

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **WHITE HOUSE PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT**

Kingston upon Hull

LEA area: Kingston upon Hull

Unique reference number: 117701

Headteacher: Mr John Healey

Reporting inspector: Mr Keith Tottman  
2807

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 215514

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school:	Pupil Referral Unit
School category:	LEA maintained
Age range of pupils:	5-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Unit address:	Saltshouse Road Hull HU8 9HJ
Telephone number:	01482 701334
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Appropriate authority:	LEA
Name of responsible officer:	Mr Colin Herrick
Date of previous inspection:	Not inspected before

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Keith Tottman	Registered inspector	English; history.	How high are standards? (The school's results and achievements)  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the unit led and managed?
Patricia Dodd Racher	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities.	How high are standards? (Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development).  How well does the unit care for its pupils?  How well does the unit work in partnership with parents?
Jenny Hall	Team inspector	Science; English as an additional language.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Norman Watling	Team inspector	Mathematics; special educational needs.	Integration and outreach.

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT**

The White House Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) is a behaviour support service to Hull primary schools which provides part-time dual attendance for up to 25 primary-aged pupils, and an outreach service to other schools. There are 24 pupils on roll (23 boys and 1 girl) who each attend for two consecutive days (10 hours) per week. Referrals are made from schools through the Schools Psychological Service at any time of the year and there are clear criteria and routes for admission. Pupils normally attend for two terms.

Pupils display a very wide range of attainment on entry although most are significantly under-achieving; all are at Stage 3, at least, of the SEN Code of Practice on the grounds of emotional and behavioural difficulty. Four have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Currently about a quarter of pupils are in care or are on the child protection register. Pupils attend from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and none come from homes where English is not the first spoken language. Most pupils are successfully returned to full-time mainstream education but some move on to special schools, the PRU having contributed to their statutory assessment.

Staff of the PRU contribute significantly to mainstream strategies to reduce pupil behaviour difficulties and exclusions through visits, support, in-service training and monthly 'surgeries'. This is the first time that the PRU has been inspected.

### **HOW GOOD THE UNIT IS**

This is a very effective unit, in both its on-site provision and its outreach work in mainstream schools. Pupils' achievements in literacy, numeracy and science are good. Progress and achievement in personal and social development are very good. Teaching is very good overall with particular strengths at Key Stage 1; planning and the management of behaviour are often excellent. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with some very good features; outreach work and finances are managed very well. The unit provides good value for money.

#### **What the unit does well**

- Progress in basic skills is mostly good given the short time pupils are at the unit.
- Pupils make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development.
- Teaching is very good overall, and is often outstanding at Key Stage 1.
- The unit successfully maintains pupils' attendance at mainstream schools through outreach work.
- The unit successfully re-integrates pupils at mainstream schools.
- The provision for personal and social development is very good throughout the day.
- The unit provides high quality outreach work, which includes much-valued training.
- The provision of accommodation, staffing and learning resources is very good throughout.

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

- The formal monitoring of staff at the main site and elsewhere is insufficient.
- The unit, with its two-day attendance, makes unsatisfactory provision for very emotionally disturbed pupils and those with Statements awaiting special school placement.

*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

The unit has not been inspected before.

## 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 11	<b>Key</b>	
English	B	very good	A
mathematics	B	good	B
science	B	satisfactory	C
personal, social and health education	B	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*

Achievement is good overall. Pupils make particular improvements in listening, in the early stages of reading in many cases, in basic numeracy and in learning how the body works in science. There are significant improvements in personal and social skills, in observing classroom routines and in paying attention to the rules and conventions of the unit. These achievements underpin successful return to mainstream full-time schooling in many cases.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the unit	Pupils have good attitudes toward work at the unit; they are mostly cheerful, hardworking and some do not want to leave. Pupils are enthusiastic about most activities. They speak well of the unit and what it offers them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is mostly good, and is sometimes very good, in lessons and at other times around the site. Sometimes, in one class of older pupils, behaviour is poor because the severe emotional difficulties of a few disrupt the lesson for the others.
Personal development and relationships	Overall, pupils make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Relationships are very good throughout.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory overall and unexplained absence is very low. Some transport is late in the mornings delaying the start for some. Otherwise lessons start and finish on time.

The staff work hard at securing and maintaining very good relationships with pupils. In turn, pupils show a good regard for the viewpoints and beliefs of others. A consistent personal and social education programme operates throughout the day and promotes very good progress toward greater maturity.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>Aged 5-11</b>
Lessons seen overall	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.*

The teaching in over half of the lessons observed was judged very good, and a further 20% was excellent. Teaching in only one lesson was less than satisfactory, made poor by the inability to manage some extremely difficult behaviour. Teaching in English and mathematics is mostly good and never unsatisfactory. In science, teaching is mostly good. Personal, social and health education is very well taught in a variety of contexts. Planning, pupil management and the use of support staff and resources are particularly strong features of the teaching.

Literacy and numeracy are very well taught at Key Stage 1; teaching of these skills is more variable at Key Stage 2, but is never unsatisfactory and is sometimes very good. For the great majority the unit meets pupils' needs very well, and particularly so in basic skills and in the development of personal and improved social skills. Provision for the small number with additional, complex needs is unsatisfactory and their learning is insufficient.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE UNIT

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The unit provides a broad and effective curriculum over two days per week. The strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and personal/social education is entirely appropriate.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory overall because the PRU is an inappropriate setting to meet the needs of the small number of pupils with severe emotional difficulties and those awaiting placement at special schools.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal, social and moral development is very good. Cultural and multi-cultural understandings are promoted well. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the unit cares for its pupils	Good levels of care overall. There are very good procedures for promoting attendance, good behaviour and personal development.

Part-time attendance over a short period of time reduces the possibilities of working with parents but the unit has effective links with them and parents have positive views of the work of the unit. The curriculum offered at Key Stage 1 is particularly good and the links with other schools are very strong.



The unit has very good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy; personal development and increased maturity are catered for very well. The unit staff give a high priority to pupils' welfare and care; they know the pupils very well and supervision and guidance are very good. The unit meets the reduced number of statutory requirements which apply to PRUs.

## HOW WELL THE UNIT IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall with some strong features. The unit pursues its aims very well. The management of outreach services to about 60 schools is very good. Some procedures, including the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, lack formal structure.
How well the management committee fulfils its responsibilities	The management group fulfils its responsibilities. It is an active and supportive group which meets regularly and has a good oversight of what the unit is doing and is planning to do.
The unit's evaluation of its performance	The management group receives good monitoring information on the PRU operation but senior management does not evaluate formally its performance sufficiently, particularly the teaching.
The strategic use of resources	The unit, including the outreach service, does not have a fully delegated budget but has some freedom to spend in different ways according to changing needs. Staff are efficiently deployed in a complex operation in the unit and across outreach in mainstream schools.

The unit has more than enough accommodation, good levels of staffing and resources for learning are plentiful. Management does not evaluate formally some of its activities. The unit buys wisely and looks for the best value it can find. Management has undertaken customer satisfaction surveys and questions what it is doing and whether it could be done better.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They find the unit approachable and helpful.</li> <li>They like the fact that the unit encourages hard work from their children.</li> </ul>	No points raised

Few parents attended the meeting prior to inspection and no critical views were expressed. The inspection supports the parents' and carers' views that the unit is approachable and encourages good attitudes to work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. It is inappropriate to judge the attainments of the pupils for whom this unit caters in relation to the National Curriculum or any other national benchmarks. The report does, however, report on the achievement of the pupils and on what they know, understand and can do. Judgements about achievement take account of information in pupils' statements and annual reviews.
2. The PRU offers a necessarily restricted range of subjects to pupils who attend for only two days per week and for whom the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, and greater control over their behaviour, is the priority. Achievement overall in these academic areas is good; achievement in behavioural control against the targets in their individual behaviour plans is very good.
3. In English, progress and achievement are mostly very good. In Key Stage 1, pupils are improving in their listening and waiting before they speak; they describe what they are doing and, when calm, explain things in good detail. They recognise words in Big Books from cue cards and complete sentences according to the rhyme. Achievement in reading is very variable but pupils are making good progress in ordering the alphabet, or improving their initial sight vocabulary, and making greater use of cues; a few have an increased understanding and fluency in independent reading. Writing skills range in one class from very immature copywriting to the beginning of 'free' writing, but progress is very good overall. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in the use of the word processor, highlighting and changing text, and typing their word lists.
4. At Key Stage 2, in Year 4, achievements in lessons are sometimes unsatisfactory for most pupils because of the disruptive influence of a few. Listening skills are not much in evidence, being overridden by attention difficulties, and talking is mostly confined to short utterances. Some are making good progress toward writing in linked cursive with some regard for letter size. Elsewhere in Key Stage 2, in Year 6, progress and achievement are consistently better. Here, pupils are developing an understanding of the meaning of verse and are writing good poetry reviews, sometimes using the word processor. The highest attainers read fluently with good understanding and write answers to comprehension questions in full sentences of cursive script. Throughout the teaching of English, as well as in other subjects, the insistence by staff on good habits of listening more patiently, waiting before speaking, not interrupting and respecting the viewpoint of others is promoting these key academic skills and promoting socially acceptable behaviours.
5. In mathematics, pupils make good progress over time and achieve well in developing basic numeracy skills because planning addresses closely individual needs. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn to add and subtract numbers up to ten, and some do more. Higher attaining pupils come to understand the concepts of odd and even numbers. At Key Stage 2, pupils add and subtract two digit numbers, they order numbers in the correct sequence and count correctly in two's, forwards and backwards. They recognise and name correctly mathematical shapes, for example, triangle, cube, square and sphere. Throughout their short time in the unit pupils develop and improve their use of mathematical language which helps to consolidate their understanding.
6. Attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average overall; although the highest attainers are achieving the national average. By the end of Year 2, pupils record the results in their scientific investigations in a variety of ways, using drawings, tables and bar charts, for example. Through their investigations they learn the difference between push and pull forces. Most progress

is made in pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things. They know what distinguishes living from non-living things; and they sort living things into plants and animals. Pupils name the main parts of the body and the parts of the skeleton. The quality of learning in science in Key Stage 1 is good because pupils respond well to the interesting range of activities which are planned meticulously and draw on the teachers' very secure understanding of the National Curriculum programmes of study for science. They achieve well in lessons because teachers manage them very securely, they sustain very high standards of discipline and no learning time is lost.

7. Attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average. The highest attainers are attaining National Curriculum Level 4, broadly in line with the national average. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand why different materials are suitable for particular purposes. They can give examples of solids, liquids and gases. As in Key Stage 1, the best achievement is in pupils' knowledge and understanding of biology. They have a good understanding of how the blood circulates round the body and they draw recognisable diagrams of the heart. Pupils produce good quality diagrams, accurately labelled, of flowering plants; they distinguish between plant and animal seed dispersal. Pupils are learning the scientific language associated with food chains and animal habitats. By the end of Key Stage 2, there is significantly more writing in science than in Key Stage 1. There is inspection evidence of good achievements in science in Years 5 and 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve less well because lessons are severely disrupted by the behaviour of some pupils with very challenging behaviour.
8. In the one lesson of history seen taught, within topic, achievement in the lesson was good in understanding the notion of chronology in early life, mostly because of very skilful teaching which included pitching the work at very different levels to match the prior attainment of each of the four pupils in the room. There are no significant differences in the achievements or rate of progress of pupils of different levels of prior attainment, but pupils with additional, severe emotional difficulties are not progressing or achieving as well as their classmates. The one girl on the roll of the unit was absent at the time of the inspection and there is no direct evidence of any gender differences in achievement or progress.

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

9. Pupils have good attitudes toward work at the unit. They are mostly cheerful, hardworking and some do not want to leave. They join in activities and games with enthusiasm and speak well of the unit and the progress it has enabled them to make. The great majority show substantial improvement in their behaviour, concentration, and ability to communicate with others verbally rather than through aggression. In 1998/99, 18 of the 19 pupils who left the unit returned full-time to school. A small number of pupils who are emotionally disturbed, and who are inappropriately placed in the unit, do not respond positively to the supportive but disciplined régime. The outreach support for pupils and staff in primary schools has a valuable role in preventing permanent exclusions. The majority of pupils respond well to positive behaviour strategies, including structured reward schemes, and gradually learn that good behaviour has benefits for them. Around the site, at lunch for example, behaviour is often very good.
10. Staff are generally consistent in their response to pupils who refuse to co-operate or who are abusive. When tempers flare, pupils who are not directly involved usually ignore the incident. Pupils who are creating a disturbance are sent to the "time out" room. This helps many to calm down, but is not an effective strategy for the few pupils who are significantly disturbed. Seven pupils have been temporarily excluded since September 1999, one on two occasions and the others once. One pupil who caused extensive damage has been moved out of the unit and is making good

progress. The others were excluded for a maximum of two days, used as calming down time. Exclusions are not over-used.

11. The personal and social education programme makes a major contribution to pupils' development. Overall, pupils make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Breaks and lunchtime are integral parts of the programme. Pupils are helped to play together, make polite requests, say thank you, and to co-operate in simple tasks such as clearing tables. The insistence on adhering to classroom routines in lessons is most effective in encouraging considerate, socially acceptable behaviour which is crucial for successful mainstream re-integration. There is scope to develop the personal and social programme further by planning more opportunities for pupils to take initiative and show responsibility.
12. Pupils usually show interest in their work. Teachers make good use of games to motivate pupils in mathematics and science. The attractive large-format books used in English help teachers to keep pupils' attention. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff make time for pupils, and value them as individuals and many pupils gain confidence as a result. Relationships between pupils are often neutral, and sometimes hostile, although they can be very forgiving of pupils whose behavioural outbursts are essentially beyond their control. Difficult situations are skilfully defused and pupils benefit from seeing staff respond to aggression in a calm, quiet manner.
13. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils miss 15% of the sessions they should attend, but less than 1% of absence is unexplained. Taxis do not always arrive on time and pupils who arrive late are unable to benefit fully from the education provided.

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

14. The teaching in over half of the lessons observed was very good, and in a further fifth was excellent. Teaching in only one lesson was less than satisfactory, made poor by the inability to manage some extremely difficult behaviour. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently of a very high quality. Teaching in English and mathematics is mostly good and never unsatisfactory and, in science, teaching is mostly good. Personal, social and health education is very well taught in a variety of contexts. Planning, pupil management and the use of support staff and resources are particularly strong features of the teaching. The understanding amongst staff of their complementary roles is very good. The one weakness in teaching is that there is little evidence of homework being used systematically to reinforce pupils' learning.
15. In English, teaching is mostly very good, never unsatisfactory and occasionally excellent; it is particularly strong at Key Stage 1. Teaching in a modified Literacy Hour in Key Stage 1 is very good because activities are planned to match pupils' needs and teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together to deliver the plan and manage pupils' lapses in concentration and disruptive tendencies. As a result, pupils are consolidating their reading skills and some progress to writing a sentence with a capital letter and a full stop. Elsewhere in Key Stage 1, excellent planning, appropriate targets and very astute pupil management is leading to good progress and a gradual reduction in inappropriate behaviour.
16. In Key Stage 2, at Year 6, well-planned individual work and firm management by all the adults in the room secures good understanding of the poem under discussion and general improvements in concentration and reduced restlessness. The teaching to one very difficult, Year 4, class is just satisfactory despite constant interruption from an emotionally disturbed minority. Here, sticking to the task in hand despite interruptions, maintaining clear expectations and instructions, and the

invaluable support of the classroom assistant with individuals prevent the behaviour of a few spoiling too much the learning of the others.

17. In mathematics, the teaching is mostly very good with, occasionally, excellent features. Teachers' very secure subject knowledge, alongside their detailed insights into the pupils' needs and vulnerabilities, underpins very good planning, an astute choice of materials and methods, and very good management of learning and behaviour in the lessons. The outcome is that pupils are fully engaged in the activities; they are often enthusiastic and steadily acquire new skills and knowledge. Learning is consolidated and extended through effective games and very good use of questioning; individuals are supported well by assistant staff.
18. Teaching in science is very good at Key Stage 1, but is sometimes made poor at Key Stage 2 by the inability of staff involved to manage the very disturbed behaviour of a few pupils whom a PRU cannot reasonably be expected to cope with adequately. Learning in science in Key Stage 1 is good because pupils respond well to the interesting range of activities offered, which are planned meticulously and based on teachers' very secure understanding of the National Curriculum science programmes of study. Learning is also promoted well by teachers' very good management strategies which sustain high standards of discipline, leaving no time lost on the lengthy recovery of situations which have become troublesome. Sometimes the learning is poor in Key Stage 2 because a small minority of emotionally disturbed pupils, whose behaviour is well beyond their own control at times of stress, disrupt the lesson to the extent that the teaching of science cannot take place. This is an unusual situation in the unit at this time and one which management is addressing; overall, however, the quality of learning and teaching in science is good, and often better.
19. Literacy and numeracy are very well taught at Key Stage 1; teaching of these skills is more variable at Key Stage 2, but is never unsatisfactory and is sometimes very good. A sensible modification of these two national strategies, in light of the learning difficulties encountered in the unit, makes progress in learning more likely. Literacy and numeracy are catered for well in the planning in other subjects, in history for example.
20. Within a topic session, one lesson of history was seen taught to Year 2. Here very good teaching mixed praise and demand effectively and excellent classroom management skills quietly anticipated confusions, defused potentially tense situations and re-directed pupils to other aspects of the task in hand. A planned link promoted learning in listening, speaking and writing skills well. The use of information technology, with pupils saving, printing and creating pictures using 'cut and paste', enhanced learning across a broad spectrum. Overall, progress in the lesson in grasping the stages in growing up, the notion of chronological order and new vocabulary (toddler, infant, teenager etc.) was good because of very good planning, high expectations and excellent involvement of the classroom assistant.
21. For the great majority the unit meets pupils' needs very well, and particularly so in basic skills and in the development of personal and improved social skills. At, for example, 'toast time', staff consistently reinforce what is expected, use questions skilfully to explore understanding and maintain very good relationships with pupils, even when challenging them. Social skills are very effectively taught at lunchtimes. Provision for the small number with additional, complex needs is unsatisfactory and their learning is insufficient. Moreover, they can reduce, and at times prevent, the learning of others in the same room. Through timely and careful physical restraint, all staff defuse these difficult situations and secure the safety of others in the room.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the unit are good. The curriculum is very relevant to the needs of these pupils who have been unsuccessful in learning in a mainstream school setting because of their disruptive and challenging behaviour. There is a highly appropriate, and very effective, emphasis on the development of pupils' personal and social skills, enabling the great majority of pupils to return to mainstream school after only two terms. The curriculum helps pupils to develop the essential basic classroom skills of listening to instructions, not calling out, turn taking, and respecting peers, staff and equipment; a significant contribution to social development.
23. Provision for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is very good and a few, the highest attainers, are reaching national averages. Liaison arrangements with mainstream schools are very well established ensuring that pupils attending the unit continue to receive the broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to which they are entitled. Inspection evidence confirms the highly effective work of outreach teachers and classroom support assistants, reported by many primary headteachers in the area, in securing good quality continuity in the curriculum between school and unit. There are few links with the community but some extra-curricular activities are arranged. These are understandably infrequent given the short time which teachers have to promote pupils' classroom-based learning skills.
24. The Key Stage 1 curriculum is very well matched to the learning needs of the pupils currently on roll. A small number of pupils in Key Stage 2 with additional and complex emotional and behavioural difficulties have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The curriculum provided by the unit is not matched well to their needs and two day attendance is insufficient. These pupils are waiting to be transferred to more appropriate educational settings and this delay is detrimental to the progress they make. On admission to the unit, pupils receive Individual Behaviour Plans which are reviewed each term in conjunction with the mainstream school. The targets in these plans are usually specific so that progress toward meeting them is easily monitored. The broader behaviour targets are less easily monitored. Individual teachers may set literacy and numeracy targets for pupils in their classes but there is no tradition at the unit of writing targets in Individual Education Plans for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to cover the two days a week in which pupils attend. Pre-admission information about a pupil's standard in English and mathematics is used well to pitch curriculum planning in these subjects to a pupil's learning needs. The pre-admission information in science is too narrowly focussed on skill development and provides teachers at the unit with too little information about pupils' prior achievements in their knowledge and understanding of science.
25. The unit has produced an effective curriculum policy and separate subject policies, except for physical education, music and religious education which cannot be provided in the short time available each week. There is planning in place for history and geography but limited time for more than superficial coverage of these subjects. Although not required, there are good references to the National Curriculum programmes of study in subject schemes of work. Curriculum planning in science is very good. Information and communications technology is not taught as a discrete subject but in both Key Stages 1 and 2 opportunities are provided for pupils to develop and apply their key board and mouse skills; in English, for example. The personal and social education programme is very well planned to cover the period from arrival to departure each day. The teaching of personal and social skills extends throughout the day beyond lessons into 'toast time' in Key Stage 1, play time, lunch time in the dining hall and choice time at the end of the day. Planning the assertive management of pupils at these times is very thorough and methods are consistently positive, direct, relaxed, respectful, calm, encouraging and friendly. There are no

plans for the teaching of drama. This is a missed opportunity to extend the curriculum for personal and social education. Visits linked to curriculum topics are rare, but mainstream primary schools seek to organise visits at times when their unit pupils can join in.

26. Provision for personal, social and moral development is very good. The emphasis throughout the day on consideration for the normal rules of behaviour and consideration for others is successful in developing the responses which pupils will need to re-integrate into larger classes in mainstream schools. Most pupils know the difference between right and wrong, for the most part respond on that basis and, at times, some make considerable allowances for the behaviour of others. This was particularly noticeable in one lesson when two pupils spontaneously cleared up the mess created by another very disturbed pupil during an uncontrolled outburst, recognising that his behaviour, at that particular time, was beyond his control. Cultural and multi-cultural understandings are promoted well in lessons and through display around the building. Provision for spiritual development is necessarily restricted by the short and part-time nature of placement in the unit but staff use all available opportunities to introduce spiritual elements and provision is satisfactory.
27. Staff have established satisfactory procedures overall for assessing pupils' academic progress whilst at the unit. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment information to support their planning. The assessment procedures, and the use of assessment information about performance in literacy and numeracy, at the time of entry to the unit are well established and effective. Teachers are continuing to develop their assessment procedures in English and mathematics using the published scales for monitoring progress towards National Curriculum Level 1 and through Attainment Levels 1 and 2. The procedures for assessing other subjects are not so well developed. In science, for example, there are no targets in an Individual Education Plan against which progress in science can be formally measured each term. The assessment procedures for information and communications technology, and those previously used for history and geography have been suspended pending new procedures. The unit is currently piloting a new assessment scheme for personal and social development but it is at too early a stage of development to judge its effectiveness.
28. Teachers are consistent in recording learning outcomes at the end of each lesson. These assessments are frequently focussed on behaviour with less emphasis on what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers check pupils' written work on a regular basis, noting the amount of support provided, praising good work and effort, but not providing written diagnostic comments on how work can be improved. Such commentary is oral rather than written, and often the main emphasis of feedback is on raising pupils' self esteem. Teachers keep portfolios of examples of pupils' work, assessed using National Curriculum Attainment Levels. There is very good liaison with mainstream schools to ensure that pupils have access to the national tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The requirement is met to produce a report for the mainstream school when a pupil leaves the unit but these reports are at an early stage of development; currently they lack consistency of content and style and the audience for the reports is unclear. Written reports to parents and carers about the progress of pupils whilst at the unit are not well established and are an area for further development.

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

29. Unit staff give very high priority to pupils' welfare. Records indicate that staff seek explanations when pupils are difficult in class, or make little progress. Child protection procedures are clear and well understood and all incidents involving accident, injury or damage are recorded.

30. Pupils are well supervised and security is good when pupils are indoors. All staff are aware of pupils' individual behaviour targets and track progress towards them. Pupils know their behaviour targets and are often eager to achieve them, but are less sure about their educational progress because of the lack of learning targets. The strong emphasis on personal and social education is wholly appropriate and beneficial. Pupils learn how to behave in public places, and how to communicate more appropriately with other children and with adults; this is a significant feature in the successful return to full-time mainstream schooling in many cases.
31. The local family resource centre, funded through social services, has an important and growing role in helping pupils' families to cope with behavioural, social and economic problems, and to access education and training. Centre staff, who come from a range of professional backgrounds, help support services to work together in the interests of individual pupils. Staff know the background of each pupil, and this helps them to monitor equal opportunities. The cultural mix is restricted and nearly all pupils are white English-speaking boys, but progress of the occasional girl or traveller pupil is checked to ensure they are benefiting fully from the unit's provision.
32. Attendance is well-monitored informally and non-arrival at the unit is followed up; tighter formal procedures would reduce the risk of errors. All attendance figures are reported to mainstream schools on Fridays. Overall, the unit's support for pupils' personal and educational development, and for improved attendance, is good through a complex set of arrangements at times.

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

33. The few parents who gave an opinion are pleased with the impact of the unit on their children's behaviour. They find staff approachable and value the frequent informal feedback on progress. Parents are given a brochure about the unit before their children are admitted. This is informative and with a few alterations to technical language would be even more reassuring for worried families. The unit does not provide written reports for parents, but contributes to the information which pupils' mainstream schools use to compile annual reports. The absence of clear procedures for written reports is perhaps understandable, because the average stay in the unit is about two terms, but a written report, to an agreed format, on the discharge of every pupil would be a useful record for parents and carers as well as for mainstream schools.
34. The 'good day' notes, and certificates and awards for good behaviour, keep parents and carers closely in touch with the advances each pupil makes. Nearly half of the parents and carers attend termly open mornings when they can see work and talk to staff. Pupils' records show wide consultations with parents and carers, whose views are valued and respected. There is little evidence of homework being used systematically to reinforce pupils' learning. This is understandable, in the context of the necessary focus on behaviour, but could be developed in sensitive ways so that those parents and carers who wish to can plan activities which support the work being done in the unit. In often difficult circumstances, and bearing in mind the part-time nature of placements, the unit works effectively with parents and carers.

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

35. The Local Education Authority (LEA) has established a clear role for the PRU within its overall provision for disturbed and disruptive pupils; it is the major provision of the LEA for Primary-aged pupils and has a well-defined set of objectives related to preventative intervention on exclusions through its outreach work. The LEA has established a joint Management Group, for this and one other PRU, which meets regularly, has set up sub-groups and which receives detailed



reports from the headteacher across a wide range of the unit's activities. The Management Group is properly constituted, active, interested and supportive; its members maintain a good oversight of developments, and of the difficulties confronting the PRU. The Management Group fulfils its reduced range of statutory responsibilities.

36. The leadership and management provided by this group, the headteacher and senior staff are satisfactory overall with a number of strong features. The unit has a clear central aim, to support schools, parents and LEA in improving pupils' behaviour in the Primary phase. Through outreach, in-service training and good liaison with other agencies, the PRU achieves significant success in this regard. The focus placed by management, on fostering improved social behaviour and improvements in basic curriculum skills in the two days a week at their disposal, is sound and, judged by re-integration levels, successful. The headteacher has some clear ideas on the future development of the unit and the outreach service and these are appropriate ambitions. The unit's targets, and those of the LEA, with regard to reducing exclusion levels, establishing a nurture group and increasing in-service provision, are being successfully pursued.
37. There is a widespread commitment to succeed amongst staff and morale is high. This is underpinned by good communication through formal and informal meetings. In this regard, the semi-formal liaison meetings each Wednesday morning in the unit, which bring together the outreach staff, are very effective. There are sufficient other, more formal, meetings which are managed well.
38. Albeit often satisfactory in the context of a small unit, some of the management practices are characterised by informality and a lack of sufficient structure. Most noticeably the monitoring, and particularly the evaluation, of teaching and learning are insufficiently structured. There are plans to introduce the direct observation of teaching but none takes place at the moment, and teacher appraisal is in abeyance. More structured reporting to parents, using a common format, would improve the information available to them and its consistency. Mentoring of newly-appointed staff and the professional development profiles of staff are insufficiently structured and recorded. Subject co-ordinators do not have annual budgets based on needs analysis within a subject development plan. The responsibilities of the two joint assistant headteachers, who do not have a routine classroom teaching commitment, could be usefully extended into a sharper, more evaluative role in these areas.
39. The accommodation available to the unit is spacious and, in some respects, more than is needed. It includes more than sufficient classrooms, a large library area, meeting rooms and ample office space for all sorts of staff. The accommodation is very well cleaned and maintained, except for the external paintwork, and there is very good display of work around the walls. For the reduced curriculum covered, resources for learning are plentiful and in very good condition; initiatives, like the Literacy Strategy, have been generously supported. There are more than enough teaching and support staff for the two classes which run on any one day in the unit, although all staff have additional commitments to outreach and support work at other times during the week. The qualifications and, to a greater extent, the experience of teachers is sufficient for the wide range of tasks they undertake. Classroom support assistants have good experience; the annual, and late, renewal of their contracts, which are linked to grant funding, imposes uncertainty and has led to the loss of staff to other more permanent posts. Sufficient clerical time provides effective support to the headteacher.
40. As LEA provision, the unit has a prescribed role in strategic planning and linking budget plans to objectives. Nonetheless, it supports its own priorities through satisfactory financial planning and has revitalised information technology provision and, more recently, supported priorities in numeracy through careful allocation of additional money. Management has an eye to securing best

value from the money it spends and buys wisely; the Management Group is currently looking at alternative ways of arranging transport for pupils to and from the unit, for example, and in the recent past the unit has commissioned a customer satisfaction survey across its activities. The unit uses Standards Fund Grant for exactly its intended purpose and keeps good records in this respect. The unit does not use and, without a fully delegated budget, does not need a computerised information system to manage its expenditure; the systems used are effective and efficient however. The unit makes satisfactory use of new technology administratively, for outreach work for example, and across the curriculum in the classrooms, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

41. Bearing in mind the very good quality of teaching, the standards achieved and the progress made by pupils, but most particularly the high levels of return to full-time mainstream schooling, the unit gives good value for the money allocated to it.

## **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **OUTREACH AND SUPPORT**

42. Outreach and support work is very effective and valued highly. The unit has offered a service over time to about sixty schools comprising advice, support to individual pupils of a preventative nature or for re-integration, and training. The work of the link teachers and the classroom support assistants working out of the unit is very highly valued and many schools express the wish to see the service expanded; the waiting list for support has lengthened to about nine months and the involvement of unit staff is in much demand. The unit's training packs and programmes for mainstream teachers, support assistants and lunchtime supervisors help them to cope with difficult pupils. The Wednesday 'drop in' advice sessions for mainstream teachers and others concerned about children's behaviour are popular. Some schools, having had a working relationship with the White House over years, understand clearly its role and feel it has had a positive effect on reducing exclusions in the sector significantly. Many express the view that the strength of the provision is that it is not only giving support to individual pupils with difficulties but contributes to mainstream staff development in early intervention, support plans and behaviour management techniques. Responses from mainstream headteachers, gathered from nearly forty letters sent to the inspection team, and from inspectors' visits to schools, are best summed up in the words of one headteacher; "The White House staff give excellent practical advice and provide materials which have been used with success."
43. Outreach work is so highly regarded, and is in increasing demand, because it is very effective and successful; many pupils, especially at Key Stage 2, would benefit from more rapid intervention by the outreach team, and faster admission to the unit.

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

The LEA, Management Group and headteacher should:

- (1) establish the formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning through a programme of direct classroom observation and the greater involvement of the joint assistant headteachers in the process, (Paragraph 38 )
- (2) restrict to a minimum the length of time that pupils with Statements remain at the unit pending agreed special school placement, and not admit pupils with severe emotional difficulties for whom PRU placement is inappropriate and, at two days per week, insufficient. (Paragraphs 8, 9, 26 and 34 )

The LEA, Management Group and headteacher, in drawing up their action plan, may wish to consider the following minor weaknesses identified in the report:

- shortcomings in specific learning targets in some subjects, (Paragraphs 4,6, 7 and 8 )
- weaknesses in reporting to parents and mainstream schools. (Paragraphs 33 and 40 )

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	53	7	13	0	7	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*

<b>Pupils on the unit's roll</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the unit's roll	24

<b>Special educational needs</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the unit's special educational needs register	24

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

### *Attendance*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
Unit data	15	Unit data	0.5

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

*\* Pupils are only expected to attend for two days per week*

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	24
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	7	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers in the service (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher in unit	6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: Y1 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff (unit)	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-9
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	£
Total income to unit (excludes outreach budget)	108,800
Total expenditure	108,800
Expenditure per pupil (25 pupils for 2 days per week)	10,880
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	N/A

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

#### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	24
Number of questionnaires returned	6

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

The majority of the six questionnaires expressed support, and often strong support and endorsement, for what the unit is achieving under all headings.

#### **Other issues raised by parents**

One parent and one carer attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector and neither raised any significant issue.