupils at the Longfield site make good progress in information technology whilst those at Park make satisfactory progress. The good progress made by Longfield pupils is because of the access they have to an information technology suite. They have regular information technology lessons and this has accelerated the rate at which they are improving their skills in using computers. Progress in humanities is also good at Longfield and satisfactory at Park. In physical education, pupils make very good progress and reach standards that are broadly in line with the standards expected nationally.
4. Pupils make good progress in their personal and social development and meeting the general aims in their IEPs, although the lack of clearly enough defined and

specific targets means that the steps forward taken by pupils in learning are not as finely tuned or systematic as they could be.

English

5. Attainment in English is well below the national average at both key stages. Pupils have good listening skills and speak confidently. They listen to instructions, seek advice and readily ask and answer questions. Most readily share their ideas and contribute to discussion. Most pupils enter the centre with reading scores that are three to four years behind their actual ages. Reading improves over time but the low attainment in national terms persists to the end of Key Stage 4. Nevertheless, at Key Stage 3, pupils read complex texts such as *Macbeth* with understanding. They can comment on the plot and provide clear outlines of events and motives. They also carry out simple research well on historical events to understand the text. At Key Stage 4, the most able pupils analyse both literary and non-literary texts critically as seen in their comparative essays on *'Examination Day'* and *'The Monkey's Paw'*. All pupils use background information on literary texts to deepen their understanding of the themes with many using quotations effectively to support their comments. The lower attaining pupils develop a general understanding of a storyline and themes.
6. Writing skills, including planning, drafting and proof reading, are used competently by a small number of pupils. All pupils write for a range of purposes and most make good progress when using 'writing frames' to structure their work. This is particularly successful at Key Stage 4 for extended essays. The most able write coherently and the work on advertising is generally well handled by the majority of pupils. Pupils' spelling is weak, however, and many require support on the simplest words. The basic grammatical structure of some sentences is correct but most pupils have much progress to make in understanding and applying grammar correctly.

Literacy across the curriculum

7. Listening skills are good, as pupils are encouraged to take turns and listen carefully to each other. Good oral skills are promoted in science at both key stages. An example of this was in Year 9 where pupils were given the opportunity to prepare and teach a science lesson. Good presentation skills were used with pupils preparing their own worksheets on topics such as teeth, the circulatory system and adaptation to the environment. Year 10 pupils show an increasing readiness in science to use talk to approach their learning and develop their understanding of the subject.
8. Pupils use subject specific vocabulary effectively in some curriculum areas such as mathematics throughout the centre and science at Key Stage 3, and pupils read aloud in most lessons. In humanities, pupils learn how to read for meaning as they select and highlight specific points in texts. At Key Stage 3, pupils make some good use of independent research skills when completing project work. They can, with help, extract and represent information in note form. All write for a variety of purposes and good use is made of information technology to help to develop writing skills. Many pupils are, however, reluctant writers but are encouraged to try to overcome this difficulty through the use of well thought out worksheets. Handwriting is generally clear and final pieces of work are usually neat. Pupils make sound progress and receive satisfactory grounding in developing the use of literacy skills in subjects of the curriculum. However, there is not a coherent approach to teaching

literacy across the curriculum or a common marking scheme to ensure that technical skills are consistently reinforced. These factors lead to opportunities for developing literacy skills being missed or inappropriate use of writing, for example excessive copying in some science lessons at Key Stage 4.

Mathematics

9. Attainment in mathematics is generally well below the national expectation at both key stages, though most pupils make good progress during the time they are at the centre. Pupils' attainment varies depending on their previous educational history. Some pupils at Key Stage 3 have good number skills and can, for example, do long multiplication, understand ratio and use negative numbers effectively. Others have difficulty with basic numeracy and are unable to use fractions and percentages. Most pupils have reasonable skills with number, but have difficulty applying them to real problems, though good progress was seen in applying measurement skills to the design of a garden.
10. By the end of Key Stage 4, higher attaining pupils have good skills in dealing with straightforward calculations involving money and simple percentages. They cope adequately with algebra and trigonometry and work systematically on investigations. Lower attaining pupils correctly add numbers which include decimal points and perform simple algebraic substitution. Attainment in the current school year has been somewhat affected by extended teacher absence at both key stages. Nonetheless, in lessons and in work seen during the inspection, pupils made good, steady progress working carefully at a level appropriate to their needs. Only occasionally at Key Stage 3 was progress hampered by a poor attitude to work.

Numeracy

11. Pupils are able to cope adequately with the demands made of skills in numeracy in all subjects, although there is no co-ordinated policy for the development of numeracy across the curriculum. Hence, although there is some good practice in the use of numeracy, it is not a consistent feature of teaching.
12. Pupils draw block graphs in geography to show the physical features of countries and in science to show the results of experiments. Most at Key Stage 3 are unable to cope with drawing line graphs, however. They measure accurately when cooking in Key Stage 4 food studies and in Key Stage 3 science they add and subtract measurements. In Key Stage 4 science, pupils manipulate simple formulae such as $\text{power} = \text{current} \times \text{voltage}$. With help, they make good use of timelines in history and calculations to compare the numerical strengths of different alliances, incorporating size of population, number of weapons and size of armies.
13. Lack of a policy for numeracy across the curriculum and a co-ordinated approach to the teaching of numeracy skills leads to opportunities being missed to develop these skills further and to improve more quickly skills such as those required for drawing and interpreting graphical information.

Science

14. Standards in science are well below the expectations of pupils nationally by the end of Years 9 and 11. However, lesson observations and examination of pupils' written work indicate that pupils are making good progress and achieve well relative to their

poor prior attainment. Pupils in all year groups develop well their knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 8 and 9 on food chains, pupils demonstrated a growing knowledge and understanding of the dependence of one species of animals on another for food, and could identify simple food chains. In another lesson, pupils in Year 10 made very good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the structure of the right side of the heart and were beginning to apply this knowledge to label a diagram of the left side of the heart. Pupils make particularly good progress in developing their knowledge of technical and scientific terms. In relation to practical and investigative work, progress is satisfactory. It is hampered by the lack of specialist equipment and accommodation for carrying out experiments, although teachers do manage to set up simple experimental work in the classroom, such as studying the growth of plants or examining rates of evaporation. Older pupils make reasonably good progress in developing their use of scientific formulae.

Art

15. Attainment in art is below nationally expected standards, though some pupils reach and a few exceed that standard and the majority show good progress and considerable creativity in their work.
16. Many pupils arrive at the centre with little confidence in their ability to draw and with poor manipulative skills. Through the encouragement of teachers, they make good progress in developing their creativity using techniques in which they feel more confident, such as modelling clay, cartoons, graffiti art and using media images. They learn to use sketchbooks to experiment and develop ideas. They experiment with colour and a minority of pupils become skilled in drawing and painting from observation.
17. A few pupils reach very good standards. A Key Stage 3 pupil won second place in the Heathrow Youth Games Logo Design Competition. Key Stage 3 pupils do good quality work in clay and are imaginative in design and use of colour. Their interest and their skills are enhanced through good teaching and frequent visits to galleries and working artists. Pupils do more extended work at Key Stage 4, showing considerable creativity in the development of their ideas and a good variety of techniques. In GCSE art a few pupils reach Grade B standard. Many pupils use computers to do research on the Internet and to manipulate images. In some cases, pupils' absence leads to incomplete work and lower standards. This is more noticeable at Key Stage 4 than Key Stage 3.

Food technology

18. Attainment in practical lessons is good and is close to the standard expected nationally. In both key stages, pupils listen to and follow instructions closely. They understand the importance of food hygiene and safety in a practical area. Basic preparations such as weighing, measuring and preparing equipment are carried out meticulously. They work methodically and the most able Year 10 pupils work independently, reading, interpreting and preparing recipes without the constant supervision of their teacher. In this respect, a group of Year 10 pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the principle of using the whisking method when preparing a Russian honey cake. At Key Stage 4, pupils can explain the importance of basic nutrients in the diet and develop their ideas when completing the planning and making process of a task.

Information technology

19. The development of a computer suite on the Longfield site is enabling pupils in Years 7 to 9 to make good progress in acquiring new skills in using computers. Pupils show rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding of word processing packages, desk-top publishing software for communicating and presenting, and CD-ROMs and the Internet for finding out information. For example, pupils in Years 7 to 9 successfully combine pictures and text to produce a cover for their folders. Able pupils are confident about experimenting and exploring the facilities offered by programs in order to develop creative and original presentations. The majority of pupils are suitably adept at accessing routine operations such as saving or printing their work. Since the computer suite has not been very long in existence, pupils have yet to develop their skills in other areas of information technology. However, good use of CD-ROMs and the Internet in subjects such as humanities and science help pupils to develop skills that are not too far behind those of their peers in mainstream schools. There is some good use of information technology in English, which is helping pupils to develop their word-processing skills, but limited use is made of computers in mathematics and art at Longfield.
20. At Park site, pupils are dependent on teachers to make use of computers in lessons since there is no suite. Where teachers make regular use of information technology, the impact on the quality of pupils' work and the development of their computer skills is obvious. For example, regular use of computers by an art teacher has resulted in imaginative artwork and also good use of the Internet to research ideas and background information for coursework. Word-processing skills are well developed through their use by pupils in completing National Records of Achievement and in completing written coursework. However, overall, pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress because the opportunities to use computers are patchy.

Physical education

21. Pupils make very good progress in physical education in a wide range of sports and adventurous activities, many of which are within what is termed 'Activity B' provision. This consists of a programme of curriculum enrichment activities provided at Longfield site for half a day a week over a six-week period. At Key Stage 3, standards of attainment match the national expectation in badminton where pupils show a sound understanding of the game and can use a satisfactory range of strokes. Pupils' attainment in swimming is above national expectations. All pupils observed could survive in water and use at least two strokes with good technique. Most could effectively dive and retrieve articles from the floor of the pool. Pupils show good understanding of the need to improve techniques by practice so that performance can improve further. This was strikingly evident in one pupil's progress in a swimming lesson from beginning the backstroke to swimming two lengths with good technical competence. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 4 because of staff illness.

Humanities

22. Pupils are taught elements of geography, history and religious studies at both key stages. At Key Stage 4, pupils are preparing for the Certificate of Achievement which has not yet been examined. Attainment of most pupils at the end of both key stages is well below average, although they make at least satisfactory progress and good progress in Key Stage 3. With few exceptions, pupils have difficulty in expressing in writing the true quality of their knowledge and understanding. Their speaking skills are better. In a Year 9 history class, pupils were able to select relevant material from information sheets to explain the reasons for the First World War and identify the relative strengths of the participants. In this lesson, the quality of pupils' learning and progress was very good. In other history lessons, it was satisfactory but pupils were too dependent on teachers' guidance. In geography, pupils develop satisfactory understanding of how physical features of countries affect the lives of their inhabitants, the implications of the population explosion and issues such as the conservation of wildlife. In both subjects, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of events and issues which interest them and are seen as relevant. At Key Stage 4, pupils produce thoughtful comparisons of the beliefs, values and festivals of Christianity and Islam.

Personal, social, health and careers education

23. As was the case at the time of the previous OFSTED reports, pupils make good progress in understanding a wide range of personal, social, health and careers issues. In Year 8, they are able to brainstorm ideas about equal opportunities issues and remember ideas discussed in earlier lessons. In most lessons, pupils demonstrate sound speaking skills and become increasingly able to contribute to discussion. They are less confident in writing and often seek to avoid it. Some cannot use dictionaries effectively. There are clear gains in knowledge and understanding and improvements in personal confidence and social skills. This was particularly evident in a Year 10 careers lesson when a single pupil was taught by a teacher he had not met before and made a very good response to challenging questions. Discussions with individual pupils in Year 11 indicated that they were mostly uncertain about the next stage of their education or training. At the end of both key stages, attainment is below the levels usually found amongst pupils of a similar age.

Youth Awards Scheme

24. The Youth Award Scheme significantly supports pupils' progress in learning and personal and social skills. Most achieve the bronze award and a few gain silver or, occasionally, gold. Pupils take pride in their work and are careful in its presentation. They value opportunities to gain national awards for their achievements within the centre and outside so that the quality of learning and progress is good. Some examples were seen of pupils being able to draw up an action plan for a project and then evaluate what was effective and what might have been done better.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

25. The attitudes of pupils to the centre are usually good, and in some lessons attitudes were excellent. At both key stages, those interviewed like the educational provision made for them at the centre and appreciate the opportunities provided by working in small groups. Most show a good level of interest and motivation. This has a

positive impact on learning. For example, Year 9 pupils show high levels of interest in their study of World War 1, and in science pupils are curious when studying the heart, asking questions that show a considerable depth of thought. Pupils are usually very willing to take part in discussion and debate topics raised in their lessons. Most listen attentively to their teachers and respond suitably to their instructions. Although the overall presentation of work is not always to a high standard, where interest is engaged a good working atmosphere develops and pupils try hard to keep work neat and tidy, sometimes completing it with pride, for example in art, science and information technology. Many pupils have very short attention spans but usually respond well to the strategies used by their teachers to overcome this, ensuring that steady progress is made. Most pupils are able to work independently for short periods, and particularly so when given practical tasks to complete. At Key Stage 3, a lack of confidence in some pupils results in over-reliance on their class teachers for support. The wide range of activities organised by staff that take place out of school is both valued and popular. Some of them are oversubscribed despite being arranged out of normal school hours, and demonstrate pleasing levels of personal organisation and commitment from pupils.

26. The quality of behaviour across both key stages is usually good. Most pupils respond consistently to the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour. When involved in discussing and agreeing their own rules, for example for trips and visits, they show responsible attitudes that have resulted in improved standards. In lessons behaviour seldom interrupts lessons and usually contributes effectively to learning. Pupils respond very well to the intervention of their teachers where this is needed. They show good levels of respect for school property and equipment. There is little litter dropped and no graffiti, and pupils use equipment and materials with care. They clear up effectively at the ends of lessons, for example at the end of food technology when they have been cooking. There were six fixed term exclusions of pupils at Key Stage 3 in the last academic year and 15 fixed term exclusions at Key Stage 4. The school uses exclusion only when it is absolutely necessary and subsequently works hard, involving parents wherever possible, to prevent it recurring.
27. Relationships and pupils' personal development are good overall. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive and a strength of the school. Pupils show high levels of loyalty to staff and are confident that there is someone with whom they can share their concerns. These very good relationships result in a high level of co-operation in lessons which supports learning very well indeed. Pupils usually get on well together. They show sensitivity to the feelings of others; for example, they identify others' need to be left alone for a while. Pupils show respect for the weaknesses of others and do not use these to tease them, for example when studying English at Key Stage 3. Throughout the school, pupils work well together in competitive situations, as when they play badminton and pool amicably. In practical sessions, pupils co-operate and collaborate well and this makes a positive contribution to their learning. A few pupils occasionally make hurtful comments as a result of their frustrations and, although they do not always fully appreciate the impact of this on others, the intervention of their teachers ensures their developing awareness. Pupils at both key stages are confident they will not be bullied and no such incidents were seen during the week of inspection. Pupils grow in understanding of the needs of others in their community through the work they do for charities. Discussions and debates about topics affecting young people, such as smoking and the use of other drugs, prepare them well for making informed choices on issues that can have considerable impact on their lives. Personal effectiveness,

confidence and social skills are developed effectively through a wide range of activities that take full advantage of facilities available within the community.

28. Although levels of attendance are below what is expected nationally, they are satisfactory when improvements achieved by individual pupils since starting at the centre are taken into account. There has also been a significant improvement in attendance since the last inspection. The analysis of attendance levels carried out by the school each half term shows a steady improvement over time. At Key Stage 3, overall attendance for the last academic year was 84.9 per cent with 8.9 per cent of absence being unauthorised. At Key Stage 4, levels achieved showed an improvement but were not so high at 65.5 per cent with 22.8 per cent unauthorised absence. There have been further improvements in attendance this year. For example, at Park site, up until the Spring half-term, attendance was at 71.4 per cent, with a good reduction in unauthorised absence. Although, a significant number of pupils are school phobic and their current levels of attendance represent good progress, the overall attendance at Key Stage 4 is lower than it should be. Absence was particularly high for some Key Stage 4 pupils when they were attending courses at local colleges. In addition, surveys carried out by the school show the distance many pupils have to travel to get to the centre, which for many constitutes a journey of more than one hour, has an adverse impact on their levels of attendance, and some parents condone unnecessary absence. At Park site, when pupils in Year 11 go on examination leave in the summer term, the attendance of pupils in Year 10 is affected and goes down. Although problems with punctuality result in the school day getting off to a slow start, pupils arriving late settle quickly and rarely disturb lessons that have already started. The school day subsequently usually runs on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

29. The quality of teaching is good overall, with little significant difference between the key stages, and is a significant improvement on the quality of teaching at the time of the previous inspection. No unsatisfactory or poor teaching was observed and in 78 per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching was good or better. In 22 per cent it was very good. The quality of learning closely matched the quality of teaching, but was occasionally not as good because, in these instances, pupils were not prepared to put enough effort into their work or one or two misbehaved, which slowed down the pace of teaching and learning. Overall, though, pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding.
30. Teaching is good in all subjects and especially so in English, mathematics and science where about half of the lesson observations took place. Teachers show good subject knowledge and use this well to question pupils and guide their knowledge and understanding. In a Year 10 science lesson on the heart, the rigorous subject knowledge of the teacher captivated pupils' attention and encouraged their curiosity. Teachers' enthusiasm for their subject also helps to engage pupils' interests and to enthuse and inspire them. For example, the teacher's personal skills in art acted as a good stimulus for Year 10 pupils taking GCSE art and inspired them to develop their own creative ideas. However, teachers' competence and confidence in the use of information technology is variable, with some teachers making good use of computers as part of their subject teaching but others shying away from it. In science lessons at Key Stage 3, for example, there is regular use of information technology and as a result pupils make good progress in developing their skills in finding and using information from science CD-ROMs.

31. Management of pupils is consistently good and often very good. Teachers are able to establish very good relationships with pupils and build on these to gain good levels of co-operation from them. As a result, pupils concentrate well on their work and are well motivated. Teachers are skilled in handling difficult situations without getting into a confrontation with a pupil and this means that it is rare for pupils to leave a lesson without some valuable learning having taken place. A key characteristic of teaching is the remarkable capacity staff have to focus on the whole child and to incorporate the promotion of essential social skills and personal development into their subject teaching.
32. Lessons are well prepared and resources carefully selected to meet the needs of pupils. Overall, there is a good understanding of pupils' learning difficulties and how they can be overcome. However, not enough attention is paid to helping pupils to become independent learners and pupils tend to be over-reliant on teachers. Sometimes too much is done for them; for instance, there is a tendency to give pupils too much information in science at Key Stage 4, which they usually copy. In the best lessons, teachers set clear targets for learning, share these with pupils and usually review the targets at the end of the lesson.
33. In the best lessons, teaching methods are very good and pupils are challenged to the limits. In a history lesson at Key Stage 3, a sharp and very well managed focus on selecting and recording information about the causes of the First World War on the board under different categories helped pupils to construct detailed answers. Skilled use of questioning helps pupils to maintain a good focus on their work and to make them think and, at best, it also inspires them to ask their own questions. Imaginative and varied use of teaching methods also helps to keep pupils alert and to strive to do their very best, such as teaching a science lesson at Key Stage 3 and learning through playing games.
34. Teachers are aware of pupils' needs and keep an overview of the targets in their IEPs, which are recorded on cards carried by the pupils themselves. However, because the targets are not sharp or precise enough, they are of limited value.
35. Attempts to introduce homework to support learning have had very limited success. Homework is not provided as a matter of course, but by agreement with a pupil where the pupil is willing to be given work to be done at home. Parents were not happy about this arrangement. The centre has tried to give out homework to all pupils on a regular basis, but this did not work, and staff are reluctant to try to enforce it because of the difficulties it causes. However, staff are aware of the need to try different approaches which may be more successful. There is scope for imaginative homework tasks which will motivate and encourage pupils to want to do them to be provided.
36. Marking is usually regularly carried out, but it tends to be more rigorous and regular at Longfield than at Park. The lack of regularity may be due to greater level of absence, but there are some books which do not seem to have been marked at all. Where work is marked, useful guidance and advice on how to improve is given to pupils.
37. Overall, the good quality of teaching makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and enables them to make good progress.

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

38. The curriculum is satisfactory since it reflects the policy of the LEA and meets statutory requirements for a suitable education. Within the constraints of part-time provision and severely limited accommodation, the curriculum has satisfactory breadth, balance and relevance to meet the needs of pupils. It is much improved since the previous inspection and better able to support return to mainstream schools. Part-time provision continues to restrict pupils' learning opportunities and their longer-term progress.
39. Early return to mainstream education now has a stronger emphasis. The development of the placement panel has produced more effective liaison between the centre and its partners in mainstream schools. The appointment of a member of the centre's staff as reintegration link teacher is facilitating early identification of those at risk of exclusion and the structuring and monitoring of pupils' progress towards re-integration.
40. At both key stages, the standard provision has been increased to six sessions each week for pupils at Longfield, and six at Park when pupils take up their college placements. The subjects taught are English, mathematics, science, art, geography, history, food studies, physical education and personal, social and careers education. The Youth Award Scheme provides a wide choice of activities and leads to accreditation. Especially in the case of English, mathematics and science, appropriate attention is given to the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum. In the case of science, this intention is restricted by the lack of laboratory facilities. There is support in most areas of the curriculum for pupils' improvement in skills of literacy and numeracy but this is not part of a planned provision. There is little awareness of pupils' experience of the literacy and numeracy strategies now employed in primary schools.
41. At Key Stage 3, the curriculum is considerably enriched by 'Activity B,' a series of short courses of athletic, adventurous and creative activities undertaken off-site which develop relevant skills and in some instances lead to awards. At Key Stage 4, pupils are offered courses taken at colleges of further education, for example in building skills, information technology, and one leading to the Junior Sports Leader Award.
42. All pupils take a course in personal, social and health education. This includes appropriate elements of sex education, understanding of drugs abuse and preparation for making decisions about careers. There is a sound scheme of work for this course, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. Significant contributions are made by representatives of the police, social services and representatives of religious groups.
43. Pupils are encouraged to think about future careers from Year 9 upwards. Work experience placements are provided for Year 11. This year, more effective preparation, support and de-briefing were possible because the placements were arranged in particular weeks rather than spread throughout the year. Although Year 11 pupils have had interviews with the careers service, those interviewed were very uncertain about the next stage of their education, training or employment. Transition plans to support pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need from entry to

Key Stage 4, and on into post-sixteen provision lack clear details of what has been agreed for each pupil. This provision is unsatisfactory.

44. All pupils at the centre are placed on a special register at the stage appropriate to their educational needs. Profiles provide teachers with helpful information, and individual education plans have now been provided for each pupil. These include targets for the improvement of learning, behaviour or personal organisation. There has been an improvement in the provision of sufficiency of detail to assist teachers. The targets set for pupils in their plans, however, are imprecise, and do not enable progress to be measured because there is no stated expectation that the targets will be achieved within given time limits. This leads to inefficiencies in teaching and learning. The centre has no policy for making specific provision for talented and gifted pupils and no stated criteria for their identification. It does, however, provide many opportunities for all to gain awards in which they take pride. In 1999, higher attaining pupils gained appropriate grades at GCSE.
45. The fact that pupils attend for half-day sessions, together with limited accommodation, restricts extra-curricular activities. Within these limits, pupils are given a good range of opportunities for visits to the Aquarium, national museums, art galleries and workshops, sporting and leisure facilities. A sponsored cycle ride recently raised funds for charity. The provision of the bicycles used for cycling proficiency training by a local shop at considerably reduced costs is one example of many contributions to the curriculum by local employers and professionals within the education, youth and community services.
46. The centre has improved its curriculum by responding to criticisms made in the previous report, and as part of the re-organisation since then. It has been successful in improving the breadth and balance by imaginative use of off-site facilities within the community. It is difficult to see how further progress can be made towards the intended full-time provision without additional accommodation.
47. The centre is effective in developing pupils' moral, social and cultural development. The provision in all areas has improved significantly at the Longfield site since the last inspection. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies in each site do not take place as the poor accommodation severely restricts large gatherings. Otherwise, spiritual awareness is mainly communicated through the curriculum. Art is used positively at both sites to promote pupils' understanding about the inner self. At Park Site, the older pupils as part of their GCSE coursework study a project on, '*My World*' and '*Changing Time*'. Through this work, they are introduced to different religious faith groups in the local community and are given good opportunities to discuss with representative speakers the individual, their uniqueness and the common links between all people. This theme is also linked to the personal, social and health education programme, giving pupils further opportunities to reflect on their behaviour and approach to life and consider possible changes. The centre uses food technology at both key stages to develop pupils' understanding of religious influences on dietary habits around the world. Religious education makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of the teachings and practices of major religious faiths.
48. At the Longfield site, opportunities are provided for the younger pupils to adopt an inquisitive approach when sightseeing. For example, trips are organised to major buildings such as the Millennium Dome. The reintegration scheme is used purposefully to lead pupils to think about their own values and how they are

perceived and valued by others. Opportunities are given to the younger pupils to consider concepts surrounding time and space when using information technology as a research tool and find out about the planets.

49. Provision for moral development is very good at both sites. Moral responsibility is emphasised as soon as pupils are offered a place at the site. Pupils are expected to behave well and apply the code of conduct. Every opportunity is used to emphasise a clear sense of judgement on right and wrong. This is clearly supported in the code of conduct, and through discussions when incidents occur in and out of the centre. The social time at the end of the day, as well as the key tutor system, are pivotal activities that give tutors the opportunity to discuss immediate occurrences with individuals and groups and to focus attention on rewards or the possible consequences of behaviour. The personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to think about acceptable personal values and moral attitudes. Moral values are reinforced through extensive coverage on wide-ranging issues about, for example, bullying, drugs and sex education as well as equal opportunities including racism and sexism.
50. In addition to the work done in personal, social and health education, the centre has a clear reward system that is linked to the code of conduct, attendance and punctuality. As such, the reward system promotes self-discipline as well as respect for self and others. Individual subjects such as science contribute to this aspect of pupils' development. In science, pupils are given the opportunity to discuss the morality of life when covering units of work on, for example, the food chain. The very good links with external agencies add to this strong dimension of moral development as pupils are given the opportunity to listen to expert speakers and discuss issues with them. Discussion forums in and out of lessons are used extensively to help pupils make informed choices.
51. The provision for social development is also very good. There are many opportunities throughout their time at the centre for pupils to discover, develop and use their social skills positively. The social time, introduced at the Longfield site after the last inspection, includes pupils playing games with each other, learning the skills of co-operation and teamwork, as well as building up trust with others including their tutors. The wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities that make up Activity B make a significant contribution to this aspect of their development, as does their work with charitable organisations. The enrichment programme of events is closely linked to moral development and is successful because of the extensive work with pupils on behaviour management and the image they create publicly when representing the centre. For example, the work with artists in residence at the local museum led to a major and celebratory feature in the local newspaper as pupils were invited to have an open exhibition of their work. A pottery exhibition, canoeing and sailing at the Welsh harp, abseiling at Brunel University, cycling made possible by a local firm, and fund raising for charity are but a few examples of these.
52. The Youth Award Scheme and the personal, social and health education programme include units on helping pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. The centre is now beginning to explore mentoring for pupils at both key stages. The Longfield site development plan supports the development of mini projects designed and negotiated with pupils. For example, a social area for pupils is presently being considered. Extended work with the Youth Service is being considered. There is an active pupil council at Park site.

53. Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils are given many opportunities to share and increase their knowledge about their own and other cultures. Trips to galleries, museums and places of interest are now regular features of the centre's life.
54. Cultural development is nurtured in art. Examples include displays around the sites of pupils' own art and pottery work, a graffiti wall to reflect pupils' classification of art, and youth culture. This also includes discussion on rap music. In English, project work on Shakespeare's world, travel projects and poetry around the world, extend pupils' cultural awareness of different worlds and times. Practical lessons in food technology on world food provide pupils with an array of food to taste, evaluate and research as they learn about the delights of world cuisine. These practical sessions also extend pupils' social skills when they taste and eat together the prepared meals. The centre recognises the cultural diversity of its pupils and the multi-cultural nature of Britain and seeks to draw on pupils' experience in this context.
55. Overall, the centre has made good progress since the last inspection. Park site has recently appointed a co-ordinator with responsibility for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The co-ordinator is in the process of auditing the provision to ensure greater cohesion across subjects. The centre, however, is without a common policy for both sites although this is planned.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

56. Pupils are known well as individuals and given good support for their personal development. Each pupil is assigned a tutor who is responsible for pastoral care and for monitoring the pupil's progress and personal development. At the Longfield site, a new role of key tutor has recently been devised with additional responsibility for maintaining contacts with parents and external agencies and setting specific weekly targets for pupils as well as monitoring attendance and punctuality. Key tutors are involved in pupils' review meetings and the process of reintegration into mainstream school. Pupils have regular one-to-one discussions with their key tutor. This development shows promise in improving pupils' support and guidance. The tutor role at the Park site is more limited, covering attendance checks at the centre, punctuality and pastoral care. There are plans to extend this role and to build on the good practice at the Longfield site. For example, the head of site at Park wants to extend the tutor's role to liaise more closely with staff at local colleges where their tutees are on part-time courses in order to keep a closer eye on attendance, attitudes and progress.
57. There are satisfactory policies in place for child protection and health and safety. There is a named teacher on each site responsible for child protection, and the procedures follow LEA guidelines and are known by all staff. The heads of site both monitor their buildings for safety issues and request surveys by the LEA when the need arises. However, these safety checks are not sufficiently formal to fulfil legal requirements or the centre's own policy. Risk assessments and the testing of portable electrical equipment with the results recorded are not done on a regular basis. While neither site is ideally suited to its purpose, the centre provides a safe environment within the constraints of the accommodation. At the Longfield site, an additional toilet is needed in order to provide boys and girls with separate facilities.
58. The centre has very good procedures for promoting good attendance. Registration procedures are correctly implemented and registers are kept secure. If pupils do not

arrive at school, there is immediate contact with their home by telephone. The education social worker employed by the centre makes a strong contribution to the arrangements for securing good attendance and monitoring and tracking pupils' levels of attendance. Parents and carers are kept fully informed about attendance and invited in for a discussion if it becomes a problem. They are informed of the centre's expectations of their parental responsibilities regarding attendance in a separate school brochure. Good records are kept of each pupil's attendance and any action taken. Where necessary, attendance and punctuality are included in pupils' weekly targets and improvements rewarded. Overall rates of attendance are monitored and analysed in an effort to determine the reasons for poor attendance. Many pupils had been poor attenders before starting at the centre and records show good improvement in their levels of attendance. Attendance has been improved by the issue of travel passes rather than bus passes, resulting in quicker and easier journeys. At the Park site, a breakfast club has been established to encourage pupils to arrive in good time. The only aspect of attendance not fully covered is that of Key Stage 4 pupils when they are attending part-time college courses.

59. Standards of behaviour expected are very clear and teachers have good skills in managing behaviour. There is a clear code of conduct for pupils set out in the school brochure and a behaviour policy which gives guidance to staff. Before starting at the school a contract is drawn up and agreed with each student together with the parent or carer.
60. On entry to the centre, pupils' attainment is assessed using standard reading and spelling tests as well as a mathematics test which measures attainment against the National Curriculum. Each pupil then receives an IEP which includes a number of targets for learning and/or behaviour. This baseline assessment is not sufficiently diagnostic in highlighting strengths and weaknesses, particularly in numeracy, and pupils' individual targets are not sufficiently specific or measurable for pupils, parents, or carers, and teachers to be able to see clearly where progress is being made.
61. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress in their subjects is satisfactory. Teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses in their learning well, and they record and use this information in planning their lessons. There are assessment policies for each site, which outline the principles underlying assessment. However, there is some inconsistency of practice between subjects and the extent to which assessments are linked to the National Curriculum criteria, and there is no formal monitoring of assessment. The assessment co-ordinator, based at Longfield, has had insufficient training for her role. Teachers write a report on progress at the time of each pupil's review meeting and these fulfil the role of a parental report. However, the reports from teachers often do not give specific information on what pupils know, understand and can do. Pupils and parents commented that they do not receive sufficient information to know how they are progressing with academic work. The information provided for the review meetings provides a good report on the pupil's personal development and attitude to work.
62. Each pupil's progress on a daily basis is monitored through a system known as the '*credit card*'. It is the key tutor's role to convert the targets on the IEP into specific weekly objectives for the pupil. These are recorded on the credit card and then monitored each lesson by the class teacher. The pupil's credit card is reviewed by the key tutor and pupils receive rewards for good progress, which include headteacher certificates and vouchers from a high street store. Pupils appreciate

and are motivated by the credit cards and they are a successful tool for the tutor to monitor progress and provide individual guidance. However, the credit card targets need to be written in language more easily understood by pupils, and to be more measurable, in order that pupils can see clearly whether they are making progress.

63. There is no analysis of pupil assessment data on entry or on leaving the centre although, up until this year, the centre has only had one set of results to analyse since it was re-organised into its current form. Lack of baseline assessment data means that staff are not able to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils, nor to demonstrate in summary form the progress that pupils are making at the centre. The centre is beginning to analyse its examination results now that it has two years' worth of results to consider and compare.
64. When a pupil is preparing to reintegrate into mainstream school, teachers complete a Readiness to Reintegrate Scale. This assesses the pupil according to several specific criteria within the general headings of self-management of behaviour, self-confidence, self-organisation and social skills. This provides a good assessment of personal development. The criteria listed could be used to provide pupils with specific, measurable targets on their credit card.
65. Pupils are provided with good support by their teachers, who pay careful attention to personal development as well as academic progress. There are regular review meetings, attended by the pupil and parents or carers, with written reports provided and minutes taken. These take place every six weeks for pupils who are 'at risk' of being excluded, and usually termly for other pupils. Progress against targets is discussed and new targets are set. Staff also discuss with parents their role in supporting the pupil. Pupils who are reintegrated into mainstream school are very well supported by the reintegration teacher.
66. The education social worker based at the centre has identified the needs of children in care and has run sessions for staff in residential care homes to ensure that they understand the particular needs of these pupils, and are familiar with their targets. It is planned to create a parent support group, intended to provide informal support and to identify ways to help parents and careers support their children.
67. Although general careers guidance is included in the personal and social education programme, personal careers' guidance on an individual basis starts late for many pupils, partly due to absence or sometimes because of the stage at which they have joined the centre. Guidance tends to be fairly basic. Pupils have a careers interview in the first term of Year 11, or Year 10 if they are already at Park site at this point. This interview is sometimes delayed into the second term, usually because of pupil absence. In this interview pupils complete a careers action plan. The careers officer visits later in the year to discuss progress made with the action plan but there seems to be insufficient follow up. Some Year 11 leavers who were interviewed during the inspection had clear plans for moving on after leaving the centre, but others had nothing specific planned. The head of Longfield site is beginning to set up careers' interviews for pupils in Year 9 and this should help towards adequately preparing pupils for the next stage of their careers. The careers officer attends parents' meetings and this is found to be very useful. Overall, though, the centre needs to examine its provision for careers in order to identify what could be improved so that all pupils are well prepared for their next step, be it a college placement or employment.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

68. Parents and carers are generally satisfied with what the centre provides and achieves. The large majority of those returning questionnaires say they feel comfortable about approaching staff with their concerns and are confident their suggestions will be welcomed. Inspection evidence confirms their positive views about the high standards of teaching seen, the progress made by their children and the centre's success in improving standards of behaviour. More than half of parents returning the questionnaires expressed concern about a lack of homework. Inspectors agree that there has been insufficient attention given to planning for the provision of suitable homework. Some parents do not feel sufficiently well informed about how well their children are getting on. Inspection evidence confirms the view that information about how well pupils are doing in the subjects of the curriculum is not sufficiently well reported. Inspectors are not able to agree with those parents who feel the school does not provide a sufficient range of activities outside the classroom. Given the part-time nature of the centre's provision, and the limitations imposed by the accommodation, the school does the best it can to use imaginatively the facilities available within the community for this purpose.
69. The centre has improved the links it has with parents and carers and provides a satisfactory range of information about its overall work. The education social worker has worked effectively to gain increased involvement from those who look after children in care. There are effective arrangements to familiarise parents and carers with the centre before their children's entry. These can include advice on options available to parents and carers of children 'at risk' of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. An agreement about behaviour is discussed and agreed with pupils and parents or carers prior to enrolment, ensuring a clear understanding of expectations. Parents and carers meet with staff before their children join the centre and again about four to six weeks later, ensuring that any problems or concerns that have arisen are resolved at an early stage. A newsletter produced each term at Park and each half-term at Longfield ensures that parents and carers are up-to-date with current school news and dates for their diaries. The prospectus offers an effective range of information about the centre's routines and expectations. It is supplemented well by brochures covering attendance, behaviour, learning opportunities and arrangements for review meetings. Parents and carers are contacted promptly where there is any cause for concern, ensuring that they are fully informed and involved at an early stage in overcoming problems. Equal consideration is given to sharing with them their children's successes, giving them a balanced view of how well their children are coping with life in the centre.
70. Parents and carers are invited to a review of their children's progress at least twice each year. The reports published after these meetings provide good information about attitudes to learning and progress towards targets set in individual education plans. What pupils know, understand and can do in the subjects they are studying and what they must do to improve is less well reported. This results in parents having insufficient understanding of what their children can be expected to achieve or how to help them at home.
71. The involvement of parents and carers with the school has improved since the time of the last inspection and makes a satisfactory contribution to learning overall. Parents and carers take an active interest in how their children are progressing. This results in high levels of attendance at events such as reviews and the open evenings held each term. They also welcome the regular informal contact made to

discuss behaviour, attendance and achievements. They are supportive of the centre, responding well to consultation questionnaires, for example about the planned parents' group. This has resulted in a clear understanding of the support that parents feel they need and firm plans to provide it, starting from the beginning of the next school year. The school has not yet taken advantage of the opportunities provided by a home/school agreement to formalise the partnership with parents and carers in ensuring that pupils get the very best out of their schooling.

HOW WELL IS THE UNIT LED AND MANAGED?

72. The centre is well managed and there is a clear educational direction for development. Key features of good management and leadership include a common understanding of main aims, values and policies which leads to very good reflection of these in everyday practice. Clear-sighted leadership ensures that staff are strongly committed to raising standards and meeting the needs of pupils. Overall, the good leadership and management have been a key factor in the good improvement seen in provision since the last inspection.
73. The LEA, as the responsible authority, meets well its own responsibilities. There is a clear policy for curricular provision and criteria for admission. Much good work has been done since the previous inspection to set up very effective procedures for placing pupils quickly and appropriately at the centre, such as the formation of a pupils' placement panel comprising headteachers from local schools as well as LEA staff and the headteacher of the centre. The formation of this panel has done much to establish a good working partnership with local schools in order to serve the best interests of pupils. The headteacher has played a major role in setting up the panel and in the way it carries out its functions.
74. The heads of site provide good leadership and management in their own right. They ensure that each site works effectively and that day-to-day running of the centre operates smoothly. Their work in managing their teams, facilitating good teamwork and developing staff effectiveness and expertise is of high quality.
75. There is a reasonably good level of delegation of work to the heads of site and to most teachers who have an agreed responsibility, and good management and accountability of delegated responsibilities. The heads of site are good at encouraging and supporting teachers to take responsibility for their subject in order to develop it further. However, the liaison between teachers at the two sites is limited by the distance between them, and there is not enough collaboration at subject level.
76. The headteacher promotes very effectively the strategic development of the centre and acts as an agent for change. She responds quickly to changes in local or national policy and provides a vital link between the two sites and between the centre and the LEA. There is a high level of co-ordination of the centre's provision, liaison and partnership with mainstream schools and involvement of the LEA and other services, as required, to the benefit of pupils. This is assisted by the headteacher's wider role which includes managing the tuition centre in the borough as well as being the lead officer for the implementation of the national initiatives regarding social inclusion.

77. The LEA and the headteacher effectively monitor the work of the centre. The heads of site check on the work of teaching staff informally and this is more rigorous and works better at Longfield than at Park. However, the centre is aware of the need to develop formal methods of monitoring the quality of teaching and is working towards this end. There are regular professional development meetings between the heads of site and each teacher they manage. The headteacher also meets regularly with key members of staff, such as the heads of site. The findings from such meetings are well used to inform development planning and identify the training needs of staff. Development planning is of good quality and the centre works very effectively in setting its own targets and the work which needs to be done in order to meet these targets. Overall, the development plan identifies appropriate priorities and the centre is very effective in taking the necessary action to tackle them.
78. There is a management committee, formed about a year ago, consisting of representative members from the LEA, mainstream schools, local colleges and other service providers. However, it has only recently started to meet formally and is at the early stages of development. The chair is clear about the need for this committee to have a role in the strategic development of the centre and the committee now needs to identify how it will carry out such a role in practice.
79. Financial planning is good and finances are well managed. Spending is effectively monitored. There is satisfactory application of the principles of best value. Purchases are carefully made in order to obtain good value for money. The centre has started to compare its spending with that of other units in London, but this is a developing area.
80. Staffing levels are satisfactory overall. The centre has, given its split site, a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers. Although there are no learning support assistants, there is an attached education social worker and a full time re-integration teacher. Whilst good use is made of staffing, accommodation and learning resources, the accommodation is poor with a lack of specialist facilities for subjects such as science and technology. The lack of learning support assistants does have its drawbacks, particularly if one or two pupils need more intensive support during a lesson or are poorly behaved. However, given the nature of the accommodation and the small sizes of classrooms at Longfield, there is little scope for having another adult in the room.
81. A major drawback to further improvement, particularly in curricular provision, is the nature of the split site and the lack of appropriate accommodation. It is difficult for the centre to be more efficient in, for example, its provision and use of teaching staff, given the split site. Although the LEA is making reasonably good headway in working towards meeting the requirements of the government's policies for excluded pupils, it will be very difficult to meet the requirement for full-time provision for all pupils by 2002 within the limitations of the current accommodation. Other aspects of the centre's work are also influenced by the nature of the accommodation. For example, when Year 11 pupils go off on study leave, it has a negative impact on the attendance of pupils in Year 10 as they are then the only year group on Park site. If all pupils were on the same site, it might encourage Year 10 pupils to maintain better attendance levels.

WHAT SHOULD THE UNIT DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. In order to improve further the quality of education provided at the centre and raise pupils' attainment, the headteacher, heads of site, LEA and management committee should:

(1) Improve the accommodation so that it can:

- Sustain full-time educational provision for all pupils placed there;
- Improve the efficiency of the use of resources, particularly teaching staff;
- Facilitate effective collaboration between subject teachers currently working at different sites;
- Facilitate better attendance, particularly for pupils at Park site. (Paragraphs 28, 46, 68, 80, 81)

(2) Improve procedures for assessment by:

- Providing the assessment co-ordinator with relevant training;
- Ensuring that all targets in IEPs are specific and sharply defined;
- Providing diagnostic assessment of pupils' needs, especially in relation to literacy and numeracy;
- Ensuring there are whole school procedures for assessing pupils' work in information technology;
- Ensuring that there is a close enough link between the National Curriculum criteria for assessment and the criteria used by teachers in all subjects;
- Making sure that pupils' work is regularly marked;
- Monitoring the implementation of assessment policies and procedures regularly;
- Analysing results of tests and examinations thoroughly;
- Developing measures to identify the extent of value added in the progress made by pupils. (Paragraphs 4, 36, 44, 60-64)

(3) Further improve attendance for pupils in Years 10 and 11 by:

- Extending the role of the tutor to include greater responsibility for tracking and following up the attendance of individual pupils, particularly when they are attending college courses. (Paragraphs 28, 56, 58)

(4) Develop a coherent and co-ordinated approach to the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information technology skills across all relevant subjects being taught by:

- Providing relevant training on literacy and numeracy;
- Developing policies and plans on the delivery of literacy, numeracy and information technology across the curriculum;
- Putting in place procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of implementation of plans and policies;
- Extending the existing good practice in using literacy, numeracy and information technology skills across the curriculum. (Paragraphs 8, 11, 19, 20, 30, 40)

(5) Ensure that all requirements for health and safety checks are met by:

- Clarifying and putting into practice clear procedures for checking that equipment and buildings meet safety standards. (Paragraph 57)

83. The following minor weaknesses should also be included in the action plan dealing with the issues highlighted above:

- (1) Putting in place formal methods for checking the work of teachers as currently planned in the centre's development plan; (Paragraph 77)
- (2) Developing the role of the management committee so that it plays an effective part in overseeing the work of the centre and in steering its future strategic development; (Paragraph 78)
- (3) Promoting pupils' skills in independent learning and reducing their over reliance on teachers, including through the effective development and use of homework; (Paragraphs 25, 32, 35)
- (4) Ensure that parents and carers receive sufficient and clear information about pupils' academic development and progress. (Paragraph 68)

PART C: UNIT DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	22	57	22	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	97

Special educational needs	No of pupils
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	11
Number of pupils on the unit's special educational needs register	97

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
Unit data (Longfield site/KS3)	7
Unit data (Park site/KS4)	8.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
Unit data (Longfield site/KS3)	11.7
Unit data (Park site/KS4)	22.8

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

The performance of Year 11 pupils in accredited courses other than GCSEs in 1999

Achievement Tests in Literacy and Numeracy

	Results for 1999			Results for 2000		
	Over 50%	Over 70%	Over 85%	Over 50%	Over 70%	Over 85%
Numeracy						
Level 1	3	7	9	0	6	10
Level 2	1	7	3	4	2	3
Level 3	0	0	0	4	4	5
Literacy						
Level 1	6	4	0	4	0	0
Level 2	3	9	3	3	4	0
Level 3	0	0	1	2	6	3

Results for Examinations in Certificates of Achievement

	Results for 1999			Results for 2000		
	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Pass	Merit	Distinction
CoA - Mathematics	2	5	2	Not yet published		
CoA - English	6	8	9	2	10	11
CoA Food Studies	7	6	1	21	8	1
CoA Humanities				7	10	0
	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Bronze	Silver	Gold
CoA Science	15		1	5	2	14

Results for Examinations in AEB Courses

AEB Certificates – Subject	Number of pupils gaining passes in 1999	Number of pupils gaining passes in 2000
Life Skills	19	7
Communication skills	8	0
Health, hygiene and safety	17	29
Geography	6	0

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	22
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	2
Indian	4
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	61
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	3	0
Black – African heritage	2	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	12	0
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7-Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7-Y11

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total expenditure	529135
Expenditure per pupil	5455

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	97
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes the unit.	30	45	25	0	0
My child is making good progress in the unit.	25	60	10	5	0
Behaviour in the unit is good.	15	55	20	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	5	25	25	35	10
The teaching is good.	30	55	5	10	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	30	20	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the unit with questions or a problem.	50	35	0	10	5
The unit expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	40	0	10	0
The unit works closely with parents.	40	30	15	10	5
The unit is well led and managed.	45	20	10	15	10
The unit is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	40	5	15	0
The unit provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	20	20	10	25

Other issues raised by parents

Lack of full time provision, particularly at Park site.