

INSPECTION REPORT

The Springfield Centre

Lupset

Wakefield

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108139

Acting Headteacher: Mr. A. Middleton

Reporting inspector: Dr. Eric Peagam
14943

Dates of inspection: 2nd-5th December 2002

Inspection number: 249469

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 (out of school pupils)

School category: LEA maintained

Age range of pupils: 14-16

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Unit address: St. George's Road
Lupset
Wakefield

Postcode: WF2 8BB

Telephone number: 01924 303770

Fax number: 01924 304040

Appropriate authority: Local Education Authority

Name of responsible officer: Mr. J. Winter

Date of previous inspection: 16th October 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Eric Peagam	Registered inspector	Science Art History	The unit's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the unit do to improve further?
John Brasier	Lay inspector		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?
Tom Smith	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Physical education Citizenship Special educational needs	How well is the unit led and managed?
Collette Gribble	Team inspector	English Geography Personal and social education Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications

The Croft
Brierley Way
Oldcroft
Lydney
Gloucestershire
GL15 4NE

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

The Springfield Centre was established in September 1997 as the LEA provision for pupils not attending secondary school at Key Stage 4. The PRU provides full and part-time places for up to 42 girls and boys, although only 28 can be accommodated at any one time on the premises. Full-time pupils attend from Monday to Thursday and there is provision for part-time attendance on Fridays, when some full-time pupils also attend. Pupils come from the whole of Wakefield Metropolitan Borough, and often travel considerable distances to attend.

Of the 42 pupils on roll, most (37) only attend this centre (28 full-time, 9 part-time) with five Year 11 pupils dually registered with Wakefield College. They come mainly from white UK backgrounds and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are presently three girls on roll. Attainment on entry covers a wide range, but most pupils have low attainment and self-esteem as well as a history of poor attendance when they arrive. They mainly have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools and many have previously failed to achieve at an appropriate level. There are seven pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Many pupils transfer from the LEA's Key Stage 3 provision, but most will have been there for only a short time before transfer. There is currently 1 Year 10 class and 3 Year 11 classes on Monday to Thursday and one class on Fridays. This class includes some pupils who have been identified as vulnerable and the centre has agreed to give help towards meeting their educational needs. Most pupils stay at Springfield until they leave statutory schooling, but some pupils move on with an Early College Transfer.

The headteacher is currently seconded by the LEA to another school and there are temporary arrangements in place for the management of the centre.

HOW GOOD THE UNIT IS

Pupils arrive usually with negative attitudes to learning and poor social skills, so that standards are low. The centre brings about satisfactory improvement in standards so that by the time pupils leave, these are satisfactory overall, with some good and very good outcomes. Teaching is satisfactory overall, often good, very good at times and rarely unsatisfactory. Leadership is effective and provides support for the aims of the centre. Management structures are satisfactory overall, but the inexperience of the present leadership means that current difficulties being experienced by the centre are not being addressed well. In addition, poor attendance by pupils leads to inefficient deployment of staff, who are the centre's major resource. While this continues, the centre is unable to achieve satisfactory value for money.

What the unit does well

- It enables a number of pupils who have previously failed to achieve enhanced self-esteem.
- It offers very good teaching leading to high achievement in art
- Pupils achieve a range of accreditation certificates in both academic and vocational subjects
- It provides pupils with a good range of facilities, including very good accommodation
- It provides good support for pupils' basic literacy skills
- It gains the support and approval of parents

What could be improved

- Attendance and punctuality
- The amount of teaching offered and the quality and range of extra-curricular activities
- The management of behaviour in many settings
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Teachers' expectations in some lessons
- The role of the management committee

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 centre was last inspected in October 2000 by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors following a previous judgement that the centre required special measures. Since then, although there are a number of outstanding issues, the centre has made satisfactory improvement. The Key Issues have mainly been addressed through increased attention to the way in which literacy skills are taught. The management committee has been effectively re-launched with a membership that reflects the LEA's commitment to the centre and is preparing to take an appropriate level of responsibility for its overall running. Improvements have been made to staffing which have in turn have led to major changes in the curriculum offered and its delivery, including increased availability of externally accredited courses. Resources for ICT have been improved, including developing the use of a specialised learning programme to improve literacy skills. The centre was selected for a government School Achievement Award in 2001. The secondment of the headteacher to a local school has resulted in temporary management arrangements so that some momentum has recently been lost and the centre was experiencing what are likely to be temporary management difficulties at the time of the inspection. In consequence, the inspection found a deterioration in attitudes and behaviour at the time of the inspection in comparison with those previously found

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	C	good B
science	C	satisfactory C
personal, social and health education	C	unsatisfactory D
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	poor E

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

Pupils who attend regularly achieve satisfactory overall standards as a result of the progress they make during their time at the centre although there are significant variations in standards between subjects. Pupils achieve very well in art, where there are good results at GCSE. They also achieve well in English, history and geography, gaining accreditation through entry-level certificates. Progress in ICT is unsatisfactory, as pupils' behaviour does not allow them to learn effectively. Pupils make good progress in acquiring literacy skills and satisfactory progress in numeracy. They acquire satisfactory skills and knowledge through non National Curriculum activities and develop an appropriate awareness of the benefits and duties attached to membership of society. Levels of progress for a significant minority are seriously reduced through poor attendance and punctuality. In a number of cases, this is exacerbated by the effect of their own or others' poor behaviour.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the unit	Unsatisfactory: A significant proportion of pupils show little commitment to the centre or their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Unsatisfactory: good and very good behaviour is seen in some classes and contexts, but too often it is unsatisfactory or poor, with abusive comments, inappropriate attitudes towards staff and occasional violent outbursts.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory: A number of pupils develop well, becoming mature and relating well to staff and one another. Others however, do not, especially when they attend infrequently.
Attendance	Poor: attendance levels by a significant minority of pupils are very low and pupils are often late, frequently very late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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 quality of teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Teaching was good or better in just over a half of lessons, very good in about one-fifth and only unsatisfactory on occasion. It is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. Good preparation of lessons in PSHE is not always fully effective in the face of poor behaviour, but teaching is mainly good. Teaching in art is consistently very good as a result of very secure subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. High expectations also underpin good teaching and learning in English, geography and history, as it is in motor vehicle studies where pupils are offered well-structured practical experiences. Teaching is less good and even unsatisfactory when low expectations and lack of confidence on the part of teachers, leads to pupils setting the tone and pace of the lesson. Pupils learn best when they are highly motivated by the subject or the teacher and where their desire to learn is greater than their tendency to misbehave. In these lessons, they are willing to talk about their work and demonstrate they understand what they are doing and they listen carefully to the advice and guidance they are offered. Learning is less secure and too often unsatisfactory when pupils are hostile, abusive or indifferent to what is being taught and they prevent teachers from teaching effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE UNIT

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory in terms of what it contains: the curriculum is broad, balanced and largely relevant, with a range of additional vocational and recreational activities but there is limited regular provision for physical development. However, the amount of taught time is low especially for part-time pupils, and there is unsatisfactory extra-curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory: special needs are identified and effectively addressed through individual programmes, which are monitored through IEPs. There are shortcomings in the extent to which provision specified in statements is made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Unsatisfactory overall. The centre makes insufficient planned provision for spiritual and cultural development other than in and through art. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop teamwork and a sense of community on visits, but opportunities within the centre are insufficiently promoted. Moral behaviour is satisfactorily promoted through staff example and teaching.
How well the unit cares for its pupils	Satisfactory: staff are supportive and show concern for pupils' well-being, but structures to improve behaviour and attendance are unsuccessful. The centre has an effective policy to address oppressive behaviour, including racism.

The school makes considerable efforts to work with parents and communicates well, by telephone and letter. The distance to many pupils' homes limits the extent of parental involvement in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE UNIT IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory: after a period of energetic restructuring under the substantive headteacher, the acting headteacher is maintaining the functioning of the centre against a background of uncertainty about permanent management arrangements.
How well the management committee fulfils its responsibilities	Unsatisfactory but improving: the newly reformed management committee has yet to become fully effective in its monitoring and evaluating role in relation to the work of the centre.
The unit's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory: the centre has not established any means of evaluating its own performance against objective norms. Currently it monitors more than it evaluates and application of the principles of Best Value is inconsistent.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory: the planning of the budget at centre level is appropriate and reflects identified priorities. However, day-to-day planning for the deployment of staff, especially support staff, is often unsatisfactory and takes insufficient account of the number of pupils actually attending.
The adequacy of staffing,	Good overall: staffing is generous; there is a very favourable pupil to teacher

accommodation and learning resources	ratio and a good number of learning support assistants. Accommodation is very good and provides good facilities for learning. Resources are satisfactory and sufficient to provide the planned curriculum.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT

Only three parents returned a questionnaire, but there were very positive views expressed, which were also confirmed at the meeting with four parents prior to the inspection. The team was not able to fully support the views that parents expressed about the overall effectiveness of the centre.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The centre's results and achievements

The characteristics of pupils at this centre make it inappropriate to report their attainment in comparison with national norms. This report focuses on the progress pupils make in relation to their prior attainment, as well as giving examples of what they know, understand and can do.

1. Standards achieved in the subjects offered are satisfactory overall, with some good, or very good, achievement. In some cases, pupils are at the centre for a relatively short time, arriving in Year 11, although many transfer in Year 10 from the Key Stage 3 Pupil Referral Unit. The centre enables a number of pupils who have been excluded from mainstream education to re-establish successful learning and, in many cases, to achieve a range of accreditation, including passes at GCSE. Last year, for example, only 2 pupils out of 30 left without some externally accredited qualification. For others, it lays the foundations for future success in a Further Education setting. However, for a significant minority of pupils it is unsuccessful, as it is not able to secure their regular attendance. Judgements about progress, therefore, are based on the work of pupils who do attend on a reasonably regular basis and take into account the limited amount of teaching they receive during the week.
2. Progress and achievement in **English** is good. Many pupils achieve passes in externally accredited tests in literacy as well as in the units leading to the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) Entry Level certificate. Speaking and listening skills improve satisfactorily although there are limited opportunities for debate or discussion. Reading skills develop well and pupils use their skills well in work in other subjects. Formal writing develops satisfactorily, especially in letter writing and other work-related activities, although there are few examples of extended writing. Overall literacy skills are developed well and are effectively supported by the planned approach to literacy teaching across the curriculum. Assessment and IEPs form the basis of the Individual Learning Plan for each student. These give comprehensive information that assists accurate target setting and tracking of pupils' literacy gains across the curriculum.
3. In **mathematics**, including the acquisition of numeracy skills, pupils make satisfactory progress, again securing entry level passes in the Unit Award scheme, and with a small number achieving GCSE passes at foundation level. Most pupils develop satisfactory skills in number and data handling but there is little use of mathematics for investigation. Pupils work largely individually at their own level and make appropriate if, at times, slow gains in knowledge and skills during lessons.
4. In **science**, achievement in terms of knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. Last year, three pupils achieved entry-level certificates. Standards in investigative skills are less well developed, especially the skills of analysis and evaluation, because pupils have little opportunity to acquire and practise these skills given the limited facilities and the irregular attendance of some pupils.
5. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in **information technology lessons** although, under close instruction they complete work that leads to external accreditation. In so doing they produce examples of work across many strands of the subject. They use word-processing and spreadsheet

packages and use a digital camera to capture images, and incorporate these into their work. Some pupils make effective use of computer-assisted learning packages, particularly the commercial Integrated Learning System in use, to support development of literacy skills. There is good use of ICT skills in work in other subjects and there is evidence of the use of downloaded images in art, history and geography. However, many pupils do not develop confidence to use computers independently other than for the simplest tasks or for playing games. Pupils use word-processing to prepare and improve their English work and graphics applications are used at times in art but there is little use of information technology in either mathematics or science.

6. In **art**, achievement is good overall and very good in some individual cases. Over the last two years, progress has been good and the majority of pupils entered for GCSE achieve passes in the A-C range. Pupils make good progress in researching and bringing together their ideas, in using a wide range of materials and techniques and they make clear connections between their work and that of recognised artists, particularly from the cubist school.
7. Pupils also make good progress in **history** and **geography**, where they are achieving a range of units in entry-level accreditation this year. They learn the skills of historical research, learning to examine issues and situations from different standpoints and coming to see why particular individuals might have thought or acted as they did. They develop a good range of knowledge as a result of studying broadly based units including studying aspects of both World Wars, American history, including the history of native Americans, natural disasters such as earthquakes and the geography of the rainforests.
8. **Design and technology** is offered as an option and is also accredited through entry-level units, which were achieved by three pupils last year. The subject is at present confined to food technology because, although equipment is available for the study of resistant materials, there is no one to teach this strand. In lessons observed during the inspection, learning and response were both good.
9. Pupils make satisfactory progress in learning in a number of activities that are not directly related to the National Curriculum. In **motor vehicle studies**, pupils identify and select appropriate tools for a particular task and are familiar with the materials with which they are working. They recognise the basic engine components and have some understanding of techniques for maintenance and repair. They show good regard for safety issues and dress appropriately for the task.
10. Progress in **PSHE** is satisfactory as pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of sexual relationships and related health issues. However, progress within the lessons observed was limited as a result of unsatisfactory or poor behaviour.
11. In lessons within the **careers education** programme, pupils make mainly satisfactory improvement in their knowledge and work-related skills and develop an understanding of the role and structure of a CV. However, again, their progress is impeded by negative and confrontational behaviour.
12. All pupils have IEP's, but the targets in these are mostly behavioural and frequently insufficiently precise for progress towards them to be ascertained. Where specific targets are identified, progress towards them is satisfactory.
13. There are too few girls in the centre for gender comparisons of achievement to be made and there are, at any one time, very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Although a minority of pupils show appropriate attitudes to the centre, these are unsatisfactory overall. Behaviour is very variable, from pupil to pupil and from setting to setting, ranging from very good to poor, but, on balance, is also unsatisfactory at present. Personal development over time and the relationships made by pupils who stay the course are satisfactory. Overall, this represents a decline in standards compared with the last inspection.
15. Attitudes were generally good in art, history and geography lessons and in most English lessons. Pupils showing very good attitudes in art, were proud of their achievements, worked hard and were happy to talk about the techniques they were using. However, a significant proportion of pupils show little commitment to the centre or their own work. In one third of lessons seen attitudes were unsatisfactory and there were others where the lesson failed to take place because there were no pupils. A poor attitude was seen in a child development lesson when the sole pupil present [out of seven] refused to do any work, said the subject was only good for girls, tore up his work and refused to converse with the teacher. Pupils who are late, often unceremoniously barge into lessons without apology and at other times pupils refuse to join in lessons or otherwise show a disinclination to work.
16. Behaviour is unsatisfactory. It is very good or good in some classes but poor or unsatisfactory in others. Where it is very good the class reflects the teacher's enthusiasm and the lesson proceeds with humour and consideration, generating commitment and perseverance. Where it is poor pupils are disrespectful to staff, ignore requests or instructions, are noisy and interrupt and fail to stay seated. Very few apologies are made after such behaviour. Swearing is rife and abusive swearing at staff is not uncommon.
17. The difficulties being experienced at present are reflected in the rate of exclusions. There were 18 exclusions in 2000/2001, 22 in 2001/2 and 25 so far this term [up to December 1st] all for serious breaches of discipline. The premises are well cared for, however, and pupils respect the games and equipment in their recreation area. Bullying between pupils is effectively dealt with; it is intensively investigated and pupil relationships are monitored afterwards. Racism is very rare as staff respond very quickly to any hint of it.
18. Pupils get on with each other in a generally friendly way and staff and pupils relate to each other out of class generally satisfactorily, but there is a lack of bonhomie and humour. Pupils do not share in each other's achievements, for example, when certificates were awarded only staff applauded the recipients.
19. While pupils are at the centre, a number develop mature and appropriate responses. Some pupils develop well and relate well to staff, but they are in a minority. Outdoor activities, especially team-building activities, make a good contribution to the development of better relationships and staff are keen to develop these activities.
20. Attendance is poor at 49 per cent. Eight per cent of the absence last term was authorised and 43 per cent unauthorised. This largely reflects the pattern of pupils' attendance at their previous school or centre. There is a slight improvement in attendance this term to 57 per cent. In the week of the inspection one third of the pupils attending were at least an hour late. They were not marked as absent, which is unsatisfactory. 28 pupils attend the centre for only four days and thus do not receive a statutory full time education, and the twelve pupils who only attend on Fridays attend no other place of education and also fail to receive a statutory period of education. Registration is efficient. Lessons start on time, when there are pupils available.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. As at the previous inspection, there is some variability in the quality of teaching, which is satisfactory overall. It is good or better in about a half of lessons, including some teaching that is very good. It is rarely

unsatisfactory, although the learning that results is unsatisfactory in up to a third of lessons as a result of unsatisfactory or poor behaviour by individual pupils or groups

22. For much of the time, teachers are offering their chosen specialist subjects and this is a significant strength, ensuring that the quality of teaching is good overall in those subjects. It is at its most effective when teachers actively support pupils through individual work in preparation for their assessments, as in English, history or geography and especially when preparing portfolios of GCSE coursework in art. High quality teaching is characterised by the promotion of a lively pace of work, high expectations of pupils' achievement and a good balance between listening and practical activities. These lessons are well organised and teachers have a good understanding of the learning needs of the individuals and groups they are working with.
23. In some lessons, particularly those seen in art, very good relationships between teacher and pupils ensure that the pupils are managed well, with the minimum of visible control. Enthusiastic and encouraging approaches have a very positive impact on pupils and greatly increase their motivation to succeed. In many lessons, the quality of teaching is significantly enhanced by the work of support assistants who work very effectively to support a variety of activities during lessons, including working with pupils individually or in small groups. This is again particularly noticeable in art lessons, where the learning support assistant has worked to improve her own skills in the subject and delivers very good help and guidance to pupils. However, in some lessons, insufficient thought is given to the role of support assistants and they are not enabled to contribute effectively or are allowed to become a target for gratuitous abuse.
24. Teachers' short-term planning is satisfactory, with clear learning objectives that, in the best lessons, are shared with pupils at the outset and reviewed with them at the end. In good lessons there is clear planning for the development of key literacy skills. However, planning for the use of numeracy skills is less well established, and pupils' skills in using information technology to support work in other subjects are insufficiently developed.
25. In less successful lessons, especially where teachers are using worksheet-led tasks as a means of controlling pupils' behaviour, or where pupils are allowed to set the tone for the lesson, the pace is often slow and a limited amount of learning takes place. In these lessons, inadequate behaviour management allows pupils to become abusive and inappropriate, often resulting in a significant level of disruption.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall, but there are shortcomings in a number of areas. The most significant shortcoming is in the amount of teaching offered which, at 18 hours, for full-time pupils is well under the expected 25 per week. For those part-time pupils whose sole educational provision is attendance at the centre on a Friday, the amount of teaching is very far below what is expected. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and is constructed to meet the needs of these pupils. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are offered as well as a range of other National Curriculum and non National Curriculum subjects. Vocational courses and work experience provide satisfactory preparation for life after school. Pupils have the opportunity to gain externally accredited qualifications such as Entry Level Certificates, AQA tests and a range of courses leading to external accreditation. The curriculum is hampered by the limited access for higher achievers to GCSE courses other than in art and English. Sporting activities are provided from time to time but there is no consistent provision for physical development.
27. The curriculum provides satisfactory strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Planning for each skill across the curriculum is at least satisfactory. There are opportunities for pupils to transfer skills from English sessions into other areas such as extended writing in geography. There is restricted access to the library for research purposes because it is usually locked. It is insufficiently used to support learning in other subjects.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, although provision specified in statements is not always made. There is a generous degree of support available to pupils in the classroom and on outdoor activities. However, there are some inconsistencies in the way that work is organised to

meet individual needs. For example, pupils are not always aware of the level of support that they require and can be overly sensitive to adult support. Therefore, attempts by adults to assist pupils are often met with resistance.

29. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very limited. Pupils do go out of school on activities but there is no current timetable for after-school groups or residential visits. In the past, pupils have visited the local galleries and museums, such as The National Film and Photographic museum and The Thackrey Medical Museum, to extend work done in science and personal, social and health education. There is photographic evidence of a range of outdoor activities and visits having taken place in the past. Pupils also benefited from study support outside the normal school week last year. Funding was awarded for projects, such as off road motor-cycling, snow boarding and white water rafting, and it is anticipated that funding may be available for further activities in the current year. There is no provision for pupils to formally extend their knowledge and experience in music.
30. The centre aims to provide each pupil with varied experiences and promotes equal access to all parts of the curriculum. It effectively challenges racism. There is a strong focus on equal opportunities and pupils of all abilities are provided for. All pupils enjoy the right to be treated as equals and can access the facilities and curriculum available according to their individual need. Additional support is provided when necessary and boys and girls are able to take advantage of every available activity. The centre provides planned interviews and induction to ensure their individual rights are maintained. The behaviour of some pupils effectively denies equality of opportunity in some circumstances and undermines what the school strives to provide.
31. The impact of the curriculum on pupils' personal development is more limited. Music and modern foreign languages are not taught. This results in lost opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Art offers pupils increased access to cultural experiences as pupils appreciate the work of great artists, visit galleries and museums and work on projects in the community. In geography, pupils consider the impact of the depletion of the rain forests for indigenous people from South America and how earthquakes can devastate lives and world economies. Food technology is contributing to pupils' personal development by offering specific training in food preparation and improving personal, social and health education.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for pupils to explore their ideas and reflect on their view of the world. On the rare occasions that teachers create or seize the moment for reflection and discuss the wider beliefs that guide behaviour or human responses, there is some level of wonder to be seen on pupils' faces. However, moments like these were rarely witnessed during the inspection. When they occurred, it was in lessons where pupils were inspired and challenged, and when teachers had the confidence and expertise to grasp opportunities and develop theories.
33. The provision for moral development is satisfactory but pupils do not always respond well to it. Moral codes of behaviour are promoted and staff help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. When this teaching is successful, pupils respond well and work together to contribute positively to lessons. They know that honesty, truth and fairness are the values promoted by the centre. Pupils do not always exhibit these values and can disrupt lessons and be abusive and threatening.
34. Lessons in personal, social and health education, child development and citizenship provide good information on issues relating to sexual health and the dangers of drug misuse. Too often, these lessons are hijacked by immature and derogatory responses that detract from the sound morals within the lesson content. Pupils are also given opportunities to explore the factors that lead to maturity in life skills through motor vehicle lessons, food technology and body art sessions, when opportunities are seized to discuss morality and behaviour.
35. Social development is satisfactory. Pupils benefit from team building activities. There is insufficient emphasis on the centre as a community that abides by group rules, and opportunities to develop appropriate social patterns at break times and before school are not taken up. Relationships are often good but can be marred by poor behaviour and abusive comments that lead to disruption. When pupils relate well to each other and to individual members of staff, they show self-discipline and positive behaviour, they can discuss their rights and responsibilities and lessons are productive and enjoyable. Social opportunities outside school have been curtailed recently but there are plans to reinstate many outside, social visits and activities.

36. Culturally, there are insufficient opportunities to go on visits that would promote cultural awareness or appreciate music. The alternative curriculum operating in the afternoons does provide some cultural experiences. They cook dishes from other countries, such as Italian and Chinese dishes, and look at other cultural traditions in body art classes. There is limited provision for cultural diversity but they do discuss issues relating to other cultures in some subjects. Art lessons provide a cultural backcloth for students as they look at art work from around the world and create high quality paintings, emulating the works of great artists. Geography and history studies also consider events from around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. There is satisfactory educational and personal support and guidance for pupils and good procedures for health and safety and child protection, offset by unsatisfactory structures to support attendance and behaviour. This is a deterioration since the last inspection.
38. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are good. Most pupils leave the centre with recognised forms of national accreditation. Information provided by referring schools about pupils' previous attainment is sparse and the school routinely conducts baseline tests on pupils, in English and mathematics, when they are admitted to the centre. This information is then used as a comparison against future progress.
39. Day-to-day assessment procedures are satisfactory and in subjects, such as English and mathematics, the information obtained is used appropriately to vary the next stages of learning for each pupil. There is a weakness in science where the procedures are insecure and the information gained is not used well in order to promote further learning. The procedures include good recording arrangements that enable progress to be monitored.
40. Pupils' behaviour within lessons is recorded in detail and against criteria that are known to each pupil. This data is used well to monitor behaviour patterns of individual pupils. However, in practice the completion of these monitoring sheets is a one sided event – with points being announced by the teacher. Evidence from the inspection indicates a tendency to award points unmerited by the behaviour that was seen. Opportunities are also lost to involve pupils in their self-assessment.
41. Provision for the particular needs of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and as a result they make appropriate progress, in common with other pupils. The coordinator has very good procedures to ensure that the needs of these pupils are addressed although there is evidence to indicate that there are isolated examples where pupils have been inappropriately placed at the centre, especially where the provision specified in statements cannot be met. The guidance of the nominated coordinator has ensured that the policies and practices in use at the centre meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs. It is a weakness that the coordinator is employed on a part- time basis and that she is not recognised as a contributor to senior management team discussions.
42. The quality of IEPs is satisfactory. The coordinator has good and meticulous systems for the drawing up of these and it is a considerable strength that parents are invited to meetings where IEP's are drawn up or modified. This initiative does not always get the response it deserves from parents.
43. The content of IEP's is heavily weighted toward social and behavioural development. While this is a positive feature within the context of the centre, the usefulness of IEPs in guiding teaching and learning is reduced. Moreover, the targets are often couched in terms that are too vague to permit

close monitoring. As a result, teachers do not always use the opportunity of IEP planning and contents to raise the pupils' sense of self-esteem through a focus on academic achievement.

44. The centre has insufficient involvement with outside professionals who have appropriate expertise to help pupils with severe emotional disturbance. Consequently, staff often work without any informed knowledge of the conditions exhibited by pupils. Moves are at hand to redress this imbalance but extending and improving the range and extent of this additional help should be regarded as a matter of urgency.
45. Procedures for the maintenance of health and safety are all in place, with a good spread of first-aiders and a thorough policy for the control of outside visits. The acting head of centre is the nominated person for child protection, and he knows the local procedures and agencies. He is due to be trained in January and will then refresh the training of all adults in the centre. He is also the officer for children in public care and has produced education plans for them. He is well aware of the pupils in the school who are at risk of child abuse and a careful watch is kept upon them. Welfare arrangements are good. Medicines are administered carefully and staff are trained in the response to an allergic reaction to nuts. Bereavement counselling is available and a variety of therapeutic assistance is sometimes made available. There is a breakfast club and BCG jabs are made available.
46. There are unsatisfactory procedures to promote attendance. Telephone calls are made on the first day of absence. Home visits are made by the education welfare officer on referral from the teacher in charge. Rewards are given, including trips out of the centre. These procedures have had little overall effect and procedures to make the centre more interesting and more welcoming are not in evidence.
47. There are unsatisfactory procedures to promote good behaviour. Classroom practices are inconsistent and staff do not always model appropriate behaviour. Behaviour assessment is made at the end of each lesson, but standards applied are very low in some classes so that it ceases to be an incentive. In a number of classes expectations of behaviour are low. Swearing, abuse and bullying of classroom assistants goes unchecked. Behaviour targets in IEPs are very broad and do not form a basis for determining improvement. Informal management plans for individual pupils are discussed at briefings and rewards are given, but neither of these practices is fully effective. New intakes of pupils arrive together and are not phased so that intensive individual communication of the ethos of the school can take place. Class rules are not drawn up by pupils and the home-school agreement is very one-sided with the result that it is not taken seriously. Anger management sessions are available for pupils who are in need of it.
48. There are satisfactory procedures for addressing oppressive behaviour among pupils, based largely on thorough investigation and application of sanctions. The personal and social education programme also makes a contribution.
49. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Mentoring sessions are recorded but regular mentoring for all pupils is not yet in place. IEPs are regularly reviewed and, as the targets are generally for personal development, each pupil has a regular review. Pupils are not allocated tutors – in practice, pupils choose a mentor they are comfortable with.
50. Members of staff know pupils well and talk about them with understanding and concern. They are well placed to give good guidance.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. This aspect of the centre's work was not reported on at the previous inspection. Although only three questionnaires were returned and four parents attended the meeting, the views expressed were very positive overall. The inspection confirmed some of the parents' views, but was not able to confirm their high overall opinion.
52. The fundamental link with parents is considered to be the induction interview, at which the expectations of the centre are made clear to students and parents, and acceptance of their obligations sought. Parental involvement in the centre is minimal thereafter, and they have very little impact on the work of the centre.
53. The centre provides good information for parents. There are occasional newsletters reviewing past activities. Parents are invited to come into the unit once a year to discuss their child's progress. About one in five comes. Annual reports on pupils' progress are good. They have targets that are readily understood and gradings for effort and attainment. They are frank about pupils' shortcomings and give a clear picture of the pupil's development.
54. A few parents or grandparents help with homework, but the main link with parents are the communications from the centre by mail and by telephone detailing achievements and progress. These are regarded as important and are good procedures. Parents are also invited in to discuss problems when they arise.

HOW WELL IS THE UNIT LED AND MANAGED?

55. At the time of the previous inspection, good management and leadership had resulted in considerable improvement in the work of the centre, including the removal of the requirement for special measures. This improvement was continued into 2000/2001, when the school won a Schools' Achievement Award. The management structure has been reorganised and there is now a post of senior teacher. This has enabled the acting headteacher to share the administrative load – for example the senior teacher now administers the school accounts. A benefit of this reorganisation and sharing of responsibility is that the headteacher has been able to extend the monitoring procedures, from just the curriculum, to include more aspects of the centre's work, such as the behaviour and attendance of pupils.
56. Since April 2002, leadership and management of the centre has been in the hands of an acting headteacher during which time the headteacher has been seconded to other duties within the authority. This has resulted in a period of inexperienced leadership at a time when the centre is facing a number of difficulties. The acting headteacher continues to unite the staff in their effort to secure a better future for the pupils. However, as a result of the relative inexperience of the newly formed management group as well as the inexperience of the acting centre management, the development of the centre has stalled and planned initiatives have been shelved. Previous improvements, such as rates of attendance and the introduction of a wider range of accreditation are not being sustained and a continuing rise in standards cannot be guaranteed.
57. The aims of the centre are to provide a wide range of academic opportunity for its pupils and to ensure the curriculum it provides is relevant to pupils' needs. Through this they hope to redress the educational disaffection that many pupils have on their arrival at the centre. In this the centre is largely successful.

58. Subject co-ordinators are fully aware of their responsibilities and carry these out with enthusiasm. The centre now provides a secure curriculum largely based on examination syllabuses. A weakness reported at the last inspection was that English coordination was a shared responsibility. This has now been remedied and as a result of effective co-ordination, the standards in English have risen.
59. The leadership ensures there is a commitment to improvement that is supported by all staff. This comes essentially from the democratic manner in which decisions are made. Staff report they feel fully included in decisions. For example, morning meetings attended by all teachers provide good information of known developments that affect pupils – this ensures that staff are well informed.
60. Since the last inspection the work done by the management group has become a more significant feature. This group comprises sixteen individuals who also have joint responsibility for another PRU within the authority. They carry out their work satisfactorily with reference to the service level agreement (SLA) drawn up by the authority. In this there is a weakness because the group makes some decisions according to the needs of two centres. They monitor the work done at the Springfield PRU by means of reports provided by the acting headteacher. These reports, although accurate in detail, do not provide a full picture of the centre and consequently do not enable the management group to make informed decisions.
61. The management group has set challenging targets which they expect the centre to achieve; for example, they expect that 75 per cent of pupils, on leaving the centre, will continue to some form of education or training and that all pupils will attain some form of accreditation. However, these targets and their outcomes do not provide the management group with actual information as to the current standards within the centre – it is management by ‘bottom line’ numbers.
62. Teaching is monitored appropriately by the acting headteacher and this process is placed within the context of performance management. Targets which emerge from these could be more rigorous and aimed at raising the quality of teaching and, particularly, learning.
63. The centre is well staffed. Although some teachers are qualified by virtue of previous experience in further education, the expertise they bring is appropriate to the needs of pupils’ learning as well as that of the curriculum. Where possible, teachers teach the subject of their first qualification and, as a result, the quality of pupils’ learning is becoming better, as seen in the range and outcomes in final accreditation. The needs of the curriculum are served well by the expertise of all staff – for example in motor vehicle studies, art and food technology. The skills of support staff are not always fully exploited by teachers. In a significant number of lessons they are often used to manage pupils’ behaviour through proximity, rather than support learning or assess the progress pupils are making.
64. The accommodation is very good and fully supports the needs of both pupils and the curriculum. There is a very good range of specialist accommodation, such as an ICT suite, food technology room, art room, heavy craft provision, motor vehicle maintenance facilities and an activity hall. In conjunction with ample classroom space these contribute well to the opportunities that pupils have to increase their range of learning. In addition, the space available allows pupils to have a dedicated social area – this enables staff to get the most out of their relationships with pupils that are established in other areas of the school. This also provides the basis for pupils to develop social skills within controlled and managed settings.
65. Externally the centre is surrounded by adequate grounds. There are hard surfaces, which are used for a variety of small team games, but there are no larger, grassed level surfaces which would

support major team games; however, it should be noted that demand for the latter is insignificant. Currently, occasional games are played using the facilities of a nearby primary school. Team games could be developed through use of the basketball court – but currently there are no markings that would allow this. Pupils generally respect the quality of the building, as seen in the manner in which they care for it. The building and its facilities have suffered very little vandalism by Springfield pupils although some has been caused by local people during out of school hours.

66. Resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory. This is because staff have been made responsible for the identification, purchase and use of these, and the limited funds ensure that anything bought is appropriate and necessary. Additional funds are available to individual subjects where a case is made for these. Good quality displays of pupils' work are both informative and enable pupils to take pride in their achievements. Pupils are motivated by the displays and some proudly discuss their involvement.
67. Staff and pupils make appropriate use of computers as well as other forms of new technology, such as digital cameras. The latter are used extensively to record work or activities undertaken by pupils and the speed at which the results can be displayed are an incentive for pupils to achieve more.
68. Whilst not impacting on educational standards, there are parts of the building that have suffered from neglect and these are now in need of maintenance. For example, parts of the roof are no longer waterproof. The acting headteacher has identified other deficiencies to the local authority as well as the management group, and steps are in hand to put in place a repair programme.
69. Financial control is satisfactory and there are good procedures in place, which account for centre-based expenditure – these are enhanced through use of computer technology. The budget figure is set by the local authority and figures for the last financial year show a very small overspend. Although all money is spent prudently there are weaknesses within the ways in which planning for this is carried out. For example, although each subject has a known budget, developments are carried out on an ad hoc basis and without reference to an agreed plan. Curriculum developments are carried out in isolation and without clear reference to the centre development plan. Planning does not sufficiently include the criteria for evaluating the outcomes of spending decisions. The principles of Best Value are not fully understood by the school management and are inconsistently applied.

WHAT SHOULD THE UNIT DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to restore the recent rate of improvement and to continue to raise standards (especially in ICT) and the quality of education offered, the management committee, acting headteacher and staff should:
 - improve attendance and punctuality, in particular by providing appropriate incentives and sanctions and by ensuring that the education of those pupils who attend regularly and on time is not disrupted by those who do not (paras. 15, 20, 46);
 - increase the amount of teaching offered so that all pupils for whom the centre is the only provision receive the expected 25 hours each week unless there are valid medical or other reasons why they cannot make use of this entitlement (paras.26);

- ensure that the management of behaviour is consistent and effective in all settings by establishing appropriately high expectations of work and behaviour and introducing measures to ensure these are met (paras.16-18, 23-25, 40, 47);
- improve provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and underpin this with an appropriate programme of extra-curricular activities.(paras.31-34, 29);
- increase the role of the management committee to ensure that support for the management of the centre is based on secure understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and that effective permanent arrangement for the management of the centre are put in place as soon as possible (paras.56, 60,61).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

This does not include the 2 lessons where no teaching took place when pupils refused to participate

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	-	8	10	12	2	-	-
Percentage	-	25	31	38	6	-	-

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the unit's pupils

Pupils on the unit's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the unit's roll	42

Special educational needs	No of pupils
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the unit's special educational needs register	42

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
Unit data	8

Unauthorised absence

	%
Unit data	43

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll		Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	32		19	1
White – Irish	-		-	-
White – any other White background	-		-	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	-	1	-
Mixed – White and Black African	-		-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	1		1	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	-		-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	-		-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1		-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-		-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	-		-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	-		-	-
Black or Black British – African	-		-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	-		-	-
Chinese	-		-	-
Any other ethnic group	-		-	-
No ethnic group recorded	-		-	-

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	3.8
Average class size	7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	532,300
Total expenditure	542,185
Expenditure per pupil (fte)	17,600
Balance brought forward from previous year	-
Balance carried forward to next year	-

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Only three parents returned a questionnaire, but there were very positive views expressed, which were also confirmed at the meeting with four parents prior to the inspection