

INSPECTION REPORT

KIRK HALLAM CENTRE

Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 131632

Head of centre: Angie Watts

Lead inspector: Jacque Cook

Dates of inspection: 3 – 5 November 2003

Inspection number: 259086

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE

Type of school:	For pupils at high risk of exclusion
School category:	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils:	7 - 14
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	Maximum 30
School address:	Windsor Crescent Kirk Hallam Ilkeston Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE7 4HD
Telephone number:	0115 9326445
Fax number:	0115 9307980
Appropriate authority:	The local education authority
Name of responsible officer:	Mr Stephen Cox
Date of previous inspection:	June 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CENTRE

A mixed pupil referral unit for 30 pupils aged between 7 and 14 who are at high risk of exclusion from their schools. Fifteen pupils can be taught at one time. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 attend for four mornings each week and those in Years 3 to 6 attend five afternoons. They are dual registered, which means they are also on the roll of their school, where they attend when they are not in the centre. Pupils attend the centre for a maximum of two terms and towards the end of this period they gradually increase the length of time they spend back in their school each week. Pupils may join the centre at any time during the year.

At the time of the inspection there were 19 pupils on roll, eight in Years 3 to 6 and 11 in Years 7 to 9. There was only one girl and all pupils were of white ethnicity. Six pupils had statements of special educational needs which included moderate learning difficulties, behaviour and concentration difficulties and specific learning difficulties (dyslexia). Attainment on entry varies but because of behaviour difficulties, very few are attaining the levels they should be for their age. There is no outreach provision. The centre is situated on the edge of a small market town. Pupils are transported by taxi, with journeys taking up to an hour each way.

In 2001 the centre gained the Schools Achievement Award and, in 2002, the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The centre was placed in special measures in February 2000 and removed following an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in June 2001.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2351	Jacque Cook	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design
9981	Saleem Hussain	Lay inspector	
16979	Charlie Henry	Team inspector	English Geography History Personal, social and health education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Kirk Hallam Centre is effective and has a good record of successfully returning pupils to their schools full time. The very strong leadership of the head of centre ensures staff have very high expectations. This, together with the calm, purposeful ethos, where pupils are expected as a matter of course to do well, and the good quality of teaching, leads pupils to achieve well. Value for money is good.

The centre's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievements are very good in English, particularly in literacy, and in personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) through other subjects is unsatisfactory.
- The teamwork of staff is very effective and makes the care, guidance and welfare of the pupils a high priority.
- Very effective liaison with parents and with schools contributes to the considerable improvement in pupils' behaviour.
- The centre receives very effective support from the local education authority (LEA) advisory service and the Behaviour Support Service.
- The centre's development plan does not build sufficiently on the very effective self-evaluation that the centre has undertaken.

The centre has made a good improvement since the last inspection. Effective management of changes in staff and consistent teamwork have ensured that areas such as pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their care, guidance and support have strengthened and standards have been maintained in other areas. This meets two of the three key issues well. The staff, management committee and LEA consultants explored and evaluated the provision for external awards for pupils, but concluded that it was not appropriate.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 6	Good	Very good
Year 9	Good	Very good

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

Pupils' achievement and progress are good and often very good in all year groups. Their achievements in English and in PSHE are very good. They are good in science, art and design and humanities and satisfactory in the two subjects that are currently being developed, mathematics and ICT.

Pupils' personal qualities - including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development - are very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and respond well to the high expectations of the staff. The system of tracking and rewarding behaviour helps them to improve their behaviour so that it is good and, often, very good by the time they leave the centre. Pupils' attendance is good. There is very little unauthorised absence and pupils with previously poor attendance improve while they are attending the centre.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good and often of a very high standard. Staff insist on extremely high standards of behaviour and plan interesting lessons that capture pupils' attention and sustain their concentration. An effective assessment system and very good use of praise and encouragement enable pupils to try hard and make good progress in their lessons.

The curriculum is good and is designed well to help pupils return to school full time. Provision for PSHE and English is very good. The support and guidance given to pupils is very good, particularly the procedures to help new pupils settle in. This forms the basis for strong relationships where pupils trust staff and fit into established routines very quickly. The centre is very effective at forming links with parents and the wider community, especially other schools and colleges. These support and enrich learning and a successful return to school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall, with the leadership of the centre being very good, forging strong team work and a clear focus for the centre's work. Management is good. Effective systems have been established to ensure the centre runs smoothly. Very strong support from the LEA and Behaviour Support Service has been very effective in helping the centre to improve. Their governance of the centre is very effective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE CENTRE

Parents are very satisfied with the work of the centre. The analysis of the questionnaire returns indicates very few concerns apart from a few wishing for more homework for their children. Those attending the parents' meeting were very complimentary. They commented that the improvement in their children's behaviour was remarkable.

Pupils are also very pleased to be attending the centre. They feel that the staff expect them to work hard, that they are treated fairly and with respect and that the centre is well run. However, a substantial number would like more homework. At present, the learning of spellings is good but there is a lack of homework for mathematics.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the centre should do to improve are:

- Develop a centre development plan with an increased emphasis on priorities from the effective self-evaluation.
- Raise ICT standards through teaching ICT in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievements and progress are good overall in all year groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in English and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Pupils make good and often, very good progress towards meeting their targets.
- Good progress is being made towards meeting the targets set for the centre.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well.

Commentary

1. During the short time, up to two terms, that pupils attend the centre, pupils' achievements are good overall and they make good progress. This maintains the high standards set at the last inspection. There are no measurable differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Teachers take account of the needs of individual pupils well, particularly ensuring that the few girls, one at the time of the inspection, do as well as the boys. Lessons are planned effectively to include support for the less able and extension work for the more able to help each pupil make good progress. All pupils have individual education plans and they make good, and often very good, progress towards meeting their targets. As a result, pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. Suitably challenging targets have been set for the centre to improve pupils' literacy skills. Although it is early days, there are indications that they will be met.
2. Pupils are making particularly good progress and achieving very well in English and in personal, social and health education (PSHE) partly because they are taught consistently very well. Also, there is proportionally more time spent on these subjects. The initial session at the centre for Years 7 to 9 in the morning and for Years 3 to 6 in the afternoon is predominately focused on improving literacy skills. This is supplemented by a timetabled English lesson each week and additional time in basic or key skills lessons. Most pupils improve their reading ages considerably and even those without reading difficulties often improve their comprehension and spelling ability. Literacy and PSHE are taught effectively through other subjects. Time is taken to teach subject-specific vocabulary, such as 'invade' and 'settle' in humanities, and key words, such as 'browse' and 'search engine', in information and communication technology (ICT). Communication skills are learnt well in paired activities in PSHE. In art and design, pupils explore what makes an angry face and pupils learn to appreciate the value of each other's work.
3. In mathematics, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they make satisfactory and, at times, good progress in their lessons. At present, the subject is being developed but mathematics is not taught often enough. This limits the progress pupils make. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 improve their ability to calculate in their heads and increase their understanding of the properties of shapes. In Years 7 to 9, pupils continue to improve their calculation skills. They learn about fractions and decimals and many use short-cut strategies to work out problems, such as doubling, halving and rounding up and down.
4. Achievements and progress are good in science, in art and design and in humanities because the quality of teaching is good. Pupils have good opportunities to study resources at close hand including masks from around the world and Viking and American Indian artefacts. These interest them and encourage them to find out more. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in information

and communication technology (ICT). This subject is an area where standards are being targeted to improve. At present, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use ICT to develop their skills and to support their learning in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are very good. Their behaviour is good and often steadily improves to very good by the time they leave the centre. This is good improvement since the last inspection. Attendance is good and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is often improved for pupils who previously had high levels of absence.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the centre and work hard.
- The reward and sanction scheme works very well.
- All pupils in Years 3 to 6 returned successfully to their schools last year.
- Pupils are successful in meeting the high expectations established by staff.
- There is a calm and workmanlike atmosphere which helps pupils to learn.
- High levels of supervision and effective teaching ensure that instances of bullying are rare.
- Pupils become responsible members of the centre.

Commentary

Attendance

5. Pupils enjoy coming to the centre and most that have previously had poor attendance records show good rates of improvement. This is helped by a very effective range of initiatives. There are awards for good attendance and for improving attendance. Also, if a pupil does not arrive at the centre when expected, parents are contacted immediately. These steps have reduced unauthorised absence to a low level. Effective liaison with pupils' schools alerts education welfare officers when needed for support. Punctuality is dependent on the taxis but is usually good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
Centre data	12.8	Centre data	0.8

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

Attitudes and behaviour

6. Pupils' behaviour is good because they appreciate the rewards and sanctions system which is consistently applied. They know exactly what is expected of them. The points system is effective and the additional bonus points spur pupils to greater efforts. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 demonstrated their regard for the system by proudly showing their certificates on display in their wall spaces. Older pupils went through their records of achievement files pointing out their awards and explaining why they had got them. Sanctions are few but just as effective. Older pupils do not enjoy a break time detention which means they have to sit in a classroom rather than play ball games or join the others for 'tea and toast'. Those who forget to return their daily points sheets from school are given a break time detention. The improvement in pupils' attitudes makes them keener to improve their behaviour. Many achieve very good behaviour by the time they return to school. Last year, all the pupils in Years 3 to 6 returned successfully to their schools. Of the 20 pupils who left in Years 7 to 9, 15 successfully maintained their places in school. Those that did not had deep-seated difficulties beyond the provision of the centre. Two were referred too late in their school career, part way through

Year 9, to enable the centre to make an adequate difference. Last year, four of the seven pupils who were excluded from the centre (two of them twice) did not regain their place in school and were moved to more suitable alternative education provision. A pupil is only excluded for extremely unsatisfactory behaviour and appropriate procedures are followed. The figures recorded below refer to exclusions from the centre. It is the practice of the Behaviour Support Service for pupils not to be allowed to attend the centre if they are excluded from school. This is unsatisfactory and contributes to the authorised absence figures shown above.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	46	9	0

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

7. Pupils try very hard to meet the very high expectations that staff set them. The ‘no calling out’ rule, for example, is a target for pupils and those that find it difficult to remember to put up their hands get warnings recorded on their sheets. This works well and only the very new pupils were gaining warnings. Presentation of work is very good. It is neat and dated and pupils are rightly proud of their efforts. The calm and workmanlike atmosphere was commented on by parents who remarked that it “rubbed off on the pupils”. There is no shouting; if there is a problem, a quiet word is had with the pupil. As a result, pupils are able to concentrate on their work. The calmness of the staff is very effective as role models for the pupils. Pupils understand that consistency, fairness and honesty are important. One pupil who had returned to his school full time commented that “the staff dealt with you with respect” which “made you feel good about yourself”. This contributes very well to pupils’ moral and social development as does the programme for PSHE. Pupils are helped to deal with their feelings and to consider the effect of what they do on others. Good listening skills are taught and pupils learn to get on with their peers. Throughout their time at the centre pupils are encouraged to work out the ‘right’ response to any situation. As a result of this and the high levels of staff supervision there is very little bullying. In fact, all the pupils spoken with, in the centre and those who had left, reported no bullying. Staff are also very skilled at ‘nipping in the bud’ any potential difficulties by dealing quickly with any adverse comments by pupils. They are made to understand very clearly that that is not acceptable.
8. Pupils spend time discussing with staff how well they are doing and the particular difficulties they have, academically and emotionally. The resultant increase in self-knowledge helps them to manage difficult situations more effectively. One pupil talked of his difficulties in dealing with his anger and how he has learnt to find other outlets. Pupils’ spiritual development is broadened by considering and exploring faiths and beliefs of Ancient Egyptians, American Indians and Moslems. Instances such as ‘the magic bag’ led to excited speculation regarding the contents and pupils appreciated the beauty and workmanship in portraits by Van Gogh and the various masks from around the world. These aspects contribute to the very good cultural development of pupils. They listened attentively to the legend of the dragon’s head Barona mask from Indonesia and handle all artefacts with care and consideration. Pupils are prepared well for the multi-cultural society in Britain.
9. Of major importance to the work of the centre is the way pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and then to help others. Pupils who have been in the centre for a while are selected to mentor new arrivals. This has excellent results in helping new pupils understand what is expected by staff. One mentor was heard to remark to his charge “Now remember – stop – think...” to successfully avert a problem.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE

The quality of education is good. There are real strengths in the care, welfare and support provided for the pupils and the very effective liaison with parents, schools and colleges. The weakness is the insufficient use of ICT in other subjects.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and often very good, which maintains the high standards set at the last inspection indicating how well new staff settle in. Pupils' work is assessed well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are particularly good in English and PSHE.
- Experienced teachers and education care officers (ECOs) consistently set high expectations.
- Staff work together to establish a calm, focused working atmosphere which gives pupils the opportunity to learn effectively.
- Lessons are well planned and pupils sustain their interest and concentration well.
- Assessment is used well and guides staff to ensure that all pupils make gains in their learning in lessons.
- National strategies are used well to help pupils learn.
- Usually there is a good pace to lessons, but occasionally activities take too long.
- ICT is not used sufficiently to help pupils learn.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 12 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	5	1	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.

10. Pupils learn very well in English and PSHE because of the skills and expertise of the teachers and the ECOs. Literacy is taught particularly well. Initial testing is used effectively to pinpoint areas of weakness and to plan work that is challenging and at the right level of difficulty. Teachers regularly check progress and pupils know how well they are improving, which spurs them on to do more. This is very noticeable in the work pupils do on improving their spelling, which is particularly useful for those pupils with specific learning difficulties. As all staff are involved with the initial literacy session every day for each group, pupils are all able to be heard to read. Careful questioning by staff increases pupils' understanding of what they have read. In PSHE lessons, staff demonstrate appropriate responses and provide the right level of support to enable pupils to participate. Pupils very quickly realise that they need to work constructively with each other, for instance, when they are asked to question a partner and then talk about the information that they have gained.
11. The teamwork of the staff is very good. They work together to create a calm atmosphere and ensure that pupils' energies are focused on their learning by giving clear instructions and reinforcing them, where necessary, with quiet words to individuals. The consistent use of the targets set for improving behaviour is very effective and there is excellent insistence on very high standards of behaviour. Praise and encouragement are used very effectively to maintain pupils' efforts and to emphasise when they are getting it right. As a result, their behaviour stops being a barrier to learning.

12. Lessons are planned well, making good use of national strategies in literacy and numeracy and building on what has been learnt previously. Quick-fire questions at the beginning of mathematics lessons help pupils improve their number skills well. Clear objectives are set, which are used to assess pupils' progress very effectively. Staff take into account the needs of individuals well. The one girl is included in lessons through using such strategies as asking her to choose first and by selecting topics that appeal to girls as well as boys. New pupils are made to feel welcome. They are helped to be successful because staff phrase, and at times rephrase, questions so that they can answer. Pupils with special educational needs such as literacy difficulties are given help to complete their work if they need it.
13. Pupils know they are expected to work hard and the pace of most lessons is maintained well which keeps them involved. Activities are changed often with question and answer starters to recap on previous learning. Good use is made of resources to capture and maintain pupils' interest, such as clockwork and battery toys and a video of how a steam train works to show types of energy. The length of time for a piece of work is frequently given. For example, two minutes were given to complete a worksheet and pupils rose to the challenge very well. Occasionally, as in a mathematics session, what is chosen for pupils to do takes too long and pupils become restless, not making as much progress as they should.
14. The use of ICT is not planned into lessons sufficiently and as a result, pupils do not apply the skills that they have learnt in their ICT lessons. Opportunities are missed, for example, for pupils to use the Internet to investigate the work of artists and designers.
15. In their responses to questionnaires a few parents and pupils expressed concern about the lack of homework. The policy of the centre, which is appropriate, is to provide work in English and mathematics when needed, as pupils have homework from their schools. However, although a number of pupils do take spellings home to learn there is no regular pattern of setting mathematics homework.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. It provides a broad range of relevant opportunities to help pupils return to school. Staffing is good. The quality of accommodation and learning resources is good. The high quality of the curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum offered is very suitable for helping pupils return to their schools full time.
- There is a very appropriate focus on literacy and PSHE but, at present, barely sufficient on numeracy.
- Visiting specialists provide additional expertise and broaden the curriculum.
- The provision ensures the special educational needs of pupils are met well.
- The accommodation is well decorated and maintained inside, and used effectively.
- There is a high level of expertise in the staffing of the centre.
- Learning resources are good, particularly ICT.

Commentary

16. The curriculum is designed well to support and broaden when necessary what pupils learn in their schools. Since many pupils have difficulties with their reading and writing and in their ability to behave appropriately, good decisions have been made to emphasise the teaching of literacy and PSHE. Furthermore as pupils come from a number of schools sensible decisions have been made about the topics to be covered in other subjects. As a result pupils do not simply repeat things they may have done before. This is particularly important in subjects such as science and the humanities. Although the daily timetable is designed with time for teaching additional numeracy skills to each of the classes, these sessions are mostly used to develop literacy skills. This has limited the progress pupils make in mathematics. The

national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being used well as the basis for planning and have contributed to the progress pupils make in these subjects. In addition to the daily literacy lessons, the weekly basic skills lesson for Years 3 to 6 and key skills for Years 7 to 9 have been successfully introduced to further improve pupils' spelling and reading. Time in these sessions is also being used for individual pupils to use a computer mathematics program.

17. As well as the PSHE lessons, other subjects are used effectively to help pupils improve their self-esteem and behaviour. As a result, these subjects, including art and design, design and technology and 'co-operative games' contribute well to pupils' successful return to their schools. The work of a member of the youth service is very effective, for example, in helping pupils understand the dangers of drug misuse. He also successfully encourages pupils to join youth clubs and sports centres after school. Regular visitors to the centre, which have included an art therapist, music therapist and Sporting Futures, a charity that works with schools to promote sport, also broaden further what pupils learn in the arts and in physical activities.
18. The strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils have a high quality of education is clear in the use of individual education plans. These plans contain targets that are negotiated with the pupils and ensure that their needs are identified accurately and tackled effectively. The provision in the six statements of special educational need is taken into account effectively ensuring these pupils make good progress and achieve well.
19. The centre liaises well with pupils' schools to make sure that particularly important parts of the curriculum are not missed while they attend the centre. These include sex education, education about drugs misuse, careers education and religious education. On the whole these arrangements work well and pupils return to their schools for these sessions as necessary. However, education on the dangers of drugs misuse is also taught at the centre.
20. Accommodation in the centre is good and used well. Each age group of pupils has its own classroom that is resourced and furnished as it would be in their own schools. This level of thoughtfulness is important in preparing them for their full-time return to school. In addition there are valuable specialist areas for ICT and physical activities. A communal meeting area provides good opportunities for pupils to gather at break times and is used well for such subjects as art and design that need more space and flat surfaces. Artefacts, resources and pupils' work are displayed well in the centre, helping to make it an exciting place to work in. The outside of the building does not match the high standard of maintenance and care shown in the inside. Paint is peeling, there is a lack of adequate lighting and it looks unwelcoming. The head of centre has allocated money from the capital building fund to remedy this. However, although the work has been on order for over a year, no start date has been given.
21. The centre is well staffed by two experienced and qualified teachers ably supported by two suitably qualified and experienced ECOs. In addition, visiting specialist staff contribute effectively, for example, in ICT and in mathematics. As a result, pupils make good progress in their subjects as well as in their behaviour and relationships, enabling them to return to school full time.
22. The level and quality of resources are good and support well what pupils are taught. These are enhanced by staff making extra resources to meet the needs of individual pupils as they arise. Good use also is made of artefacts and books borrowed from the library, museum and LEA; these help to make lessons even more interesting. The ICT equipment is particularly good and makes a strong contribution towards the improving standards in this subject, although they are not used sufficiently in other subjects. The range of reading books is very good. There is a wide choice of subject matter at different levels of reading ability that encourages pupils to enjoy what they read and improves their skills.
23. As the two groups taught in the centre travel to and from their schools over the lunch time period it is not possible for the centre to organise extra activities and clubs at this time.

Similarly the difficulties around transporting pupils home, in many cases involving journeys up to an hour, prohibits the organisation of such events after the school day.

Care, guidance and support

This is a caring centre that provides very good advice, guidance and support for pupils. The calm, orderly ethos allows pupils to work hard and achieve well in their learning. The centre has made good improvements since the last inspection, for example, in the support and guidance provided by staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good.
- There are very good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff.
- Pupils are highly valued and encouraged to raise concerns, make suggestions and become well involved in the centre.
- There are very good and effective induction arrangements for new pupils.

Commentary

24. Procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good. The designated officer for child protection is well trained and deals with issues effectively. There are very high levels of supervision of the pupils particularly during break times and when pupils are arriving at or leaving the centre.
25. Very strong relationships at all levels reflect the centre's caring ethos very well. Pupils are confident that they can approach staff about any worries or concerns. Well-informed support, advice and guidance are available. For example, staff, the educational psychologist, the social services and child and family support agencies regularly work with parents and their children regarding any difficulties. Staff review the progress each pupil is making very effectively when they meet together each Monday morning. Strategies to help pupils improve further are discussed and plans of action decided. As a result, all pupils are monitored and supported very closely by staff. This is particularly important and effective in ensuring for example, that the girls that attend the centre and those pupils with special educational needs are making the progress they should.
26. Although pupils usually stay at the centre for up to two terms, the head of centre is considering setting up a school council as a formal mechanism to channel pupils' good ideas and suggestions and as a further opportunity for personal development. It is pleasing to see that even without a council, pupils are so involved. For instance, they were concerned about the lack of provision for physical education and this led to the development of the link with Sporting Futures.
27. The centre's very effective arrangements for the induction of new pupils are easy to see. The new pupils conform quickly to the expectations about good attitudes, behaviour and effort because of staff's hard work in raising their self-esteem within a strong work ethos. The inspection team was highly impressed at how well new pupils settled in to the centre.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents and the wider community, including with schools and colleges, is very good, making a very strong contribution to pupils' learning. The centre has maintained the strengths in its links since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents and the community have a very high opinion of the centre.
- Parents are provided with very good information about the centre and about pupils' achievements and progress.
- Parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning at the centre and at home.
- Many very good links in the wider community enrich learning.
- Very good links with schools ensure that pupils are re-integrated into mainstream schools very successfully.

Commentary

28. Responses at the parents' meeting and replies to the questionnaire confirm how highly the centre is regarded. For instance, all parents replying to the questionnaire said that staff expect their children to do their best and that the centre is well led and managed. Written comments included statements like 'my child is a changed person'.
29. The centre and its staff are very helpful to parents regarding day-to-day issues as stated in the well-written, parent and pupil-friendly prospectus. Parents receive 'daily points sheets' which provide very useful information about how the day has gone for their children. Review meetings are especially informative as are written progress reports for each term's work. Reports give a concise picture of what pupils know, can do and understand. Regular telephone calls with parents also keep them well informed.
30. Home to school records and review meeting comments confirm that parents are very well involved in their children's learning. For example, they do their best in supporting the centre's homework policy.
31. Links in the community are very effective and include Barnardo's charity (family action scheme), Cotmanhay youth project (drugs education), Sporting Futures (sports coaching) and Derbyshire Library Service (book and artefact loans). Community members run a variety of workshops at the centre, for example, in science and history topics.
32. Very strong links with colleges and schools enable pupils to use learning resources such as the ICT suite at Kirk Hallam Technology College. The centre has established very effective relations with many schools. They contribute effectively to the annual review meetings for pupils with statements of special educational needs. The headteacher of a primary school made a point of informing the inspection team how delighted his school was with the work of the centre regarding reintegration. Praise was given for the way the centre identifies specific learning and behaviour strategies to help the pupil and the mainstream school. Procedures to help a pupil return to their school full time are very effective and rely heavily on the trusting relations between the staff concerned. Pupils gradually increase their time in school until they are no longer attending the centre. This is monitored very closely by staff at the centre who receive reports on how well the pupil is doing in school followed up by a phone call from the school or the centre to discuss any difficulties. These are then discussed with the pupil and strategies devised to help avoid a recurrence.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The head of centre provides very effective leadership and is supported well by other staff. Management is good and the governance of the centre is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership from the head of centre builds very effective teamwork by all staff.
- There is a very positive ethos where all pupils are keen to do well and improve.

- The centre has a very clear role in providing short-term placements for pupils alongside their continued attendance at school.
- Very effective monitoring and support are provided by the LEA and the Behaviour Support Service.
- There is a detailed self-evaluation of the work of the centre, although too little from this feeds into its development plan.
- The management is effective towards achieving continued development, although there is too little planning of the centre's finances to support these efforts.

Commentary

33. Since taking over the role, the head of centre has built well on developments started by the previous head. In particular, the strength and the clarity of the vision as a centre for pupils who are dual registered with another school, attending part time and for only two terms, has been the key to its success in returning pupils to school full time. Great care is taken to ensure all pupils do well through the over-arching emphasis on meeting the needs of each individual and monitoring their progress systematically. The head of centre makes good use of and develops the expertise of all staff. For example, the other full-time teacher's expertise in the planning and teaching of English and literacy has been used very well to improve these aspects of the centre's provision. Similarly, the ECOs are empowered to use fully their skills in managing pupils' difficult behaviour. She also encourages their further professional development towards achieving qualifications that would enable them to become teachers. In this way the head of centre has built an effective team who work closely together to ensure the necessary consistency required to help pupils improve. Induction of new staff is effective. Valuable and ongoing guidance is provided from their first day. Centre-wide responsibilities are introduced gradually and successfully.
34. The centre has undertaken a very detailed self-evaluation of its work with a format used by schools within the authority. This analysis has been supported and challenged by the authority's visiting adviser. As a result, the evaluation of the centre has been rigorous and accurate. However, the full benefit of this work does not lead through to its improvement plan, since this is also required to show how the LEA's education development plan is to be promoted by the centre. At the present time, the balance is too far in the direction of the plan's contribution towards the authority's priorities. There is, never-the-less, a valuable emphasis on developing the means to compare the work of the different pupil referral centres. The centre's improvement plan is not sufficiently costed to show how it will be supported by the finance available. A broad range of well-considered policies, many written for all of the authority's pupil referral units and adapted for this centre, support its work well.
35. Most of the governance role, to monitor, support and challenge, is fulfilled by the local authority's advisory service and the Behaviour Support Service. Statutory responsibilities are met well, such as making appropriate provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs and properly fulfilling the race equality legislation. The appropriate authority is informed very effectively by the termly reports from the head of centre. They include, for example, details of monitoring the ethnicity of pupils who are admitted and if any are excluded. The adviser visits very regularly and gives very valuable support to the head of centre, through rigorous analysis of how well the centre is doing. This has been especially useful as the head is still relatively new to her role. Effective support is also provided from the newly appointed deputy head of the Behaviour Support Service as the line manager of the head of centre. Both of these visitors undertake observation of lessons that gives the head a valuable external perspective on the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, a new centre management committee has been formed to support the work of the larger committee that monitors and supports the work of all of the pupil referral centres across the authority. This local group has only had an initial meeting and its role and responsibilities have yet to be clarified fully. The chairman of the local committee demonstrates considerable enthusiasm and commitment to the success of the centre, alongside a good understanding of the importance of its work.

36. The leadership and management of the centre have been maintained at the same high quality since the last inspection and position it well for still further improvement. The principles of best value are applied well to manage the relatively small budget and the resources of the centre. Overall budgeting is managed by the appropriate authority. The shared commitment to help each pupil improve is impressive and recognised by all pupils, including those who have already returned to their schools full time. They readily acknowledge the important contribution of the centre in helping them improve.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	292,235
Total expenditure	292,235
Expenditure per pupil	9,634*

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	None allowed
Balance carried forward to the next	None allowed

*This figure represents the cost per full-time equivalent pupil. As the centre has pupils for only half of their school-time the cost per pupil attending the centre is half of the above cost.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2 and 3

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently very good for pupils in both classes.
- Educational care officers (ECOs) contribute very well to the high quality of teaching.
- Pupils' very good progress contributes very significantly to their successful return to school.
- Assessment of pupils' needs and the monitoring of their progress are very good.
- The National Literacy Strategy is used effectively and literacy is taught very well in other subjects.
- The subject is very well managed.

Commentary

37. The centre has appropriately emphasised the importance of improving English and literacy levels in assisting pupils' successful return to their schools. Many pupils have low levels of skills as they enter the centre; however, they make very good progress during the two terms they attend. This progress gives pupils valuable skills to tackle work at their schools and raises their self-esteem. Pupils who had left the centre and successfully returned to their schools commented on how much progress they had made with their literacy skills and recognised that this was due to the very good teaching from teachers and ECOs.
38. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 7 to 9 achieve well and make very good progress. Conversational skills are improved as pupils learn to listen more carefully to what is said by others. They are encouraged to give their opinions and vocabulary is improved, for example, through discussing what they have read with staff. Most increase their reading age by at least a year, many by two years. Many increase their spelling level by a year. This is particularly impressive given the short time they attend the centre and the behavioural and emotional difficulties that they have at the start of their placement. Younger pupils increase the range of common words they can spell accurately, they learn to use simple punctuation correctly and read with greater confidence. They begin to understand that the author creates a 'picture' in the readers' minds by the use of careful chosen words, for example, in the story of *Treasure Island*. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 often begin their two terms in the centre with relatively lower levels of skill yet make equally good progress and achievement as the younger pupils. They learn basic spelling rules and apply these well to new words as the need arises. They write longer pieces of work, for example, when recording their opinions on reading a new book. They read with greater fluency as they gain skills and build confidence. The older pupils analyse a plot and identify the most important parts, for example, understanding how the author builds up suspense in *Frankenstein*.
39. Teaching and learning are consistently of a very high standard. Staff create a very calm yet extremely purposeful atmosphere where the high expectations to behave well and work hard are met. Planning is very effective and teamwork is very good. All staff know exactly what they want pupils to learn. As a result no time is lost and pupils try really hard as they increase their skills. The very good relationships between pupils and staff mean that they have the confidence to tackle difficulties that occur. Pupils help one another, for example, if one needs to spell a word they are unsure of. An interesting range of books is used to increase pupils' enthusiasm. However, there is too little planned use of ICT to help pupils improve and consolidate their literacy skills.

40. The new subject leader manages English very well. She has quickly used her substantial knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy to build on the previous developments within the centre. Planning is very good. English lessons are supported very well by the additional daily literacy sessions that focus on improving spelling and reading. Carefully considered work is planned for each pupil, based on an assessment of their needs as they enter the centre. ECOs follow these plans very effectively to provide the high levels of individual support that the pupils require, and to contribute to the work of the teachers. Pupils with specific learning difficulties make notable progress in improving their literacy skills. Continuous tracking of pupils' progress is also very effectively used to identify if particular aspects need further work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

41. The development of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum is very good. The individual literacy programmes are supported in all lessons, since the same staff teach pupils for all subjects. This consistency is a strength as it means that the development of literacy is promoted throughout a pupil's time in the centre. Teachers use a range of resources in lessons at just the right levels of literacy for their pupils. This contributes to their progress in developing literacy skills, as well as the opportunity to learn in the other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good support provided by the teacher and the ECOs ensures all pupils learn.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is used well.
- Staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- There is limited time for teaching mathematics.
- At times there is a lack of pace in lessons and opportunities for practical activities are missed.

Commentary

42. It was only possible to see one lesson of mathematics during the inspection, but a scrutiny of past and present pupils' work and teachers' plans and records indicates that, although pupils may make good progress at times in lessons, their achievement is satisfactory. This difference is largely because mathematics is not taught often enough in the centre with only one timetabled lesson a week. This lesson is supplemented by the use of a computer program with individuals during skills lessons on Fridays, but the gap between mathematics lessons is too long and time has to be spent revisiting previous learning.
43. Pupils' work shows they have a wide range of ability. Good, focused help given to individuals by staff helps pupils to correct mistakes and maintain their concentration. A few more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to classify shapes and independently draw three-dimensional shapes. Most count accurately in multiples of two, five and ten. The less able need help to calculate additions to twenty and are not always accurate when doubling numbers. Similarly, more able pupils in Years 7 to 9 work out the decimal equivalent of fractions and understand rotational symmetry. Most multiply and divide by 10, 100 and 1000 successfully. The least able experience difficulties in mastering calculations with more than one step but improve their ability to subtract numbers in their head.
44. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy have been introduced well and this has improved pupils' capacity to calculate answers accurately. Evidence from pupils' work, documentation and the lesson seen indicate that the quality of teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. Staff expect pupils to behave very well and any calling out of answers is annotated on pupils' behaviour records. This helps particularly when activities such as reading and ordering three

to five-digit numbers takes too long as a starter activity. Although pupils become restless, they are keen to answer questions and participate in activities.

45. Leadership is good with a clear vision of how the subject needs to be developed. The new subject leader has good expertise for teaching pupils in Years 3 to 6 and is working effectively with LEA consultants to tailor work for the older pupils appropriately. Possible problem solving activities (investigations) to provide pupils with practical experiences and opportunities to work independently and in groups have been identified. It is also recognised that the test used to give a baseline for measuring pupils' progress is of limited use and an alternative is being sought. Teachers' planning shows that, apart from the program used in skills lessons, there is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning and resources have not yet been identified for this area of work. Improvement since the last inspection has been maintained.

Mathematics across the curriculum

46. The teaching of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory although it is not clearly indicated in lesson planning. A number of examples include:
- Putting elements of the life of Robert Louis Stevenson in order when studying the novel *Treasure Island*.
 - Establishing the time scale for the Viking period in history.
 - Practising using the 24-hour clock was given in ICT when establishing how to use search engines successfully.
 - Counting the number of throws and catches during co-operative games sessions.
 - Exploring 'same' and 'different' in relation to faces and portraits in PSHE.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and all pupils achieve well.
- Subject leadership and management are good.
- Lessons are well planned.
- Pupil's attitudes to science are very good and they present their work well.

Commentary

47. Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning have improved well since the last inspection. Their achievement is now good and this is because the teacher has good expertise and the overall quality of teaching is high. Additionally, the leadership and management of the subject are more effective. This can be seen in the very effective system established to record pupils' success and track their progress.
48. The curriculum is good and the consistent checking of pupils' work enables lessons to be planned to meet the needs of individual pupils. There is a strong work ethos and all pupils know they are expected to do their best. This was particularly noticeable when new pupils joined the group. They fitted in immediately and accepted the class routines without question. Lessons are planned in great detail to ensure that all pupils fully participate including less able pupils. Pupils are given good opportunities to improve their learning. They are inquisitive and have a desire to learn, for instance, trying to work out how things work. In a Year 9 lesson, for example, pupils showed a good understanding of different types of energy. They experimented with light and sound energy and investigated what kind of energy was needed. They showed great curiosity when watching a video on steam engines that illustrated energy transfer. This very positive attitude enables them to increase their knowledge and understanding of science which is helpful when they return to their schools. Good use of praise and encouragement by staff ensures pupils work well independently and also in pairs. There are good displays of

pupils' science work showing the results of the research they carried out on the Internet to find out more about the planets. This work is well displayed and shows that pupils take great pride in what they achieve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory** and developing well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources and staff expertise have improved.
- Direct teaching of ICT has been established well.
- Pupils enjoy ICT and try hard.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in other subjects.

Commentary

49. Pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory but they make good progress in their lessons. This difference is caused by the success of current developments which have not yet been effective for long enough. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory ensuring staff have improved their expertise through relevant training. A new ICT suite has been developed with good hardware and software resources. The local authority ICT adviser is working closely with the centre in establishing high quality discrete ICT teaching through planning lessons and teaching classes. In Year 9 pupils are taught to use the Internet effectively, for example, they investigate local weather conditions in Kirk Hallam. Good use of questioning ensures all pupils take part in the lesson and a brisk pace means that pupils' attention is maintained.
50. Conversations with pupils and examples of their work show they are confident in using the Internet for research, recording data and presenting text. They are enthusiastic about the use of ICT, clearly enjoy their lessons and work well individually and with partners to achieve their targets. As a result of high quality resources and teaching, pupils respond positively, behave very well and try their best in ICT. They show obvious enjoyment and great pride in their work. Pupils' work is displayed attractively in the centre.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

51. The use of ICT in other subjects is unsatisfactory at present. ICT is used, on occasion, in English and humanities to word process pupils' work and to add illustrations. A commercial mathematics program has recently been introduced which is designed to help pupils to improve areas of weakness. Pupils researched information on the planets in science using the Internet. However, opportunities to use the Internet for research in many subjects are missed.

OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

52. It is not possible to make a judgement on the provision in **humanities**. The work seen indicates pupils do well. The subject is well managed and led. Lessons concentrate on topics of geography and, especially, history that pupils are unlikely to have covered at school. Religious education is not taught as a separate subject since the centre does its best to liaise with schools to ensure that it is covered during pupils' time with them. Planning for humanities is good and makes effective use of artefacts loaned from the local authority's library service. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 3 to 6 a wide range of resources helped pupils understand aspects of the everyday lives of the Vikings. The study of life in Victorian times helped pupils understand how the lives of children had changed, such as the age when they could go to work. Older pupils developed this theme further when they looked at working conditions during the Industrial Revolution. The teacher's enthusiasm and knowledge kindle and increase the interest pupils have in these subjects. The assessment of pupils' learning is

very good. Staff record whether pupils have understood the key points after each lesson. There are only a very few examples where ICT has been used to help pupils learn in humanities.

53. Only one lesson of **art and design** was observed. This was supplemented by scrutiny of displays of pupils' work and the teacher's planning and records. From this evidence, it is clear that pupils make good progress in art and design. Skilful teaching ensures pupils learn to use a range of techniques and media effectively. Very good use is made of exciting artefacts, such as masks from around the world and pictures of the work of such artists as Van Gogh and Bruegel to grab the interest and provide inspiration for pupils. Their cultural development is promoted very well and their sketching skills improve from one piece of work to the next. Praise and encouragement by the staff are very effective. For example, the positive evaluation of each pupil's work at the end of a lesson was done exceptionally well. The teacher took care to compare each pupil's first and second piece of work in turn drawing out specific points. These included what she particularly liked, for example, "the way the eyes have been drawn, narrowed in anger", and illustrated how each pupil had improved: "this one shows a development in the shape of the face from the first piece, the shading and heavy lines emphasise the feelings of anger". This valued every pupil's efforts and successfully boosted their self-esteem. As a result, pupils were proud of what they had achieved regardless of their level of ability.
54. From the evidence of the one lesson seen, the examples of pupils' past work and teachers' records, in **design and technology**, pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. They are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques, increasing their skills in marking, cutting and gluing to create models. There are indications from this lesson and pupils' work and records that the quality of teaching is good; consequently pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and work well in pairs. They show great interest and build upon previous skills and knowledge, taking care and patience to build their 'structures' to an agreed design.
55. Only one lesson of **co-operative games** was seen but it was evident that the sessions are well planned. Instructions are clearly given to the pupils and written on a white board, so they know exactly what to do. New pupils find this particularly helpful. Pupils assist in getting the equipment out and putting it away willingly. They co-operate well when throwing and catching and in the short time, their skills improve well. On returning to the classroom, they transfer what they have learnt about working together to playing board games.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress and this contributes very successfully to their return to school.
- The broad and relevant range of topics covered in lessons is supported very effectively outside of lessons by all staff.
- Very good teaching sets very high expectations and uses interesting activities which helps pupils learn very well.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

56. The centre's clear focus on improving personal and social development is an important part of pupils' successful return to school. It is very well thought through and extremely effective. The subject contributes very well to pupils' social and moral development. Pupils make very good progress against targets set for their personal development in their individual education plans, which maintains the high standards set at the last inspection. Younger pupils identify things they do well, since they often feel, when they join the centre, that they are 'failures'. They

increase their understanding of how they have skills and abilities to deal with difficult situations, including recognising that when things go wrong they have the capacity to cope. The co-operative games lesson increases their ability to play with others, including taking turns and dealing with winning and losing appropriately. Older pupils learn how to manage better in stressful situations at school, including increasing their awareness of when they are getting angry and how to reduce these feelings. They learn how their behaviour can make a situation worse and how they can reduce this.

57. Teaching and learning are very good. There is a wide range of carefully thought-through topics to meet the needs for each of the age groups in the centre. Specific lessons are selected to match the needs of the pupils in the class at the time. Interesting activities are then used to help them learn very well. For example, amusing yet very relevant cartoon sketches of pupils are used to increase their understanding of their role when problems occur and how not to blame others when things go wrong, such as forgetting to do homework and not taking their physical education kit on the right day. Very effective teamwork by teachers and ECOs, for example, in setting high standards and expectations, ensures that pupils make very good progress. These high standards are expected and usually met from when pupils enter the centre until when they leave. As a consequence, the awareness by pupils of what they need to do to improve and how well they are doing is impressive.
58. The success of the personal, social and health education is due to staff identifying accurately the areas where pupils need to improve. They use this information very well as the basis for setting personal targets to be tackled throughout pupils' attendance at the centre and for choosing appropriate topics for lessons. Careful monitoring of progress shows pupils just how well they are doing and enables staff to adjust their teaching if necessary. Effective planning and liaison with schools ensure that some topics, such as sex education, are covered when pupils are in their school. Occasionally this means that a pupil will return for a lesson in school when they would otherwise have been in the centre. Very good use is made of specialists to support the expertise of staff. For example, a youth worker leads the sessions about the dangers of drug misuse.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7)