

# INSPECTION REPORT

**DERBY CITY PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT /  
KINGSMEAD CENTRE**

Derby

LEA area: City of Derby

Unique reference number: 132133

Teacher in charge: Mrs Angela Jenner

Lead inspector: Mr Mike Kell

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 259085

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils:	5 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	255
Unit address:	Kingsmead Centre Bridge Street Derby
Postcode:	DE1 3LB
Telephone number:	01332 716000
Fax number:	01332 716006
Appropriate authority:	The local education authority
Name of responsible officer:	Mrs Rita Silvester
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNIT

Derby City Pupil Referral Unit was established in September 2000. It is a large and complex organisation, catering for a very wide age-range of pupils who are placed in a wide variety of placements; there are 25 classes in total. Three broad groups of pupils are catered for. They are pupils who have been excluded from mainstream schools; pupils who have been referred to the unit for additional support and guidance because there is a high likelihood that they will be excluded; and pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who are placed in the unit as an alternative to other provision, such as a special school. There are four times as many boys as girls. The maximum capacity is 218, but currently 204 pupils are exclusively on the roll of the unit, while a further 51 pupils are dual registered, in that they are on the roll of the unit and still on the roll of a mainstream school. The majority of pupils attend on a part-time basis, 121 of those who are sole registered and 45 of the dual registered ones. Pupils are taught on 11 sites across the city. Details of the sites are shown on the following page. Over 80 of the full-time pupils receive part of their education away from one of these sites, such as in college, on work experience or at home. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are moving to newly-established mainstream provision in September 2004.

Overall, the unit's socio-economic context is significantly lower than average. Sixty pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' levels of attainment are below national expectations. The great majority of pupils have a white British background, though four per cent have an Asian background and a similar number are black. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English.

The unit received two nationally recognised awards in 2003; the Healthy Schools Award and Investors in People.

<b>Name and details of base</b>	<b>Age range</b>	<b>Pupil descriptors</b>
<i>Newton's Walk</i> Chatsworth group pupils attend for five mornings. Haddon and Kedleston groups attend for two afternoons per week.	Years 1 to 6	Years 1 and 2 – a nurture group that is no longer taught at the base. Chatsworth group - sole registered pupils in Years 3 to 6. Haddon group - shared placements for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Kedleston group - shared placements for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
<i>Peartree Centre</i> Derwent group attends for five half-days each week. Trent group attends for four half-days each week.	Years 7 to 9	Derwent group – sole registered pupils, with an aim of returning to mainstream. Trent group – sole registered pupils with more complex needs requiring an alternative curriculum.
<i>St. Paul's Church Hall</i> Two groups, each of which attends for two days each week.	Years 7 to 9	Pupils on shared placements who have not yet been excluded.
<i>Duffield Road Centre</i>	Year 10	Maximum of 20 sole registered pupils who can access a mainstream setting.
<i>Step Forward (St. James Centre)</i> One group that attends for 23 hours each week.	Year 10	A mixture of sole registered and shared placement pupils with a long history of disaffection and non-attendance.
<i>Derby College</i> Two groups, each of which attends for part of the week.	Year 10	Study base of 25 sole registered pupils who have access to a mainstream-type setting. 'Networks' group of 12 sole registered and shared placement pupils following a programme of vocational options and basic skills organised by the college.
<i>Osmaston Road</i> Work-related learning.	Years 10 and 11	A mixture of sole registered pupils and shared placements. A maximum of 10 pupils who attend on an individual basis.
<i>Sinfin Youth Centre</i> A maximum of 20 pupils who attend as a single group	Years 10 and 11	Predominantly a Year 10 (although some Year 11 attend) group of sole registered pupils who require an alternative curriculum. This is a joint project with the Youth Service.
<i>Derwent Youth Centre</i> A maximum of 10 sole registered	Year 10	A temporary group set up at short notice to deal with a large number of Year 10 exclusions. This is a joint project

pupils.		established with the Youth Service.
<i>Mandela Youth Centre</i>	Years 7 to 11	A temporary group set up at short notice to deal with a large number of Year 10 exclusions.
Individual and small group tuition <i>Schoolroom - Derby Children's Hospital</i>	All age groups	Priority is given to long stay patients (more than five days) and children with special educational needs.

No Year 11 pupils were observed as all had left full time education; nor was the nurture group seen, as all pupils were off site pending full time reintegration to a mainstream school. All bases were visited except Step Forward, which had no pupils on site throughout the inspection, and Derwent Youth Centre, although these pupils were observed using a local sports centre.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Members of the inspection team</b>			<b>Subject responsibilities</b>
1310 1	Mike Kell	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Art and Design; English as an Additional Language.
1955 7	Liz Halls	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
2339 0	Mel Blackband	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Food Technology.
3059 7	Robina Howells	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics.
1078 1	Bob Thompson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and Communication Technology.
3055	Clive Tombs	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Personal, Social and Health Education; Citizenship; Physical Education; Special Educational Needs.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The unit is ineffective and is failing to provide an adequate standard of education.** Because of the lack of clear strategic planning by the local education authority (LEA), the unit is admitting pupils whose needs it does not meet. The unit is over-crowded, dispersed over many sites, and managed within the overall special educational needs support service (SENSS) rather than as a separate entity. This arrangement is not working and has resulted in ineffective management within the unit. The management committee has limited understanding of the unit's work and fails to support it effectively. Teaching and learning in lessons are satisfactory but pupils do not make enough progress over time because attendance rates are low and pupils do not receive sufficient teaching. The best provision is for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and Years 10 and 11. The unit provides unsatisfactory value for money.

#### The unit's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There are significant weaknesses in the strategic leadership and management provided by the LEA.
- The advisory panel is ineffective in its role as a management committee.
- Staff on all bases are very committed to pupils' personal and academic development, and key staff provide good role models.
- The position of the unit, as an element within the SENSS, and its dispersed nature over 11 sites means that it is not managed effectively.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress over time because their attendance is unsatisfactory and, for those who do attend, teaching time is much too short.
- Effective and appropriate programmes have been devised for pupils in Years 10 and 11, who are prepared well for leaving the unit.
- Pupils work in an environment that is free from bullying and other forms of harassment.
- The accommodation at some bases is unsatisfactory and not fit for purpose. Resources are restricted at some bases.
- High staff turnover, limited induction procedures and the high proportion of temporary staff mean that, overall, the workforce does not have sufficient experience and knowledge of the pupils and their needs.
- Good links with the community enrich pupils' learning.

The unit has not been inspected previously, so judgements on improvement are not applicable. In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this unit.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	In relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	Personal and social education
Year 6	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
Year 9	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Year 11	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory

*Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, poor, very poor.*

Overall, in relation to their prior levels of attainment and capability, **pupils' achievements over time are unsatisfactory**. They do not make sufficient progress. Some pupils, of all ages, achieve well in some lessons in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), personal, social and health education (PSHE), food technology, and art and design, but for the most part standards of achievement are unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Provision for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is **satisfactory** overall.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides an unsatisfactory quality of education.** Although there is some very effective teaching, **the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory**. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and motivate them through use of encouragement. Lessons are generally well prepared and planned, though planning sometimes fails to identify what exactly it is that pupils should learn. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils but, at times, work is not sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of more capable pupils. Education care officers provide good support to pupils. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

The school provides an unsatisfactory range of curricular opportunities which fails to meet the curriculum needs of the diverse and complex group of pupils for whom it has sole responsibility. The LEA is using the unit as an alternative to a special school for some pupils, and as a result they are not receiving an appropriate or adequate curriculum. The number on roll exceeds the unit's capacity, so some accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory and very few pupils for whom the unit is solely responsible have sufficient teaching time. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from a relevant and well planned curriculum designed to develop their awareness of further education and of employment. Opportunities for additional activities outside the school day are good.

Satisfactory arrangements are in place for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Satisfactory support, advice and guidance are given to pupils and there are good arrangements for the induction of new pupils. Staff treat pupils with respect and value their opinions. The unit involves pupils satisfactorily; their views are generally sought but their involvement in decision making is limited.

Links with parents are satisfactory overall; the recently established family-links service enhances support for children and their families. Mutually beneficial links exist between the unit and its local community, and links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership provided by the LEA is unsatisfactory, as is the leadership and management of the advisory panel. The leadership and management by the teacher in charge and by other key staff are also unsatisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation of elements of the unit's work is erratic.



## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT**

Parents are generally pleased with the work of the unit. Pupils have generally unsatisfactory views about the unit, although many in Years 10 and 11 are appreciative of the work it does for them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

**The most important things the unit should do to improve are:**

- The LEA should develop a clear strategy for the structure and development of the unit that will enable it to meet the needs of all the pupils on its register. In particular, this means clarifying the role and purpose of the unit in terms of which pupils it admits, and providing a taught week of 23.5 hours at all bases, in accordance with its stated policy.
- Ensure that the teacher in charge has the time and opportunity to lead and manage the unit on a day-to-day basis in order to monitor and evaluate all aspects of its work, and that senior staff are deployed efficiently to enable them to manage the bases effectively.
- Rationalise the number of bases so that all are of acceptable quality and meet health and safety requirements.
- Appoint a management committee specifically for the unit in order to develop systems for working with staff, to help to shape its direction and to support its work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Overall, in relation to their prior levels of attainment and capability, pupils' achievements over time are unsatisfactory. They do not make sufficient progress.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Overall, pupils who attend regularly learn satisfactorily in lessons but there are too many instances of pupils' bad punctuality and internal truancy, and this reduces achievement.
- A short taught week and unsatisfactory attendance rates result in restricted progress over time.
- The achievement of those pupils who attend and remain in lessons is sometimes adversely affected by the negative attitudes and behaviour of others, which disrupts their learning.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 and those in Years 10 and 11 make satisfactory progress towards their personal targets in subjects of the curriculum and towards their individual targets in personal and social education. The progress of pupils in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well because they are motivated by the possibility of external accreditation.
- Approximately 25 per cent of the teaching staff are temporary or agency appointments and a number are required to teach subjects with which they are not familiar, and this affects the standards pupils achieve.

#### **Commentary**

1. Overall, the unit does not enable its pupils to make satisfactory progress. The overall unsatisfactory standards evident throughout the unit are a result of pupils' absence from school and from lessons, a short teaching week and, on too many occasions, negative attitudes and a lack of application to work. Some pupils, of all ages, achieve well in some lessons in all subjects of the curriculum. A number achieve well in lessons overall in subjects such as English, science and physical education, and satisfactorily in mathematics, ICT, PSHE, food technology and art and design. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well because they are motivated by the opportunities to take externally accredited examinations, but attendance rates show that a number choose not to avail themselves of the opportunity.

2. There is no common policy for the promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum. Although individual bases have developed good practice to promote speaking, listening and reading skills, writing does not receive sufficient emphasis, with the result that pupils' progress in developing this skill is unsatisfactory. Overall, across all bases, those pupils for whom the unit is solely responsible achieve satisfactorily in mathematics lessons. The work of the Year 3 to 6 pupils who attend the Newton's Walk base shows that they achieve well; work is plentiful, and the evidence suggests that pupils learn well in all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils in Years 7 to 9, particularly at the Peartree base, achieve satisfactorily but follow a limited curriculum which focuses on number work, with too little emphasis on investigative mathematics. The current Year 10 pupils attending the Duffield Road and Mandela bases are making satisfactory progress in mathematics. Half the Year 11 pupils who

have attended the College Study base have taken General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations. All are expected to gain passes, and some pupils are expected to gain above-average grades. Not enough attention is given to the development of numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. While teachers in the bases are aware of their responsibility to help pupils' development of mathematical skills, they do not have a common policy or guidelines on teaching methods to ensure a consistent approach. The unit has not conducted an audit of the contribution of other subjects to the pupils' numeracy development, and has not identified areas where numeracy might be taught in other subjects. Achievement and progress in ICT are unsatisfactory. Progress over time is limited by poor attendance and the inadequate amount of teaching that pupils receive. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used satisfactorily to support other subjects of the curriculum, and many examples of good practice were found in all age groups. However, teachers' planning does not routinely identify opportunities for pupils to consolidate their ICT skills in other subjects, and opportunities are missed.

3. A number of factors associated with teaching and learning are inhibiting pupils' progress. A large proportion of teachers are on temporary contracts and a number are inexperienced in teaching pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and in the teaching and management challenges they present. As a result, pupils are not always provided with activities that meet their needs and behaviour management is, at times, ineffective. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour also contribute to their lack of progress. Late starts to lessons, internal truancy and a reluctance to learn by some pupils result in a serious discontinuity in the learning of a significant number of pupils, and consequently their achievement suffers. This is particularly true for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

4. There are other factors which inhibit the achievement of pupils. They include a low attendance rate, below 60 per cent in some bases; the existence of mixed-age classes in some bases, increasing the difficulty in providing work to match pupils' prior attainment; and, above all, the fact that the amount of teaching time provided is inadequate, seriously so for some groups.

5. In PSHE lessons, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good. However, their progress and achievement over time are unsatisfactory. They achieve satisfactorily overall in terms of the progress they make towards their individual personal and social targets. A number of factors combine to prevent better progress, particularly in Years 7 to 9. These include unsatisfactory attendance, a shortage of taught time, internal truancy, lateness to lessons and negative attitudes. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and those in Years 10 and 11 make more sustained progress because they have a clearer aim on which to focus. For the younger pupils it is their return to mainstream education, and for Year 10 and 11 pupils it is a growing realisation that they will soon be leaving school and need to make decisions about their future.

6. Some shortcomings in the management of the unit, particularly the lack of routine monitoring and evaluation of its work, adversely affect the standards pupils achieve. Although lessons are observed regularly by team leaders, their findings are not shared routinely with senior management and therefore no one has a clear overview of the whole unit. The result is that good practice is not being celebrated and disseminated to improve overall standards of teaching. Teachers who may be less effective are not being recognised and then supported. There are no overall co-ordinators of different subject areas, and this results in the lack of an overview of provision and effective mechanisms for overseeing and tracking pupils' progress.

Deficiencies in management are also responsible for the unsatisfactory induction of teachers new to the unit, with the result that learning and achievement suffer.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Overall, pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils behave appropriately most of the time and have positive attitudes to activities they like; on occasion, however, negative attitudes interfere with learning. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 appreciate the different educational opportunities being offered at their bases.
- Exclusions rates are high.
- The school's provision for social and moral development leads to good relationships between pupils, with little evidence of bullying or harassment.
- Attendance overall is unsatisfactory, but staff and the education welfare service work hard to encourage regular attendance, and individual pupils have made significant improvements.

## Commentary

7. Although attendance rates are unsatisfactory overall, they are satisfactory at the Newton's Walk base. A high proportion of pupils in Years 7 to 11 have unsatisfactory, and in many cases poor, attendance. Non-attendance is sometimes due to medical reasons, but a significant proportion is due to other factors. In particular it includes a high level of exclusions and absence due to some pupils attending court or being in custody. Pupils who travel independently often arrive late in the morning and a number are frequently late, arriving for lessons after breaks and lunchtime.

### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5	School data	28
National data	N/A	National data	N/A

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

8. Generally, pupils who attend regularly and remain in class show positive attitudes towards learning. They are interested in what happens in lessons and, with the regular encouragement of staff, generally follow instructions and settle to the tasks they are given. They are prepared to contribute their ideas, and a number are able to work independently and collaboratively. These positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching and are most apparent when a variety of interesting activities is built into the lessons. However, the high absence rate and the degree of absconding from lessons indicate that for many pupils the unit does not offer adequate stimulus, or provide enough activities which interest them sufficiently to encourage them to go to school or to stay in lessons.

9. Overall, the behaviour of the pupils is satisfactory. It is better at Newton's Walk and for pupils in the bases for Years 10 and 11. These older pupils appreciate the importance of the opportunities they are being given in preparation for leaving school. Behaviour at the bases for pupils in Years 7 to 9, Peartree and St. Paul's, is worse and frequently unsatisfactory. Across the unit, the number of fixed period exclusions is high and this reflects the unacceptable behaviour of some pupils. A particularly successful strategy has been the introduction of a set of key rules which have been created by the staff and pupils in each base. These rules are generally accepted by pupils and teachers, and pupils themselves review other pupils' adherence to them; pupils' performance is linked to a system of rewards.

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

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	188	94	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	10	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	8	1	0
Black or Black British - Caribbean	11	4	0
Any other ethnic group	1	4	0
Information not obtained	20	2	0

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

10. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their spiritual development. This is encouraged through subjects such as art and design, when pupils examine the work of famous artists, and further enhanced by the sense of community developed through weekly whole base gatherings, such as at Peartree, to celebrate achievement.

11. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Staff are good role models, and the overall positive approach of the unit to encouraging pupils' moral development is evident in the way all adults show tolerance and patience when dealing with pupils with difficulties. Many pupils respond appropriately; they are mainly polite to adults and welcoming to visitors, though this is much less evident in the bases for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Instances of bullying or other aggressive behaviour do occasionally occur but staff deal with any such behaviour promptly and effectively. Generally, pupils work in an environment that is free of harassment.

12. Pupils' social development is satisfactory. The bases provide some good opportunities for pupils to work together and to interact with their peers in social activities outside lessons and on visits. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults are generally strong and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. For example, the quality of these relationships gives them the confidence to ask and to answer questions.

13. Overall, the provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Its strength lies in the fact that many subjects provide pupils with a fuller understanding of the world around them. Subjects like art and design and English help to develop aesthetic awareness, and an appreciation of others' creative endeavours. Visits to different places of worship, museums and theatres help pupils to consider the practices and beliefs of people from their own and different cultures. Well-established community links also enhance pupil's first-hand experience of multicultural music and dance.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE UNIT

### Teaching and learning

Across all bases, teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils' learning, in developing new skills, knowledge and understanding, is satisfactory in lessons. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and use praise and encouragement well to motivate and encourage them.
- Lessons are generally well prepared and planned, although planning sometimes fails to identify what exactly it is that pupils should learn.
- Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils but, at times, work is not sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of more capable pupils.
- Many teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach but others are teaching subjects in which they are not specialists
- Education care officers provide good support to pupils, although they are not always used efficiently.
- Learning time is often lost through late starts to lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and absence from class.

### Commentary

14. Although some very good and good teaching was observed, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good quality teaching and learning were seen at a number of bases and included all age groups. The unsatisfactory teaching was limited to pupils in Years 7 to 9.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	2 (5%)	21 (50%)	16 (38%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

15. In the most successful lessons, teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and enthuse pupils and manage them well. They plan high-quality activities and prepare them in such a way that individual pupils are challenged and achieve success. Efficient time-management, good classroom organisation and the effective deployment of education care officers contribute to the success of these activities. The lessons are characterised by high quality relationships and encouragement; all pupils are included because of the strong teamwork between teachers and effective education care officers, who play an important role in promoting pupils' learning. Education care officers make a considerable contribution in helping to maintain pupils' attention and in managing their behaviour. However, they are not always deployed efficiently, a reflection on the management of the unit rather than on individual teachers. On a number of occasions, because of the high level of absence, too many adults are in the room for the number of pupils, and the organisation of the unit is such that they cannot be redeployed elsewhere.

16. Lessons are less rewarding experiences when teachers' expectations of behaviour and attitudes are set too low. At these times, pupils are allowed to display unsatisfactory attitudes, such as lounging back on chairs and sitting around wearing outdoor coats and baseball caps,

without comment from the teacher. Teachers' reduced expectations result in their setting work which is not challenging enough for the more capable pupils. This feature was most evident in bases for Years 7 to 9.



17. Lesson planning is satisfactory. The best plans use information about pupils' prior learning to plan activities that are appropriate to their age, interests and abilities. The plans identify what pupils are expected to learn and show the activities that have been chosen to develop subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding. At these times, the learning needs of all pupils are met, as tasks challenge the most capable pupils and extend their understanding. On other occasions teachers' planning is much less effective; lessons do not have a clear focus on what it is anticipated pupils will learn and the progressive activities that will develop this learning.

18. In addition to providing opportunities for pupils to make academic progress, teachers try to develop their personal qualities. They devise activities that require pupils to work independently. For instance, pupils use computers to research information on the Internet for posters they are designing. Other examples are producing a multi-media presentation, carrying out a scientific investigation which requires them to read and record temperatures, and using weights in a personal fitness session. Pupils carry out these tasks very successfully, but at other times, for instance when designing a totem pole, a number found it very difficult to work unaided. Teachers also engineer opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs or small groups. Year 9 pupils for example, worked successfully together to make a snakes and ladder game associated with different types of crime. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 made very good progress in developing trust and working with other people during a series of outdoor pursuits which required very close collaboration. Pupils are also given opportunities to participate in larger-group work, such as whole-class discussions in English about advertising and the use of persuasive language. Pupils' responses to these opportunities are unpredictable. On occasions they are fully involved and show perceptive insights, but at other times their attitudes are immature and discussions break down.

19. While assessment procedures are generally satisfactory, and good at Newton's Walk, they are not always implemented consistently across the unit. For example, while marking is recognised as a sensitive issue for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, standards of marking varied considerably, ranging from teachers who regularly and positively mark, date and annotate work to others who do little. Similarly, the use of assessment within lessons is inconsistent and does not always evaluate what pupils have learnt, or inform the planning of future work. Each pupil has an individual multi-element plan with academic and behavioural targets, although these vary in quality and preciseness. A daily log is kept of pupils' behaviour, and weekly meetings take place with staff to monitor progress against these targets. Overall, this arrangement is satisfactory.

## **The curriculum**

The unit provides an unsatisfactory range of curricular opportunities, though the provision of additional activities outside the school day is good. Unsatisfactory accommodation and learning resources inhibit pupils' learning at some bases. Provision for pupils' PSHE is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Although the curriculum generally has breadth and balance, the amount of time devoted to learning within the taught week is much too short for effective progress to be made.
- Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who are placed in the unit as an alternative to attending a special school do not receive a statutory curriculum.
- The management of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

- Curriculum programmes in Years 10 and 11 are good.
- Pupils who attend regularly can benefit from a range of extra learning experiences.
- Planning for the next stage of education is good in Years 3 to 6 and Years 10 and 11, but unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9.

## Commentary

20. The unit is a complex organisation that is trying to offer a curriculum which meets the needs of the very diverse and complex group of pupils for whom it has complete responsibility. These constitute pupils for whom reintegration into mainstream is the aim; pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties for whom re-integration is very unlikely; pupils in Years 10 and 11 following a work-related curriculum involving alternative education providers; and pupils on individual programmes taught at home. Overall, the unit fails to meet the curriculum needs of its pupils. Because the LEA has not clarified its admission arrangements the problem is made worse by the addition of other pupils during the year, which results in insufficient capacity and means that additional accommodation has to be found at very short notice. The situation is further made worse because the number of permanent staff is inadequate to teach the growing number of pupils. The net result is that pupils are not provided with sufficient time in lessons.

21. The LEA is required to provide its excluded pupils with a full time education and is on record as declaring that all pupils, across all sites, will receive 23.5 hours of education. It is failing significantly to achieve this objective. The teaching time allocated to different groups varies considerably; for very few does it approach the target. Pupils in the Chatsworth group at the Newton's Walk base are expected to return to mainstream schools, but they spend just 12.5 hours in lessons each week. The Derwent group of pupils at Peartree are taught for just 13.5 hours each week, while the Trent group, who have complex behavioural, emotional and social needs and are unlikely to re-integrate into mainstream schools, have just 10.5 hours of taught time each week. The LEA is using the unit as an alternative to a special school for this group of pupils and, as a result, they are not receiving an appropriate or adequate curriculum. This arrangement is unsatisfactory. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive more teaching time but there are still wide variations. Those at Step Forward and the Duffield Road and Sinfyn Youth Centre bases fare better, as they are taught, on average, for approximately 20 hours, but pupils at the Derwent Youth Centre and on the Mandela site receive about 12 hours education. Excluded pupils located at Osmaston Road at the Work-Related Learning site have only 7.5 hours teaching. The provision for pupils on individual programmes is even less satisfactory; some may have five or six hours of lessons but many receive little more than one hour each week.

22. The unit provides those pupils in Years 3 to 6 for whom re-integration is intended with an appropriate curriculum that focuses on English, mathematics, science and ICT. In addition, pupils are given opportunities to enrich their education through a variety of other experiences, including art and design, food technology and physical education. Although the curriculum provided is broad and balanced it is inadequate because not enough time is allocated for it to be taught effectively. The curriculum for those pupils for whom re-integration is not a possibility is quite inadequate. The unit is failing to offer these pupils the National Curriculum to which they are entitled.

23. When pupils in Years 10 and 11 are given the opportunity to attend, they benefit from a relevant, appropriate and well-planned curriculum designed to develop their awareness of further education and of employment. They can take appropriate accredited examinations. For example, pupils at Duffield Road and at the Study Centre at Derby College follow courses such as GCSE and Certificate of Educational Achievement (Entry Level) in courses like English, mathematics, science, ICT, and physical education. Pupils at the Osmaston Road base follow a variety of vocational and work-related courses, and those at the Study Centre are able to take part in a number of taster vocational courses taught by college staff, gaining accreditation

in units of such vocational courses as engineering, bricklaying and motor vehicle maintenance. The curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is supported well by a programme of work experience and a successful emphasis on careers education, including links with the Connexions careers service, but overall taught time is still restricted.

24. Pupils across the age range benefit from an emphasis on PSHE, which is taught as a separate subject at some bases; even where it is not, the emphasis on pupils' personal development influences much of the teaching and learning. Statutory requirements for the teaching of drugs education and sex and relationships education are met, and provision for these subjects is good. However, the overall provision for PSHE is unsatisfactory because of the limited taught time available, and the inconsistency of messages pupils receive in aspects such as what constitutes appropriate attitudes in lessons.

25. The quality of preparation for later stages of pupils' education varies across the unit. Specific and detailed preparation is made for pupils in Years 3 to 6 at the Newton's Walk base to enable them to successfully reintegrate in mainstream schools. This is good practice and is effective in that all the pupils in Year 6 will be returning to mainstream schools next year. The strategy is less successful at Peartree. Most pupils enter the base with complex behavioural needs, and they have not generally made enough progress by the end of the Year 9 to return to mainstream schooling. Provision for the pupils' continuing education is unsatisfactory in this base. Although basic records of pupils' progress are maintained, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage in their education, and parents are not sufficiently involved in decisions about the pupils' future placement.

26. Pupils who attend regularly benefit from a range of extra learning experiences. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have taken part in a 'space project' that was originally devised by a lecturer from Sheffield Hallam University; pupils were helped to make spacesuits and to write 'space poems', enriching their imagination and literacy skills. Pupils have taken part in a variety of outdoor pursuit activities, including horse riding, and they recently enjoyed a very well planned and well taught activity on an assault course. A considerable range of extra activity is available for pupils at the Peartree base, but attendance here is poor and pupils do not benefit widely from the full range of activities offered. Pupils across the age range have produced exciting work in the arts through working with groups like *Q Arts* and *Derby Dance*.

27. Although the unit has a core of experienced and able teachers, difficulties in retaining and recruiting staff, and the LEA policy of redeployment within SENSS, result in many teaching staff being temporary and teaching subjects for which they are not qualified. Accommodation on many bases is unsatisfactory. The LEA and the advisory panel are fully aware of the serious problems over accommodation, which are made worse by the unplanned increase in pupil numbers. In many premises, the lack of appropriate classroom provision and the need to share space has led to poor behaviour by pupils. This has led to managers of the unit reducing the pupils' timetables, as happened at Peartree, and this in turn has contributed to the unsatisfactory curriculum available. Pupils are taught in buildings which are too large or too small for their complex needs; in some cases they have no outside space, and in one base no running water or toilet facilities. There is an urgent need to review accommodation, both from health and safety considerations and in the light of the behavioural and learning needs of the pupils. Learning resources are unsatisfactory overall, particularly in terms of modern ICT equipment and software.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are satisfactory, and they receive satisfactory support, advice and guidance. The unit generally seeks pupils' views but their involvement in decision making is limited.

**Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pastoral care arrangements are satisfactory and the arrangements for child protection and the general welfare of the pupils are good.
- The arrangements for the induction of new pupils are good.
- Staff treat pupils with respect and value their opinions.
- Overall, relationships between staff and pupils are good.
- Pupils in Newton's Walk have very good levels of support and guidance; pupils in the Year 10 and 11 bases have good support; support in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory.

## Commentary

28. Parents confirm that pupils are happier in the unit than in their previous schools. The unit is a caring community. Pupils are treated with concern and respect, and the unit's focus is on trying to meet the needs of the individual. Staff are generally aware of the needs of each pupil, familiarising themselves with multi-element plans and knowing the targets specific to each pupil. An effective mentoring system is based on tutor groups and key-workers. Child protection concerns are well embedded in the staff's thinking and are in line with locally agreed arrangements. Systems to reduce and effectively deal with bullying, racism or oppressive behaviours are good, and exclusions are used appropriately as a last resort.

29. The arrangements for maintaining a safe establishment are satisfactory. Staff with health and safety responsibility have attended suitable training courses and have a good understanding of health and safety procedures, including risk assessments. However, not all staff have had appropriate restraint training. Good records are kept of any identified potential hazards to ensure that they are dealt with quickly. Health and safety issues are discussed at staff meetings to ensure that staff understand their role. During lessons such as food technology and physical education, teachers make sure that pupils follow safe practice. First aid arrangements are good, with most staff having had emergency training, and some are further qualified with four-day training. A wide range of buildings are used as bases, and whilst most have been deemed acceptable by the local education authority a number are unsatisfactory, including one with no running water.

30. Provision for pupils' welfare is satisfactory, and the designated key-workers know individual pupils well. Pupils' records include personal, behavioural and academic objectives, and they identify targets and progress. Targets are sometimes discussed in lessons, and even more so with key-workers. Pupils generally feel valued and confident about expressing their views not only to individual staff but also in larger group settings such as lessons. Staff openly discuss issues with pupils and act upon them as appropriate; pupils at Peartree suggested, successfully, that a handrail be fitted to assist the senior citizens who sometimes use the canteen facilities. The pupils acknowledge one another's needs and there are good examples of mutual support and encouragement, as when Newton's Walk pupils called out encouraging comments to help their classmates complete an assault course. However, in general, pupils have few opportunities in the unit to use their own initiative, grow towards independence, and take account of their own actions. Some staff feel that the unit cannot take the risks that accompany this growth towards independence and greater freedom. Each pupil has individual behaviour targets which are monitored and celebrated when the pupil is successful in meeting them. Each base has a reward system which is effective in reminding pupils of their targets and the consistent efforts which pupils must make to meet them.

31. Pupils find most of their bases welcoming and, in discussion, they expressed the view that their introduction to their base was a pleasant and reassuring experience. Induction for new pupils is good. The familiarisation programme includes visits from parents and carers to the base before a pupil can be admitted. The staff develop an initial profile of the core needs of each entrant and regularly review progress in the early days, reporting to parents as appropriate.

32. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not guided effectively about further study or career options, but when they reach Year 10 they begin to receive good quality careers guidance and this continues until they leave the unit. Teachers, and careers officers from Connexions, offer an effective service to the pupils, supported by good links with the local college and the business community. Many pupils move from school to college, and their choice of further education is greatly helped by a good work experience programme. Pupils taking part in work experience

at the time of the inspection spoke very highly of this opportunity and were most appreciative of the support they receive.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory overall. Links with the local community are good, and with other schools and colleges they are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Parents are generally pleased with the work of the unit.
- The recently established family links team enhances support for children and their families.
- There are mutually beneficial links between the unit and its local community, and the unit works effectively with other community organisations.

### Commentary

33. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, the few parents who responded indicated that they are generally pleased with what the unit provides; their children like the unit; the staff expect the children to work hard; and parents think their children make progress. Parents and carers believe that staff encourage them to work closely with them, and they are happy that their child is being offered another chance in education. Some like to be involved in deciding on the best approach to helping their child; they respond when necessary to the school's suggestions to contact outside agencies, such as health services. A number of parents expressed concern about behaviour in the unit. The inspection concluded that the behaviour is satisfactory, given the nature of the pupils' SEN; some pupils do misbehave on occasion and there is some bullying, but the school closely monitors what goes on and takes suitable action quickly and effectively.

34. The unit provides parents with good information about its work. Letters which are sent home each term are easy to read, informative about general matters, and celebrate the work of pupils and staff. Staff at Newton's Walk telephone home very regularly to share both good and bad news with parents. They are very willing to talk to parents who ring the base, and they welcome any who want to visit. Parents see teachers at end-of-term performances and informal open days, which are well attended. Initiatives such as the family links team are a very beneficial addition to the ways in which the unit can help its pupils and their families. Annual Reviews of those pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are not well attended by parents. Parents receive comprehensive settling-in reports following their child's admission to a base, and a satisfactory annual progress report, with information on each subject and a grade based on National Curriculum descriptors. Reports also include details of progress in personal, social and emotional development.

35. Staff and pupils work hard to maintain good relationships with their immediate neighbours; some bases work closely with local community groups. For example, they help serve refreshments to senior citizens and help young children in local schools as a form of community service. The unit makes good use of community facilities. For example, some of the most challenging pupils in Years 10 and 11 use training providers such as the Highfields Happy Hens, where they go to train and learn within a very supportive, work-based environment. Other good opportunities for work experience and introductions to the world of work are provided through the local education and business partnership, and many pupils benefit from these links.



36. Mechanisms for the transfer of pupils are satisfactory. The unit aims to work constructively with mainstream schools and colleges, but the quality of the relationship between the unit's bases and the schools from which pupils have been excluded is variable. Where the links are satisfactory or better, following exclusion, the schools forward the necessary background information on pupils' learning and personal development. Teachers at the bases feel able to contact the schools' teachers to complete their initial assessments of pupils. However, in some cases, obtaining the information required is much more difficult and several requests may be necessary; even then, they are not necessarily successful. In the case of pupils who have dual placements, links are satisfactory, and in some cases good, such as at Osmaston Road where information is sent routinely each week to pupils' schools.

37. The unit has limited success in re-integrating pupils into mainstream schools. When a return to mainstream is initiated, support mechanisms are not always in place for a sufficient period of time, although the arrangements at Newton's Walk are good. Some pupils transfer from one base, such as Peartree, at the end of Year 9 to a Year 10 base that is still part of the unit, but transitions are made less effective by the lack of communication between bases about aspects such as curriculum management and subject co-ordination. Many pupils stay in the unit far too long, and this is due, in the main, to the lack of exit strategies drawn up at the time of admission. There is a serious lack of urgency, and this is a significant failing.

38. Links with the local further education college are good. Many pupils in Years 10 and 11 attend short taster-courses in a range of vocational areas, and these make a good contribution to the work-related curriculum available for this group of pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership provided by the LEA is unsatisfactory, as are the leadership and management of the advisory panel. The leadership and management of the teacher in charge and other key staff are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The LEA and the advisory panel have failed to provide a clear strategic plan for the unit's development, and they do not support and develop its work through routine and robust procedures to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness.
- The senior management team is fully committed to the individual and pastoral needs of pupils. They provide good role models for pupils and, despite working in difficult conditions, generate good relationships throughout the unit.
- The LEA's decision to operate a single pupil referral unit, covering the whole age range, based on a number of sites, and managed as part of a much larger umbrella service, does not enable it to be run efficiently or effectively.
- The LEA advisory panel and key staff have not ensured that the majority of pupils receive a suitable quality of education, particularly in terms of the amount of taught time they receive.
- The monitoring and evaluation, by key staff, of all aspects of the unit is at an early stage of development, and is unsatisfactory in a number of areas.
- Finance is well managed on a day-to-day basis.

## **Commentary**

39. The unit is managed within the integrated SENSS, with the head of service acting as the teacher in charge. The vision of the unit is 'to provide high quality learning and therapeutic experiences in a structured environment as an interim provision leading to independent functioning in school or the world of work'. It is failing to do this. The unit is unable to fulfil its prime purpose of working effectively to support pupils returning to mainstream schools. Part of the responsibility for this lies with the LEA and the advisory panel, who have not sufficiently supported the development and work of the unit to enable this to happen. However, responsibility also lies with the unit's senior management team, who have not managed the unit effectively.

40. The LEA looks upon the unit as providing education for excluded pupils, pupils likely to be excluded, and pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties who have a Statement of Special Educational Need but who cannot be placed elsewhere. In these cases, the unit is seen as an alternative to a special school, even though it was not planned to meet this range of pupil needs. Unacceptably, the unit does not provide either access to a full National Curriculum or full-time education. This lack of comprehensive strategic planning is further compounded by the fact that the unit does not identify admission arrangements; nor does it encourage the production of exit plans for pupils, which results in pupils staying too long in the unit. As a consequence of these failings, the unit is heavily oversubscribed. Although the agreed capacity is 218, there are currently 255 pupils on roll. Other implications of the lack of clear strategy are: the use of unsatisfactory accommodation, which frequently has to be found at very short notice; and the use of many temporary teachers. The net result is evident in pupils' achievements; they do not make sufficient progress over time.

41. The unit's management committee provides little help in enabling the unit to develop and carry out its work. This panel is, in fact, the advisory panel for the whole of SENSS and attempts to carry out its management committee responsibilities for the unit while meeting as an advisory panel. Consequently, the unit does not feature highly on the agenda. While members are aware of some issues, such as the unsatisfactory accommodation, they have little understanding of the day-to-day functioning of the unit, its indicators of performance, its deficiencies, and the problems it faces.

42. All key staff, teachers and education care officers work hard to do the best for pupils. They are fully committed to the individual and pastoral needs of pupils, and team leaders and year co-ordinators work hard within year groups and in individual bases. However, the way in which the unit was established, as part of SENSS, has implications for the effectiveness with which all staff can carry out their responsibilities and the way in which the unit operates. The head of service is required to be the nominal teacher in charge of the unit but at the same time has responsibility for the rest of the service. Therefore, insufficient time can be devoted exclusively to leading and managing a large and complex organisation, with the result that management has significant shortcomings. Senior managers are too remote from the unit, and this has implications in areas such as staff induction, which is ineffective. This is of particular concern, given the high staff turnover and the high proportion of temporary staff. Overall, the workforce does not have sufficient experience and knowledge of the pupils and the wide range of their needs.

43. The senior staff within the unit include the head of service, the deputy head of service, the three team leaders for Years 1 to 6, Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11, and the team leader responsible for hospital education, and they are all very experienced teachers. However, none has a teaching commitment and none is based at any of the 11 bases. There are also other full-time co-ordinators, such as two separate ones for the two groups of pupils, within the same

age group and on the same base, who attend only part time. These arrangements do not represent an efficient and effective deployment of staff, and this unsatisfactory feature of management has implications at a day-to-day level. For instance, a number of examples were observed of education care officers having nothing to do, because so many pupils failed to attend, and no one with management responsibility was available to redeploy them. On another occasion, a temporary teacher chose to teach subjects other than those on the timetable and, again, there was no one to manage the situation.

44. The monitoring and evaluation of elements of the unit’s work is erratic. For example, the team leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning within their own year groups but these findings are not shared routinely with senior management and therefore no one has a clear overview of the whole unit. Similarly, they carry out monitoring and evaluation of standards of achievement but this data is not yet collated and robustly analysed as whole-unit data to give an overall picture of standards. There are no overall co-ordinators of different subject areas; therefore, no one has an overview of provision and no one is in a position to ensure that good practice is shared and less effective practice is addressed. Management’s failure to ensure that pupils have exit plans drawn up is a significant shortcoming. The lack of urgency in focusing teachers’ and pupils’ minds on returning pupils to mainstream education is unsatisfactory.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,859,308.00
Total expenditure	1,877,771.00
Expenditure per pupil	9,276.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to the next year	N/A

45. The whole of SENSS is provided with a block budget, and the senior management team then allocates an amount to the unit, as with other cost centres within the service. However, these cost centre budgets are arrived at historically; for instance, the budget from 2003 – 2004 is used as a base line for 2004 – 2005 and increased in line with inflation. The figure is not raised even if the number of pupils on roll increases, as happened in the last year. This means that the unit’s funding has to be increased in line with changing circumstances, and therefore carry-forward balances do not bear any relationship to initial budgets. Direct comparisons with other LEAs have limitations, but Derby LEA’s own figures and analysis of costs show that the unit cost per pupil is approximately two and a half times the national average for pupil referral units and more than three times the average of the ten comparator LEAs. The unit provides unsatisfactory value for money. The bursar for SENSS also acts as finance officer for the unit. Despite a very complicated system of financing the unit, she carries out her duties very efficiently in tracking spending across the different bases.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 2, 3 AND 4**

#### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

##### **English**

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The overall leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Overall, pupils achieve well in lessons in speaking and listening.
- Pupils' achievements in writing are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' progress over time is severely limited by their attendance and the time available for teaching.
- The organisation of the subject in some bases is good.

##### **Commentary**

46. Overall, pupils' achievements in speaking and listening are good. They receive a high degree of personal attention from teachers and education care officers and are encouraged on an individual basis to answer questions and give opinions. At the Newton's Walk base, pupils benefit from a well-conceived programme which is effective in developing their skills in listening carefully to others, and their vocabulary and grammar. During a good lesson at this base, pupils used a variety of alternative words to 'said', incorporating them successfully in their own simple sentences. Pupils at the Peartree base make good progress through a structured programme, whereby they listen to commercial audio tapes in order to practise comprehension and vocabulary. These sessions are reinforced in other English lessons. In one lesson, for instance, pupils were confident in their use of comparative terms such as 'taller than' and 'happier than', and in another session a pupil showed good understanding of open questions beginning with 'which' and 'why'. The success of Peartree pupils' growing confidence in speaking and listening is evident in their participation in a drama production of '*Christmas Carol*'. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve well in their speaking and listening skills through the use of role-play and through practices such as encouraging them to interview visitors to the Duffield Road base. These interviews are recorded and used later to help pupils to review their performance. As the pupils gain in skill and confidence, the tapes are used in evidence for Entry Level qualifications. Pupils at this base are confident in speaking to visitors and in responding correctly to the high standard of questioning which was observed in their English lessons.

47. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in their ability to read. Progress for others is impeded by the lack of available teaching time within the base. Pupils benefit from a well structured reading curriculum. Their ability is carefully assessed on their entry to the base and individual programmes are then constructed. Each pupil works individually on personal reading targets with the teacher or education care officer and their progress is tracked and

assessed thoroughly. Recently developed recording systems are effective in showing pupils how far they have progressed. The records are influential in helping to build pupils' confidence in their own abilities and in motivating them to read regularly. Progress is supported by the high quality of displayed work, which is suitably labelled and reinforces the status of literacy in the base. Pupils' progress in reading in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. There is no structured reading curriculum and, although pupils are encouraged to read silently, the less proficient readers are not given sufficient remedial help, because of the limited and unsatisfactory amount of teaching time. Most of the pupils are reluctant readers, and although the teacher has initiated a worthwhile system for pupils to write simple reviews of books they do so with a low level of understanding and care. There is a substantial library in the Peartree base but little evidence of organisation or of books being used. Pupils in Year 10 at the Duffield Road base are encouraged to read on a daily basis, so that pupils who attend regularly make good progress through their structured daily English tutorials. They gain confidence in these sessions through the effective way in which they are supported in their reading of, for example, selected newspaper reports. In one session observed, pupils made good progress in learning to frame and answer questions about a passage on 'street violence'. However, a weakness in this programme is that some pupils find that the passages are difficult to read and there is no alternative resource. Consequently, they lose interest in the lesson and do not make satisfactory progress.

48. Pupils' achievement in writing in Years 3 to 6 and in Years 7 to 9 is variable but unsatisfactory overall. Although pupils at the Newton's Walk base receive specific spelling lessons, which supports them in their writing, the limited teaching time they receive inhibits their progress. They are encouraged to write by the use of personalised writing activities, linked to their individual literacy targets, and their achievements are carefully recorded, but few pupils write independently. In most cases their writing is limited to one word answers to questions or to short phrases. Some pupils are restricted to this level of work during their time at the base and make very limited progress, although other, more capable, pupils make good progress and produce simple but grammatically correct sentences. Many pupils in Years 7 to 9 are very unwilling to write. In addition to their erratic attendance and internal truancy, their progress is inhibited by the lack of specific individualised targets in writing and the unsatisfactory amount of teaching time available for them. Consequently, by the end of Year 9 many have achieved little beyond the completion of single word or phrase answers to work sheets. Some, more capable, pupils in Year 9 achieve well in lessons. For example, they wrote with persuasion, using the language of advertising, about an example they had chosen, explaining articulately terms such as 'graphics' and 'product'. Scrutiny of the work of these pupils shows that they write imaginative and well written descriptions, for example of 'Vampires'. They know how to write letters that are set out correctly, and show a good grasp of appropriate spelling and grammar. Some pupils in Year 10 achieve well in writing, particularly those at the Duffield Road base. The most competent writers regularly produce pieces of extended prose which are both sequential and logical. These pupils punctuate and spell correctly and they make good use of extended and complex sentences; there are effective displays of their work on '*Aliens*' and '*Douglas Bader*'. Teachers at this base make good use of ICT, as pupils are encouraged to redraft their work and to discuss improvements with the teacher.

49. The quality of teaching and learning within lessons is good. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 and Years 7 to 9 have a secure grasp of the National Literacy Strategy and they show a good range of knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are well planned and proceed at a good pace. Pupils generally enjoy their work and contribute well to lessons. In the most successful lessons the teachers have high expectations of their pupils and use supportive

questioning and appropriate praise and encouragement to challenge and motivate them. Relationships between staff and the pupils are good, and this helps adults to manage pupils well. Teachers successfully adapt work for less capable pupils through their skilful deployment of education care officers. These support assistants are very well briefed about the lesson objectives and the individual targets towards which each pupil is aiming, and they give substantial support to individual pupils. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly, and this is most effective when the assessment helps towards constructing realistic targets for the pupils' multi-element plans. Work is appropriately marked, and annotated with suitable comments.

50. Organisation of the subject on individual bases is good. The separate co-ordinators in Years 3 to 6, Years 7 to 9 and in Year 10 at the Duffield Road base have organised secure and appropriate programmes. In each case the co-ordinator has provided clear planning and manages the pupils' learning well. Overall management of the subject is, however, unsatisfactory and there

is no effective structure for ensuring that the programmes in different bases relate to each other. As a result, pupils are not able to follow a cohesive and progressive subject curriculum when they move from, for example, a base for Years 7 to 9 to one for Years 10 and 11. No one has clear responsibility for English teaching in the unit as a whole and there is no overall strategy for the monitoring of pupils' or teachers' performance.

51. Individual co-ordinators of the subject in bases do not have structured opportunities to work with colleagues in other bases or to construct policies and practice to improve English teaching throughout the age range. For instance, the co-ordinator in Years 3 to 6 has developed a particularly effective tracking system to manage pupils' achievement but this good practice has not been extended to other bases. Although individual teachers have trained in aspects of English teaching, they do not have regular, planned opportunities to maintain and develop their skills. The quality of resources varies in each base; books and other materials are very adequate at the Newton's Walk base and at Duffield Road, but the Peartree base does not have a sufficient range of resources and this limits pupils' achievement.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

52. The unit does not have a common policy for promoting language and literacy across the curriculum. This is a weakness and a symptom of the overall unsatisfactory management of the subject. However, individual bases have developed good practice. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are encouraged to use oral language in all lessons, and the good quality displays emphasise the importance of written language through the clear labelling and simple descriptions they are given. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 regularly practise vocabulary from different subjects, both orally and in spelling exercises. Some very good practice exists in Year 10 at Duffield Road, where the different subject staff regularly discuss the spoken and written language requirements for their subjects. These are taught to the pupils in English lessons. Pupils practise specific vocabulary for different subjects and learn to use technical terms relevant to different areas of the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The quality of teaching in some bases is good, resulting in good achievement in these lessons.
- Too little time is allocated to the teaching of mathematics in Years 7 to 11, so the progress over time made by most pupils is unsatisfactory.
- There is no subject co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- Planning and assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

53. Overall, across all bases, those pupils in Years 3 to 10 for whom the unit is solely responsible achieve satisfactorily in lessons. The work of the Year 3 to 6 pupils who attend the Newton's Walk base shows that they achieve well; work is plentiful and indicates that pupils learn well in all aspects of the curriculum, including number, shape and investigative mathematics. Pupils in Years 7 to 9, particularly at the Peartree base, achieve satisfactorily but follow a limited curriculum which focuses

on number work, with too little emphasis on investigative mathematics. A few pupils were successful in 2003 in gaining GCSE qualifications. This year, half the Year 11 pupils who have attended the College Study base have sat GCSE mathematics; all are expected to gain passes and some are expected to gain above average grades. The current Year 10 pupils attending the Duffield Road and Mandela bases are making satisfactory progress in mathematics; for example all the pupils who attend the Duffield Road base have taken Entry Level examinations.

54. Although pupils of different ages learn well in lessons, in a number of bases, their overall progress over time is unsatisfactory. This is because attendance overall is unsatisfactory and, even for those pupils with good attendance, too little time is allocated for the teaching of mathematics, limiting the progress being made. In all bases where teaching is good, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils. For example, some pupils in Year 10 have been introduced to more challenging algebra and are able to create graphs from equations and vice versa. In these lessons, teachers also have high expectations of the pupils in terms of behaviour; they deploy education care officers to provide valuable support, and they are generous with praise for appropriate behaviour. Being considerate and conscientious, the teachers are good role models for the pupils. They display work attractively to celebrate the pupils' efforts and so help them develop a pride in their work.

55. Although some of the teaching of mathematics is of high quality, overall it is satisfactory. The quality of teaching in the Newton's Walk base is good; the teacher plans and presents lessons very carefully. Lessons include a variety of activities, and the work set is adapted to match each pupil's needs. The teacher assesses each pupil's progress every step of the way, adjusting her teaching to make sure pupils understand or are challenged sufficiently to move forward in their learning. The quality of teaching in the Peartree base for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory overall but some pupils are not challenged enough. The practice of teaching pupils in mixed age groups without planning for individuals is quite unsatisfactory, hindering their possible re-integration into mainstream schools. In the Duffield Road and Mandela bases, teaching is good. The teachers expect the same of these pupils as they would of mainstream pupils, while being careful to make the work interesting and varied to maintain the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. For example, a visit to a car auction stimulated the pupils' enthusiasm; they collated data and used computers to prepare spreadsheets and graphs to illustrate their findings. They practised various calculations, leading to work on percentages in the process of borrowing money for buying cars and houses. Because the work was meaningful and useful, the pupils' interest was sustained and they became adept in the management of complex calculations.

56. Some systems are in place at the end of Years 6 and 9 to assess pupils' levels of attainment through tests or by the teacher's own assessments. However, the practice and quality of continuous assessment are inconsistent. In the best lessons, teachers assess the progress of individual pupils during the course of their lessons, adjusting their teaching to provide reinforcement or further challenge, and informing the pupils of their achievements. Learning is also evaluated in plenary sessions at the end of lessons, but the lack of specific learning objectives in some lesson plans make assessment difficult.

57. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is no overall subject co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. In the bases where secondary aged pupils are taught, there is only one subject specialist, whose appointment is temporary and part time. As most of the teachers of mathematics are not specialists, they need clear direction and regular support to ensure a consistent approach to planning, teaching and assessment so that all pupils have the opportunity to achieve well. The time allocation for mathematics in most bases is insufficient, and in the case of pupils on



individual programmes of study it is very poor. Long and medium term plans are not useful guides for non-specialist teachers. They do not contain clear learning objectives or reference to National Curriculum Levels of attainment and they do not provide advice for teachers on how to assess and adapt work to match the needs of individual pupils. There are adequate textbooks and aids for learning, such as white boards and number lines, and good use is made of computers in some, though not all, bases.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. Numeracy skills are not promoted sufficiently well by other subjects of the curriculum. While teachers in the bases are aware of their responsibility to help pupils' development of mathematical skills, there is no common policy and no guidelines on teaching methods to ensure a consistent approach. The contribution of other subjects to the development of pupils' numeracy has not been audited, and areas where numeracy might be taught in other subjects have not been identified. As a result, the teachers of other subjects miss opportunities for enhancing the pupils' development in numeracy. For example, in a discussion about American Independence Day, in an art lesson, the teacher gave its date but did not invite the pupils to work out how long ago it was. On the other hand, Year 10 pupils carrying out a science investigation, on the insulating qualities of different materials, practised the skills of reading scales, taking measurements, recording results and drawing graphs.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Teachers have good subject expertise and promote effective learning.
- Education care officers make a consistent contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils who attend achieve well in lessons.
- Pupils' intermittent or poor attendance, and the inadequate time allocated to science, results in pupils making unsatisfactory progress over time.
- Pupils' access to practical and investigative science is limited because of inadequate accommodation in many of the bases.
- The subject lacks coherence because there is no overall co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

59. Achievement in lessons is generally good for those pupils who attend. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are developing a good understanding of humans as organisms. They are acquiring appropriate scientific vocabulary well and are developing good understanding of the functions of the digestive, skeletal, circulatory and nervous systems. However, occasional disruptive behaviour, and pupils' limited ability to work together, sometimes adversely affects their learning. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 know about food chains and are beginning to understand how animals avoid being eaten, for example by the use of camouflage. Pupils in Year 10 carry out simple practical investigations, such as comparing the cooling rates of hot water in variously insulated beakers. In spite of the cramped accommodation they have opportunities to handle equipment, and they work slowly but safely, reading and recording measurements from

thermometers and stop clocks. They record their results, draw conclusions and understand what is meant by a fair test. Pupils in Year 11 receive recognition of their work through accreditation in Entry Level examinations. For many, however, progress is limited by poor levels of attendance and internal truancy, where pupils walk out of lessons and do not return, particularly on the Peartree site. The inadequate amount of teaching time that virtually all pupils receive also limits pupils' progress in extending their understanding of the living and non-living worlds.

60. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and assessment procedures are satisfactory. Good relationships underpin the lessons, with all adults showing a high level of respect for the pupils. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and prepared. Teachers use questions well to challenge pupils to think, and to encourage them to make effective oral contributions in appropriate technical language. For instance, a group of Year 9 pupils at Peartree responded well to the challenge of identifying what might be the characteristics of a successful predator. Teachers are also effective in using questions to check that pupils understand what they are required to do and what they have learned. Effective questioning ensured that Year 10 pupils appreciated the requirements of a fair test and

understood the method they were about to use in a practical investigation. The teacher of a class of Year 3 to 6 pupils orchestrated a good plenary session to assess their understanding of the different human systems they had been studying. Timely and sensitive interventions by education care officers maintain pupils on task and ensure that all pupils are included in activities and are successful. Good use is made of ICT in Year 10 to compare and analyse results.

61. Leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. The lack of an overall science co-ordinator means that there is no one to monitor and evaluate the curriculum, audit resources, share best practice and build stronger links across the unit and with mainstream schools. As a result, pupils do not have the opportunity to build steadily on prior learning and the work is insufficiently focused to help in smooth re-integration into mainstream schooling. Inadequate accommodation and limited resources restrict significantly the scope of curricular opportunities in science across the unit. In only one base is there a specialist room, and this is not used appropriately because of the teacher's concerns and low expectations about pupils' behaviour and safety.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Provision has improved recently, but learning resources and accommodation remain inadequate.
- Teaching and learning are often good, but are satisfactory overall.
- Pupils' progress over time is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management across the unit are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

62. Achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory. Progress over time is limited by poor attendance and the inadequate amount of teaching that pupils receive. Those pupils who attend frequently produce good work and show good understanding. For instance, pupils in Years 8 and 9 know about desk top publishing; when producing a poster for a school disco they use text boxes, alter the appearance of script, and add images, including importing pictures from the Internet. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 further develop their understanding of the use of ICT as they produce detailed presentations as slide shows. Pupils are keen to discuss their work with visitors and take pride in their work when it is displayed. As a result, a number of Year 11 pupils achieve accredited qualifications in units such as the use of spread sheets, word processing and the use of databases.

63. Teaching and learning, in lessons seen across different bases, are never less than satisfactory and are sometimes good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they therefore plan and prepare lessons well to meet the needs of all pupils. Planned activities build well on pupils' prior learning, and a particular feature of lessons is that there are always additional activities available to challenge the most capable pupils. Education care officers are used well in lessons; they present good role models for pupils, and intervene unobtrusively, preventing minor behavioural incidents from escalating. However, such incidents are relatively

rare because pupils enjoy ICT, know what they are expected to do, and are keen to work. They show good attitudes and behave well and this is due to the good relationships in classrooms.

64. When pupils in Years 10 and 11 are following an accredited course their achievements are assessed and recorded according to the requirements of the examination board. In other year groups, and other sites, there is inconsistent practice. The co-ordinator for pupils in Years 7 to 9

uses an appropriate commercial package to record small steps in progress so that assessment is used well to plan for the next steps in learning. However, as there is no overall ICT co-ordinator, teachers on other sites do not use this type of assessment and therefore they are not always able to systematically build on pupils' prior learning.

65. Leadership and management of ICT are unsatisfactory; there is no overall ICT co-ordinator to ensure that ICT is provided adequately across the bases or to make sure that good practice can be shared with colleagues. The amount of teaching time is inadequate to ensure that pupils make reasonable progress in the subject. Although there is evidence of some improvement in the amount and quality of resources that are now available, both hardware and software, much of this has been installed recently. Because the unit consists of so many sites across the city it is difficult to ensure that all bases have sufficient ICT equipment. This is particularly the case when some bases are opened at short notice as more pupils in Years 10 and 11 are excluded.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

66. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used satisfactorily to support other subjects of the curriculum. Examples of good practice were found in all age groups. Pupils on the Newton's Walk site use word processing to improve presentation of their work in English and mathematics. Pupils at the Duffield Road base take and use digital photographs. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, such as those at the Osmaston Road base, research the Derby Education and Business Partnership database to find work experience placements, and they use presentation software to illustrate their work following an industrial link with East Midlands Airport. Pupils on the Peartree site used the Internet to find out information about different tartans as part of a project associated with various international festivals, such as Burns Night. Pupils are competent at e-mailing messages, documents and photographs, and pupils in the hospital school use their initiative to e-mail their work back and forward to their mainstream schools. One pupil, who is a persistent non-attender, uses the Internet to e-mail his work to the base. Pupils at Newton's Walk have the added advantage of rehearsing their skills during lunchtime clubs. Although there are a number of opportunities for pupils to consolidate their ICT skills in other subjects, teachers do not routinely identify these occasions in their planning and so, at times, these opportunities are missed.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Food technology**

67. Although it was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 3 to 6, the available evidence showed that pupils who attend make good progress in their work. They have made a variety of cakes and biscuits, including spectacular spaceship cakes during a project on space, and have held a Christmas Fayre at which they sold their finished products. In the lessons that were seen, those pupils who were present achieved well. In a well planned and prepared lesson, a Year 8 pupil made good progress in his knowledge of a selection of exotic fruits and his understanding that the fruits are expensive because they have to be imported. However, he was only one pupil out of three who turned up for the lesson. Year 10 pupils downloaded recipes for pancakes from the Internet. This good use of technology was enhanced by the opportunities for co-operative work which the lesson generated and which were enthusiastically taken up by the pupils. Pupils assessed and graded their own efforts and celebrated the quality of each other's pancakes.

68. The overall quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Although the subject is well co-ordinated at the Peartree base by a specialist teacher, in other bases the subject is taught by non-specialists, and they do not have the skills and experience to develop a comprehensive curriculum. Facilities vary widely; the very small kitchen is well used at Newton's Walk by the younger pupils, while at Peartree there is a well equipped food technology room. Duffield Road Centre has a refurbished kitchen, mainly for helping to develop independent skills, but other bases have few or no facilities at all. The lack of suitable facilities and the lack of overall co-ordination of the subject inhibit its development.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

69. In the lessons sampled, and in the work examined, pupils achieved satisfactorily in art and design. The lessons, involving pupils in Years 7 to 9, were well prepared but the activities and expectations were not sufficiently challenging for all pupils. Pupils were considering designs for totem poles in their international study of North American art, but too many pupils were simply tracing over drawings in books or, in one case, using felt tip pens to colour in. Pupils were allowed to do these activities because a number were reluctant to work and, to avoid confrontation, they were allowed to carry out relatively simple tasks. Other pupils worked well and imaginatively, supported by effective education care officers, and praise was used well and appropriately to encourage them.

70. Displays of pupils' art work show that in Years 7 to 9 the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. They have studied the styles of different artists, such as Monet, and produced their own work using the same style, and they have drawn still life compositions. They study a range of international festivals and celebrations and have produced work associated with various cultures, for example Easter, Divali; Burns Night; Anzac Day, and Scandinavian festivals, when they made Troll masks. Pupils at Newton's Walk have produced exciting art work as a result of support from a local community arts group. They have made lifelike papier-mâché 'superheroes' and produced a good standard of collage displays and three-dimensional models.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### **Physical education**

71. Overall, the provision for physical education is unsatisfactory despite a wide range of physical activities, many of them led by specialist instructors, and of consistently good teaching and the effective use of community facilities. This is because of a combination of irregular and unsatisfactory attendance and the shortage of time allocated to the subject. These factors limit pupils' opportunity to refine and consolidate skills and to develop cardiovascular health, flexibility, muscular strength and endurance. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their learning are broadly satisfactory, although older girls are very reluctant to take part in mixed team games. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend well and make good progress in lessons. They learn, for example, how to strike a ball correctly with a bat, how to field and throw, and how to bowl. They are assessed and accredited through the Kwik Cricket Bronze Award. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 learn how to pass, dribble and shoot in basketball, and they reinforce these skills in small-sided games. Pupils in Year 10 take advantage of the facilities of a sports centre to engage in weight and personal fitness training. Pupils from the Derwent Youth Centre worked

hard and independently and were able to explain what they were doing and how they could improve. An Entry Level certificate accredits those pupils who attend regularly. Pupils' opportunities to experience a broad and balanced curriculum are limited by the unsatisfactory accommodation for physical education, both indoor and outdoor, in all but one base, and pupils waste valuable curriculum time in travelling to community facilities.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Personal, social and health education**

72. Provision in PSHE and citizenship is unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievement in lessons is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good, and the comprehensive PSHE programme appropriately includes sex education and the misuse of drugs, taught by a specialist team. Pupils at the Peartree base also have the benefit of advice and support of a school nurse and youth worker on a weekly 'drop in' and 'open door' basis. However, pupils' progress and achievement over time is unsatisfactory. This is because of a combination of factors, including unsatisfactory attendance, a shortage of teaching time, internal truancy and lateness to lessons. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend regularly and in lessons they achieve well. This is because teaching is good and all the activities of the curriculum are focused on developing their personal and social skills, such as co-operation, sharing, listening carefully and following instructions. Clear and large targets are posted on the wall, and adults regularly remind pupils of these. Successes, however small, are always celebrated.

73. Frequent visits into the community develop in pupils a sense of social responsibility and citizenship. Co-operative ventures, such as working with two instructors from the Q Art Gallery to make a larger-than-life sculpture from cane and sticky tape, improve their commitment and concentration. The finished sculpture will be displayed in Derby City centre. Those pupils in Years 7 to 9 who attend make satisfactory progress in citizenship lessons but, on some occasions, their attitude is negative and their behaviour disruptive. At these times they are slow to join in discussions and are very reluctant to write. This adversely affects the quality of their learning. In Year 10, pupils examine post-16 options, including work, training and unemployment. They readily join in discussions because the topics are relevant, appropriate and motivating. Careers education, college links and work experience placements develop their personal, social and vocational skills and prepare them well for life after school.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the unit</b>	<b>5</b>
How inclusive the unit is	4
How the unit's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	8
Value for money provided by the unit	5
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	5
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the unit</b>	<b>5</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-unit activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the unit seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the unit's links with parents	4
The quality of the unit's links with the community	3
The unit's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the unit</b>	<b>5</b>
The governance of the unit	5
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7); the judgement statement does not apply to the unit (8).*

In a pupil referral unit such as this, **standards achieved** are judged against individual targets and not national standards.