

INSPECTION REPORT

ROCHDALE PUPIL REFERRAL SERVICE

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 133409

Headteacher: Kate Connolly

Lead inspector: Mike Smith

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th November 2003

Inspection number: 259102

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school/Service:	Permanent/fixed term exclusions, home tuition, young mothers and a range of complementary projects supporting pupil/student behaviour
School category:	Pupil referral service
Age range of pupils:	5-17
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	125
School address:	Saxon Hall Study Centre Samson Street Belfield Rochdale
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Appropriate authority:	The local education authority
Name of responsible officer	Sue Dearden
Date of previous inspection:	Not previously inspected

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PUPIL REFERRAL SERVICE

Rochdale local education authority (LEA) is part of the Excellence in Cities initiative. It was on the first wave of the Behaviour Improvement Programme. As a response to this, the authority has established the Behaviour Management and Development Team, a small group of 3 teachers and 5 support staff who work with schools to develop behaviour management strategies. Along with the Pupil Referral Service, they are managed by the Pupil Welfare and Inclusion Division of the Learners and Access Section of the LEA. In 2001 the LEA established this service to deal with excluded pupils and their reintegration. The headteacher was appointed that September and the service has gradually been built up since then. Most staff were not appointed until 2002/3. The Darnhill building for Years 3-9 has been adapted during Summer 2003. Years 10 and 11 moved into new premises at Saxon Hall in May 2003. The Young Parents Group has had a base in a local Further Education College since mid Autumn 2002.

The Head of the pupil referral service is a member of the local education authority inclusion panel which has been in place since January 2003, which includes Headteachers and LEA Officers who manage post-exclusion placements. This has been in place since January 2003. The service caters for up to 125 pupils and students (pupils years 3 to 6 and students years 7 to 11) of whom there are presently 98 boys and 27 girls on roll. Most have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Eighteen students have statements of special educational needs. 101 pupils and students are white and 24 are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The attainment of the great majority of pupils and students on arrival to the PRS is below what would be expected of pupils and students their age. Again, the previous attendance records of many of the pupils and students has been poor. Although some parents do not speak English, all pupils and students do. There is a service mentor and 2 education welfare officers who support these parents. Five students are in public care and 60 pupils take part in other off-site provision.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overall the Pupil Referral Service (PRS) offers a satisfactory level of support and is developing well. Teaching and learning are good. Academic achievement is good overall, including for those pupils and students with additional learning needs and those in local authority care. Pupils and students in Years 3 to 9 make good progress in their personal and social development and this helps many of them return successfully to mainstream schools. The leadership of the headteacher is good, although current circumstances do not allow for sufficient monitoring and evaluation of service developments and assessment processes are under developed. However, the Service is striving to achieve its stated aims and is currently giving satisfactory value for money. This is the first inspection of the PRS.

The main strengths and weaknesses of the PRS are

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and she has a clear vision for improvement
- The effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- The links with other schools and colleges are good
- The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils and students is good
- The support, advice and guidance offered to pupils and students is good
- Attendance and punctuality are not good enough
- Assessment processes do not guide pupils' learning well enough
- Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory
- Spiritual, moral, and cultural development is not sufficiently developed for all age groups
- Provision in personal, social, and health education and citizenship is unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11

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	Good
Year 9	Good	Good
Year 11	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Young Parents Group	good	good
Home Tutored	good	good

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

Achievement is good overall. It is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science and unsatisfactory in ICT and design technology. Achievement is particularly good for those pupils in years 5 to 9, those in the Young Parents Group (2003 group all passed 5+ GCSEs) and those receiving home tuition. This also includes their achievement in personal, social and health education, although in Years 10 and 11 it is unsatisfactory. Those individuals who have additional learning difficulties or who are in care make good progress in their learning. There are pockets of good achievement across age groups in other subjects, for example in art and PE. Not enough time is spent teaching some subjects for pupils and students to make sustained progress in them.

Pupils' do not make enough progress in improving their personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' and students' attendance is unsatisfactory. Attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. Many develop positive attitudes and show improvement in their behaviour and co-operate well with staff and increasingly well with each other. (Occasionally, bad behaviour interferes with learning, but usually it is dealt with quickly and

effectively). However, there is some inconsistency across the staff in managing and challenging inappropriate behaviour. Staff and most pupils form trusting relationships and there are no tensions between different groups of pupils. An appropriate emphasis is placed on getting pupils and students to think about their lives and the effects of their actions on others. There is not enough emphasis on teaching and improving pupils' and students' spiritual, moral and cultural awareness or their personal development in Years 10 and 11.

The quality of education provided by the PRS is satisfactory. Teaching is good. Sometimes it is very good, but varies across the service. The effectiveness of lessons often depends on how confident teachers are in each subject. Many teachers make lessons interesting, manage their classrooms well and work particularly effectively with the attached mentors. As a result, pupils learn well and make good progress in most lessons. Teaching is best when there are clear guidelines and expectations of both learning and behaviour. Pupils and students with learning difficulties receive effective adult support and make good progress. Assessment is underdeveloped and does not effectively guide lesson planning.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an appropriate focus on mathematics, English and science. There are insufficient resources for teaching and learning in a number of subject areas, including ICT, numeracy and literacy, design technology and French. The care and welfare of pupils are good. Pupils are carefully supervised at all times and staff show a good awareness of pupils' problems and achievements. As a result pupils are given good, advice and guidance. Every effort is made to retain close, regular contact with parents and strong links have been formed with many.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good and she has a strong commitment to the development and improvement of the service. However, progress has recently been hampered due to her management responsibility and attendance at a local school in difficulty. This has meant that support for the deputy headteachers and co-ordinators and the vital role of monitoring, reviewing, developing and improving the quality of provision has been lacking.

The local education authority (LEA) in its role as the appropriate authority has ensured that all statutory requirements have been met. Currently, the management committee do not have enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the Service or a full enough part in driving forward improvements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS

Parents are generally complimentary and welcome the help that and their children receive. They feel that it is helping their children to make progress with their work. They appreciate the transport systems that help ensure school attendance and the regular contact they have with staff. Most pupils and students share a belief that the PRS is effectively helping them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the PRS should do to improve are:-

- Improve the attendance and punctuality of those pupils and students able to do so
- Ensure that assessment procedures are fully developed and consistently used.
- Ensure that opportunities for spiritual, moral, and cultural development are increased for all pupils and students and personal, social and health education and citizenship development for Years 10 and 11
- Improve pupils' and students' achievement in ICT.
- Ensure staff expectations of consistently challenging inappropriate behaviour are clear

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are below average due to gaps in pupils and students' learning. However, pupils' and students' achievements are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is good.
- Students' achievement by the end of Year 9 is good.
- Students in the Young Parents Group achieved 5+ GCSEs in 2003
- Pupils and students with special educational needs achieve well.
- Achievement in ICT is not good enough.

Commentary.

1. In relation to their prior attainment pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Evidence indicates they make good progress in English because they are taught well and the National Literacy Strategy is adapted imaginatively to meet their needs. Their literacy skills are generally lower than those skills in mathematics and science when they come to the Darnhill Centre. Speaking and literacy strategies are sometimes poor because pupils' behaviour often impacts negatively on their ability to communicate appropriately. Their achievement in reading and writing is improving, although progress in these areas is slower than it might be due to a lack of material available to stimulate their imagination or love of literature.
2. The overall achievement of pupils and students in lessons is good overall and closely linked to the quality of teaching and learning. In those lessons, where teaching is very good or excellent and the management of challenging behaviour is successful, the quality of teaching and learning provides very good outcomes in terms of student progress and achievement.
3. Pupil's achievement in mathematics is **satisfactory** with **good** features. They achieve well because classes are small and well staffed, which makes help readily available. When the National Numeracy Strategy is more secure and resources have improved, the rate of progress is set to accelerate. This is because pupils like the subject, especially the practical use of weighing and measuring, as well as the exciting mental and oral work.
4. Pupil's achievement in science is satisfactory and similar to mathematics. Pupils display natural curiosity. A lack of resources is a barrier to their making more rapid progress.
5. In Years 3 to 9, pupils' achievement of pupils in personal, social and health education is good. Pupils and students consistently achieve well in these lessons gaining both in knowledge and understanding. They encounter information that is relevant to their daily lives and are genuinely interested in the material provided.
6. By the end of Year 9 the achievement of students is good. In relation to their prior attainment they have made good progress in English, mathematics and science. Many students make sufficient progress to return to mainstream schools, and are able to resume their studies at either GCSE level or at a standard that will gain them alternative accreditation. Good teaching and the promotion of more positive attitudes to learning ensure students generally do their best. The work they do is similar to that which they would have completed in mainstream schools. The centre is aware that a more focused use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies will further promote literacy and numeracy skills better in other subject areas.

7. Throughout the centre, pupils' and students' skills in ICT are lower than they could be, and overall, they do not achieve well enough. This is partly due to the lack of sufficient appropriate resources; partly due to the lack of a suitably planned curriculum designed to build skills up systematically, and partly due to the lack of planned opportunities to use and reinforce ICT skills and learning in other subjects. Consequently, on their return to school some individuals lack adequate competence and confidence in the subject.
8. The achievement of pupils in years 10 and 11 in personal, social and health education is unsatisfactory. There is no systematic approach to this area of learning for these students. This is a vital area of student development before they leave at 16 and its absence overshadows the very good provision made for younger pupils and students.
9. By the end of Year 11, students' achievement varies from good to unsatisfactory. Overall it is satisfactory. The variability is attributable to a number of factors. The first is poor or erratic attendance and lateness, the second is the extensive range of individual needs which have to be met and the third is the lack of provision of accredited courses for students to follow in the afternoon sessions.
10. Students who achieve good standards and progress well with their studies are those who are committed to their college links, work experience opportunities and the learning opportunities available at Saxon Hall. In particular, the students in the Young Parents Group based at Hopwood Hall further education college, and others who receive other forms of outreach support do well and most students achieve passes in GCSE examinations and some students choose to attend further education. Given the nature of their special educational needs it is inevitable that some students, boys in particular, do not attend regularly enough to benefit from the range of the provision offered.
11. Teachers keep detailed records of what students know, understand and are able to do, as well as when they attended or were absent from lessons. In this way students can progress at their own pace, and those who return after a period of absence are not disadvantaged. The high staffing ratio ensures pupils with special educational needs receive intensive help, and, as a result, they make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

12. Pupils' and students' attendance is **unsatisfactory**. Many develop positive attitudes and show an improvement in their behaviour, although, overall it is just **satisfactory**. Pupils' and students' social development is **satisfactory** while their spiritual, moral and cultural development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Service promotes good relationships including racial harmony
- The Service deals effectively with any form of harassment
- The Service works hard to enable pupils and students to distinguish right from wrong
- The Service has good strategies for promoting good attendance, although contributing circumstances are not always under their control and many pupils and students fail to attend or arrive late
- There were no incidents of racism or bullying observed
- There have been no permanent exclusions over the past year
- Some staff set low expectations of behaviour and fail to challenge pupils and students

Commentary

13. Pupils and students attitudes, values and behaviour are very variable across the PRS, with attitudes to learning being slightly better in Years 3 to 6. Those pupils and students that attend regularly mostly enjoy coming. However, attendance rates are unsatisfactory, demonstrating that the

attitude of a significant number of pupils and students is unsatisfactory. Punctuality too is unsatisfactory; too few pupils and students are in attendance at the start of the day. Attendance of those in Years 3 to 9 and the Young Parents Group are better than those in Years 10 and 11. Unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality have a negative effect on the pupils' and students' learning and progress. However, it does have to be remembered that many of the pupils and students arrive with evidence of chronic non-attendance problems and/or school phobia. However, many parents or carers do not meet their statutory obligation to ensure their children attend school

14. In order to promote better attendance, the Service has a range of good strategies in place. An attendance panel meets regularly to discuss any problems with the students and their parents or carers. The breakfast clubs encourage some pupils and students to attend and arrive on time and those that do attend report their appreciation of the toast, drink and chat with staff.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	10%	School data	47%
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.

15. There is no evidence of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment. All adults at the school are aware that students may, on occasion, because of their personal difficulties, act inappropriately towards others or make unacceptable remarks and generally they guard against this well. Pupils and students report that they are confident they can approach staff if they have any concerns

16. Relationships between pupils and students and staff are generally satisfactory. Incidents of disruptive behaviour and pupils and students showing little interest in their work, inevitably places relationships under strain. At its best the quality of the relationship between staff and pupils and students allow incidents to be calmed down quickly and teaching and learning to resume. In other cases, the relationship fails to calm the situation and the pupil or student becomes abusive and aggressive and little or no learning occurs. Some staff find managing and controlling the pupils and students particularly outside of classrooms, very difficult and some pupils and students show little regard or respect for staff in these situations.

17. When the pupils and students receive good teaching they are usually motivated and are fully involved in their lessons. Many have low self-esteem, but nevertheless in the best lessons they are willing to display and discuss their work. The general behaviour of the pupils and students is such that they can never be unsupervised and few are prepared to take responsibility for their actions. Many staff make great efforts to promote responsibility, respect and an understanding of right from wrong. A points system is in place where pupils can earn rewards for appropriate behaviour and for most pupils this is an incentive, however, for others it appears to have little impact.

18. During the inspection incidents were seen of disrespectful behaviour both in the centres and by a group attending an off sight activity. Some staff do not challenge the bad behaviour of pupils and students enough. An exception to this is the respect and regard seen in the Young Parents Group where the students work hard, have good relationships with the adults and are attempting to maintain their link with education including gaining accreditation.

19. Pupils and students social development is generally satisfactory in that some are learning to co-operate and consider the consequences of their actions. Pupils and students spiritual, moral and cultural development is unsatisfactory. Few of the pupils and students have any sense of spirituality or of their own or others cultural traditions although no incident of racism or bullying were observed during the inspection.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Black or Black British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
9	9	
2	2	

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

20. The quality of education is **satisfactory**. The PRS is successful in its main task of helping to keep pupils and students in education. Teaching and learning are good overall, but the recording and use of assessment are not consistent enough across the whole Service. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, except for weaknesses in ICT, cultural, spiritual, moral development and personal development in Years 10 and 11. The PRS enjoys the support of pupils and parents. Good links with parents, good levels of care, together with good support and guidance help many pupils and students to overcome the barriers which might otherwise exclude them from learning.

Teaching and learning

21. Teaching is **good** and overall, so is the learning. Assessment is variable but **unsatisfactory** overall

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Much of the teaching is good or better, although there are variations.
- Many of the pupils and students enjoy learning and achieve well in lessons
- Mentors effectively support learning
- A lack of specialist teaching in some areas affects the quality of learning
- Assessment is underdeveloped at many levels and is inconsistently used

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11 29%	15 39%	11 29%	1 3%	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons

22. Teaching is generally good and in over a quarter of lessons it is very good, but there are, however, significant variations in the quality across the different establishments. Where it is good, learning outcomes are clear and teaching is delivered with enthusiasm and drawn from good subject knowledge. The management of behaviour is good and pupils and students are interested and keen to learn and make progress. Systems to share best practice and plan transitions across key stages have not yet been developed. The use of assessment to guide planning is at an early stage of development and is not consistently used across the Service.

23. In Years 5 to 9, there is a clear ambition for pupils and students to be returned to mainstream schooling and this has a marked and beneficial influence upon teaching. Pupils and students' learning shows the impact of a significant proportion of purposeful lessons and it is good. The quality of teachers' planning is variable. Whilst some is excellent, some is underdeveloped and there is

insufficient sharing of good practice. The best examples show how teachers plan to ensure pupils build on knowledge and understanding gained earlier in school life

24. Although some curricular areas in Years 10 and 11 feature teaching with a clear grasp of methods and desired outcomes, there are also weaknesses reflecting some teachers being less sure of the purpose of lessons. In part, this happens when lessons are covering subjects that will not lead to a final accreditation or certificate, but also where broader aims such as improved social development are only partly understood. Across Years 9 and 10, where outcomes are not clear or explicit, for example in some aspects of the afternoon activity programmes, a much poorer response is drawn from students. Overall, students learn in a satisfactory way, but again, there is great variation across the different year groups within the PRS.

25. Teachers working in Years 10 and 11 face particularly demanding behaviour from students. The best teaching utilises the very high staff ratio to provide teaching of an intensive kind. Some teaching, however, shows less clear direction and students are not given a clear indication of academic or behavioural expectations.

26. The lead in some lessons is provided by mentors. Whilst many are experienced in supporting pupils with emotional, social and behavioural needs they lack specific subject expertise. Some staff, including qualified teachers, are candid that they are learning alongside students in subjects that are not their own specialisms. Whilst the atmosphere may remain relaxed and informally productive, in some instances there is a clear loss in the sense of purpose within the lesson, and in the amount of challenge that is provided.

27. There is a close link between subject specialism and the quality of teaching. In part, this reflects a lack of formal support for teachers working outside their area of principal expertise. By way of contrast, GCSE science taught to the Young Parent Group on the Saxon Hall site by a subject specialist was an example of a well-focused lesson where student learning and achievement was good. The teaching of the Young Parents Group is consistently purposeful and productive; it functions well in preparing young mothers for a potential return to school or college.

28. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and are inconsistent across the Service. In discussion, most staff are well aware of what pupils and students know, understand and can do. The recording and tracking of academic progress is inconsistent and varies between subjects and between teachers, from very good to unsatisfactory. Learning targets could and should be made clearer. In the best practice, the system of daily evaluation of lessons, which has a clear influence on subsequent curriculum planning, is a strong feature, and forms a good basis for devising learning targets.

29. Although there was no teaching of pupils and students on home tuition seen, a sample of their work was seen. Work was well planned, assessed and marking generally indicated how students could improve.

The curriculum

30. The quality and range of curricular opportunities are **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enrichment are **unsatisfactory**. Accommodation and resources are generally good, in spite of some resource shortcomings.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers carefully plan a wide range of learning experiences for the primary aged pupils
- Students in Years 9 and 11 are well prepared for the next stage of their education, or employment
- The quality of accommodation at Saxon Hall is promotes a positive learning environment.
- Opportunities for enriching the curriculum are unsatisfactory.

- Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education in years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.
- There are insufficient resources for teaching and learning in a number of subject areas.

Commentary

31. The headteacher's clear leadership, supported by the two deputy headteachers, has been pivotal in establishing a suitable range of learning experiences for pupils and students of all ages. Teachers at the Darnhill site, for pupils in Years 3 to 9, endeavour to plan a broad range of experiences that cater for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the pupils and students. This ensures that they do not fall behind with their work and are able to rejoin mainstream school without being at a significant disadvantage in their learning.

32. Curriculum planning in Years 5 to 9 is designed to ensure that all pupils receive similar experiences, but also that it meets their individual needs. As a result, their achievement in most subjects, by the time they leave the centre, is good. Teachers' use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is better for the younger pupils than it is for students in Years 7 to 9. However, literacy and numeracy skills are not promoted well enough in other subjects. There is a computer suite and computers in each class, but not enough use is made of computers in ICT or to support learning in other subjects.

33. Students in Years 10 and 11 benefit from a range of learning opportunities, which can result in them achieving various levels of accreditation for their work. Given that the service is in its early days, the initial development of the curriculum has been good with students able to access GCSE in mathematics, English and science as well as Key Skills Entry Level and ASDAN. There are now plans to develop more structured learning opportunities during the afternoon sessions to further increase the range of external accreditation and maximize the use of the good specialist facilities, including the computer suite and the food technology room. Joint initiatives with local secondary schools to use their expertise in subjects such as art are being negotiated. Throughout the service there is a very well structured programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education. It includes drugs awareness, substance misuse and sex education. However, it is not implemented well enough and a significant percentage of older students are missing vital opportunities to benefit from gaining a better knowledge and understanding of this extremely important aspect of their education. This is unsatisfactory.

34. At both Darnhill and Saxon Hall there are too few planned opportunities to enrich the curriculum and make learning more relevant to day-to-day living. Staff provide insufficient occasions for participation in sports, arts or other activities for learning. Homework is not often encouraged and there is no provision for students to continue their studies at the centre outside lesson time, if they should so wish.

35. A significant strength of the curriculum is the emphasis placed upon making sure students are well prepared for the next stage of their education and their entry into the world of work. The links with colleges and employers are extensive. Pupils and students who return to school are well supported during the transition.

36. Whilst the curriculum is currently satisfactory, it is not innovative, imaginative or particularly stimulating. In part this is because the teams have rightly placed all their energies into ensuring the basics are in place. However, they are not short of ideas about moving forward. They are, nevertheless, severely hampered by a lack of resources in a range of subjects, including, ICT equipment, numeracy and literacy materials, such as interactive whiteboards, big books and practical mathematics equipment. Resources are also inadequate for modern foreign languages and design and technology. The outside play and recreation areas at the Darnhill site are currently unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on the behaviour of some pupils and students as the day progresses.

Care, guidance and support

37. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. Provision for support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is good. Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Breakfast Club encourages a positive start to the day.
- The school's support for children in local authority care is good.
- The 'Early Break' initiative to support alcohol and drugs awareness is good.
- Support from the Sure Start plus midwives for the Young Parents Group is good.
- The provision of counselling and careers advice from the specialist service advisers is good.
- The school's work experience programme is good.

Commentary

38. Good procedures are in place for child protection with named members of staff at all sites. All staff, including the mentors, are aware of procedures and have received appropriate training. The Service adheres to the health and safety policy and whole-School risk assessments are completed annually. Safe procedures are in place to deal with accidents and there are two staff trained to administer first aid at each site. Good procedures are in place to ensure safe use of the Internet. The Breakfast Club also creates a safe and secure environment for the pupils and students at the start of the school day and provides an opportunity for problems to be aired and resolved before lesson time.

39. Good procedures are in place to support children in public care. The newly established Children in Public Care - Raising Achievement Project (ChiPC – RAP), in conjunction with social services, provides care and support for 'looked after' children and their carers. Assistance is given to help pupils and students return to their schools as soon as possible and additional health care is also provided. A member of the teaching staff and two mentors work from within the school but also support in homes and schools throughout the area. Frequent newsletters are sent out to carers and close liaison is maintained. The educational welfare service provides additional support with attendance problems. If requested, the staff will attend parents' meetings with parents or carers.

40. The 'Early Break' alcohol and drugs awareness scheme provides good support for pupils and students. The advocacy worker is accessible and a frequent visitor to the school. Issues can be discussed privately with a trained counsellor. The Young Parents Group based at Hopwood Hall benefit from the services of the Sure Start plus midwifery service. The midwives are available to hold appropriate health and childcare sessions and provide students with support and guidance as indeed does the youth adviser.

41. Good counselling and careers advice is provided by the Connexions service. Two advisers are available every week to counsel the pupils and students and attempt to resolve any problems. Close links are maintained with support services such as the Young Offenders, Early Break and social services. The PRS's work experience programme is good. Students in Years 10 and 11 are given two opportunities to work within the local community. Through their own initiative, or in conjunction with the Rochdale Business Chamber, students work within areas such as the engineering, leisure or retail. All students are also offered the opportunity to study for the basic food hygiene and first aid certificates.

42. Pupils are actively involved in monitoring their own behaviour and progress, for example, through the system of reward points, as well as through reference to specific behaviour frameworks and targets they have been set. Overall, the monitoring of personal development is good in Years 3 to 9 with account being taken of pupils' and students' views on the progress they make.

The good quality care and guidance provided by the school support the pupils and students' learning and personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

43. The PRS has **satisfactory** links with parents and with the community. Extended services such as outreach are **satisfactory**. The PRS has **good** links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with other schools and colleges effectively support pupil and student development

Commentary

44. Good links are in place with other schools and colleges. The Service provides good advice and support to keep pupils and students at their mainstream school if at all possible. Some pupils and students receive additional support whilst attending the school on a part-time basis only. All re-integration arrangements back into mainstream education are designed to meet the needs of each individual pupil or student. The Service is successful in managing to get a number of pupils and students back into mainstream schooling. Links are also in place with a range of further education establishments where some students continue their education.

45. There are good arrangements for shared or linked provision with Hopwood Hall College. The college houses the school's Young Parents Group and provides additional support for students completing G.C.S.E. courses. The college also offers students in Years 10 and 11 courses in subjects such as catering, childcare and construction.

46. The additional support of the schools and colleges compliments the efforts of the PRS to provide the pupils and students with continuous education and suitable employment.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

47. Leadership is **satisfactory** as is the overall management. The overall monitoring function of the Management Committee needs to improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and she has a clear vision for improvement
- There is effective, overall co-ordination and management of the contributing services.
- The LEA provides appropriate support, but the management committee does not currently make sufficient contribution to the governance and monitoring of the PRS
- The leadership and management of some key staff with curriculum responsibilities is currently unsatisfactory

Commentary

48. The headteacher has a strong commitment to the development and improvement of the PRS. The PRS is at an early stage of development and it is regrettable that the headteacher has to be absent so much at this time through her management responsibility at a local special school.

49. The headteacher tries to ensure that all staff are clear as to their role and with her deputy headteachers looks to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the curriculum. They have been successful in establishing an ethos of learning for all year groups across the service. As a result, a common sense of purpose is developing with all staff and in some areas morale is high. Staff feel confident because of the support and leadership of the headteacher, although her current absence is delaying overall developments, particularly in terms of monitoring and evaluating the quality of

teaching and learning. The headteacher is aware that her absence at this important stage of the PRS development is causing delays in progress. The deputy headteachers are running the centres well and offering appropriate leadership. However, much of their time is taken up with managing too much low level, inappropriate pupil and student behaviour, at the expense of the more important function of monitoring and evaluating the quality of education.

50. The headteacher manages the various contributory aspects of the PRS well to ensure they support and complement each other to meet the differing needs of pupils and students. Provision across the various functions is developing from appropriate to good and they do work hard at returning Year 9 students to mainstream schools whenever possible. Similarly, she ensures that other departments of the LEA, such as educational psychologists are fully involved in helping pupils and students to move on successfully from the PRS.

51. The headteacher fully recognises where improvement is needed, such as developing and extending curriculum opportunities. The recruitment, retention and development of staff is another vital area she is aware is necessary to ensure a quality education is provided across the different functions of the service. Currently, the co-ordination of core subjects is managed by non-specialist staff and there is little continuity or consistency of management across the different year groups. This situation has delayed curriculum development and the specialists who have been recruited to begin next term will have a vital role to improve curriculum management. Performance management is not fully established for all staff and this is delaying ensuring there is a common understanding and expectation amongst all adults.

52. The headteacher works closely with secondary headteachers in developing and managing the inclusion panel to effectively deal with excluded pupils and students and their return to school. This panel has been positively supported by headteachers and has an integral part to play in the future development of the PRS.

53. The LEA, in its role as the appropriate authority provides appropriate support for the management of the PRS and initially ensured that the PRS was adequately funded to fulfil its various functions. A review of finances is now necessary to ensure that the new PRS improvement plan can be fully and successfully resourced.

54. Close attention has been paid to government guidelines when setting the context within which the PRS operates. The PRS has been provided with a curriculum policy which states what the LEA expects the PRS to provide. The day-to-day administration on all sites is carried out efficiently and effectively supports routines.

55. The headteacher regularly reports accurately and fairly to the management committee as to what has been happening in the PRS, and there are occasional visits by some members of the committee. However, the management committee has little idea of what goes on within all the varied functions of the PRS and their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the PRS need to be improved.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2, 3, and 4

ENGLISH

56. The provision for English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching, learning and achievement in Years 3 to 6.
- An effective contribution is made to supporting the return of pupils back into mainstream schools.
- Teaching, learning and achievement in the Young Parents Group is good
- The management and co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory
- There is insufficient challenge to the more able students.
- Assessment procedures are underdeveloped.

57. Pupil achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. Teaching is also good and because of that, pupils respond and learn well. The lesson outcomes are made clear and teacher planning shows a detailed grasp of pupil need from both the point of view of the subject and with regard to preparation for returning to school. Classes serve as an effective reintroduction to school expectations for pupils and students. The National Literacy Strategy is adapted well, classrooms are welcoming environments. Expectations are the same as those experienced by pupils in their prior school placements.

58. Student achievement in Years 7, 8 and 9 is satisfactory. There is a particular emphasis in Year 9 to fully support and prepare students for reintegration into mainstream schooling. This has a beneficial impact upon many student responses and their commitment to their work. Teaching is satisfactory, but there is a weakness in subject knowledge. The National Key Stage 3 has not really been emphasised enough or had an impact on teaching delivery. The range of resources deployed is limited and is restricting further development in this subject. Students enjoy good relationships with their teachers and lessons are usually productive.

59. The achievement of students in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Poor attitudes to learning in previous schools and disruption caused by their behavioural and social difficulties, is quite often still a barrier to reaching appropriate standards for many students. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but is sometimes lacking in imagination and enthusiasm. Students who can work at higher levels are offered inadequate levels of challenge in the GCSE groups. Books show care in presentation and steady gains in literacy skills but even higher attaining pupils show a reluctance to broaden their thinking. Students are most comfortable with comprehension exercises of limited challenge. A decision has been made to utilise a short-course English language GCSE and the small group of students selected for entry in this, its first year, are on target to achieve grades in line with their attainment. Assessing and tracking progress in English has been inconsistent – better in Years 10 and 11 (because of the framework of course requirements), but weaker in Years 7-9.

60. The present English co-ordinator is covering the responsibility for a single term and has not undertaken a full development and monitoring role. Consequently, the management and strategic co-ordination of the subject across the different year groups is unsatisfactory. A new post holder begins in January. ICT is not used enough to support the subject. Although there are exceptions, most marking is perfunctory and does not contribute sufficiently to teacher planning.

61. Work with the Young Parents Group is a strong feature of service provision. Teaching and learning is good. Students demonstrate a commitment to their studies and often make a successful transition back into mainstream school. Their achievements are good and most pass their GCSEs.

62. It was not possible to observe English teaching within home tuition, although work observed demonstrated a good standards and pupils and students were making good progress.

Literacy across the curriculum

63. There is not currently a consistent strategy to ensure pupils' and students' literacy skills are reinforced throughout the curriculum. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for them to practice and develop these skills. This lack of planned practical application of literacy is not enabling individuals to appreciate the relevance and importance of literacy skills in everyday life.

MATHEMATICS

64. The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some examples of good and very good teaching were observed during the inspection.
- Students in Years 7 to 9 achieve well.
- There are excellent examples of planning and assessment and their use.
- Resources for teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- Numeracy skills are not promoted well enough through other subjects of the curriculum.
- The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

Commentary

65. Overall achievement, teaching and learning is satisfactory. Occasionally it is good. Achievement in Years 4 to 6 is satisfactory. Teaching reflects an appropriately adapted National Numeracy Strategy, and care is taken to provide work for individual pupils, which matches their age and ability. Teachers are aware of what pupils find difficult and use an exhaustive repertoire of approaches to make learning enjoyable.

66. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Although the standard of their work is lower than expected for their age, students try hard to do their best. All but a very small minority are well motivated by the prospect of returning to a mainstream school. They are keen to do the same work as others of their age and some are achieving well. However, the National Numeracy Strategy framework is not used well enough to ensure this happens. Teachers are very effective in ensuring students have a secure knowledge and understanding of what they have already learned before introducing more challenging work. Commercial course material provides the framework for what students learn next. Students have good relationships with their teachers and respect the comments they make about the quality of their work. As a result, any suggestions for improvement are willingly received. In one case the quality of records, assessments and planning maintained by the teacher were exemplary. However, the use of assessment across the service is inconsistent.

67. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Whilst the grades those students have achieved at GCSE have been low, the fact that they have been able to gain some accreditation represents for them, good progress. When taking into account the barriers some have had to negotiate in relation to their learning this represents good progress for individuals.

68. The recently established service is now more settled and this is having a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and learning. The newly refurbished building is a pleasant environment, where students are felt valued. This is positively affecting their attitudes to the subject. Consequently, projections are that in the current year group every student will attain higher grades. Inspection findings agree with this prediction. There is no significant difference in the achievement of the various groups of students who have the support of the service. Any differences are a result of the student's

attitude and rate of attendance and can generally be attributed to the reason they are not attending mainstream school.

69. The role of the subject co-ordinator is just satisfactory and is developing. Good work has been done in putting into place a sound mathematics curriculum within a relatively short time. The co-ordinator is anxious to overcome any communication difficulties arising from being based on two sites. The focus is now identified as developing and evaluating the curriculum with a view to speedily implementing the Key Stage 2 and 3 numeracy strategies. Additionally to improve the opportunities for all year groups to apply mathematics to practical problem solving and life style situations and improve the quality and quantity of learning resources. Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is a further target with a focus on ensuring additional adults are suitably deployed to support learning as well as behaviour.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Pupils and students have sufficient mathematical skills which could be used in other subjects. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for them to practice and develop these skills. This lack of planned practical application of numeracy is not currently enabling individuals to appreciate the relevance and importance of mathematics in everyday life.

SCIENCE

71. Provision in science is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and supports good learning
- Pupils and students show an interest in the subject
- The achievement of those students in the Young Parents Group is good

72. Achievement is good overall due to effective teaching and learning. Pupils and students are interested in science topics, particularly when they can see the relevance of what they are being taught to their own experiences. They improve their knowledge of the human body through work in Years 7 to 9, on for example, a healthy diet or the effects of smoking. In these lessons pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of why the type of food we eat is important. They understand the importance of proteins, carbohydrates and fats and can describe the effects on the body and fitness of too much fat or sugar. In work on smoking, pupils were genuinely interested in the list of illnesses smoking can cause and discussed the issue in a mature manner. In both these lessons pupils' interest and achievement was the result of effective teaching.

73. Students in the YPG studying GCSE, conducted experiments to test for acids and alkalis. They used the equipment sensibly and made the correct assumptions at the end of their tests. They showed interest in the subject and are committed to gaining good grades at GCSE. Students in Years 10 and 11 benefit from working with a subject specialist whilst teachers in Years 4 to 9 present the work in an interesting and informed way which positively captures the audience.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

74. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils and students like the subject and are well motivated to learn
- The subject is not well enough used to support learning in other subjects
- The curriculum does not build up pupils' and students' skills systematically enough as they move through the school

- Resources are limited which prevents pupils learning as much as they could
- Teaching and learning in a significant percentage of lessons observed was good or very good
- The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

75. Students in Years 10 and 11 achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. They are capable of reaching higher standards, but important aspects of the curriculum cannot be properly taught because some resources are limited, including control technology equipment and access to the Internet. Consequently, the overall standard of their ICT skills is still below that expected for their age. Where teaching was most effective, teachers built upon students' previous learning very effectively. Secure subject knowledge underpinned the teaching, and material from nationally accredited courses provided the basis for well-planned lessons. Teachers gave clear instructions and intervened quickly, where necessary. This meant that errors were quickly identified and rectified and students knew exactly what they had to do to improve their work. The students are well motivated and interested in ICT; consequently, their behaviour and attitudes are good, and they generally learned well.

76. As with the older students, inadequate resources limit the achievement of students in Years 7 to 9. In addition, the curriculum is not sufficiently formalised to build up the students' skills systematically, or to carry on effectively from earlier years in school. Overall, these students' skills are below expectations for their age, and they do not achieve well enough. Good use, however, is made of resources such as games and music software for more informal purposes, and students show good levels of control and motivation during these times. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the standards attained or achievement of pupils in Years 4 to 6.

77. The role of the subject leader is under-developed as yet, although he has a clear understanding of the immediate priorities for improvement, for example, to establish effective systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, and to track pupils' and students' progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. There is insufficient use made of ICT to help learning in other subjects. Work on display shows that it is used to enhance work, but activities are not systematically planned to support and reinforce learning in either ICT, or in other subjects. Individuals have limited opportunity to access the information and communication technology rooms independently in order to undertake aspects of their studies such as research or word processing.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

79. Provision in personal, social, and health education and citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The programme of study planned for the whole service by the co-ordinator is **very good**
- For pupils in Years 7 to 9, teaching is very good with excellent features
- The provision made for the Young Parents' Group is **very good** and highly appropriate to the students' needs and teaching here is **good**
- The informal opportunities throughout the service to promote pupils' and students' personal and social development are often well used by teachers and mentors
- Specialist agencies provide support for individual students on personal and social issues, including substance misuse
- There are no dedicated lessons in either PSHE or Citizenship on the timetable for pupils In Year 10 and 11
- Teachers in Years 10 and 11 lack confidence and expertise, particularly in drugs, sex and relationships education

- There is no effective monitoring and oversight of what is being taught in Years 10 and 11, its quality or of the gaps that need to be filled.

Commentary

80. It is a major shortcoming not to have a systematic approach to PSHE and Citizenship for students in Years 10 and 11. This is an especially important area for vulnerable students about to leave school. Its absence overshadows the very good provision made for Years 3 to 9 and for the Young Parents' Group. Pupils and students consistently achieve well in these lessons, gaining both in knowledge and in understanding. They encounter information that is relevant to their daily lives and are genuinely interested by the material provided. Examples include a session on reproduction, health and hygiene for the YPG and a very good lesson on ageing for Year 9 students. Rapport is good between staff and students in the YPG, with students being completely engaged, contributing actively and with no sense of embarrassment.

81. In the Year 9 lesson, students were challenged about elderly and young people stereotypes very effectively. Students were rapt as the teacher spoke of her mum, drawing out important points about how much young people can learn from the older people they know. These very good lessons showed high expectations of the students, asking them to contribute and think seriously, show maturity in their responses and to work throughout at a good pace.

82. The best teaching promotes very good student behaviour, attitudes and interpersonal skills. Their responses show they are developing insight and awareness of others' circumstances as well as how to deal with their own personal challenges. These strengths are also evident in the teaching in Citizenship for Years 7 to 9.

83. There is no specialist teaching in Years 10 and 11 as the co-ordinator has a full timetable with younger pupils. Youth workers contribute to the curriculum and cover some aspects of PSE, but there is no monitoring to map what is and is not, taught at present. The quality of experience offered to the other groups of students in the service makes the contrast with Years 10 and 11 more pronounced.

84. The deputy headteacher for Years 10 and 11 students is trying to find solutions by using external agencies to provide some training for staff. In the meanwhile, staff are encouraged to avoid the areas of work where they lack confidence, for example drugs and sex and relationships education. It is a priority for the service to review a range of options for securing specialist teaching for these students, and is particularly pressing for the Year 11 students.

OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

Several other subjects were sampled during the inspection and samples of pupils' past work, photographs and records were looked at as inspectors asked pupils about what they had learned. .

85. In **design and technology** provision is **unsatisfactory**. Pupils and students have no opportunity to work with wood, plastic, metal or other resistant materials. However, the work they do within food technology is good. The lessons are focused on the practical aspect of the subject, usually food preparation. Only two lessons were observed but in both these lessons pupils and students prepared and baked or cooked food to a high standard, for example Victoria sponge cakes and cheese and onion pies. The teaching is of good quality and pupils and students respond in a positive manner. They follow instructions carefully and have good knowledge and understanding of important techniques for example weighing and measuring and the 'rubbing in' process in preparing pastry. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory; the food technology area at Darnhill is very small and opportunities for pupils and students to work with resistant materials on both sites are unsatisfactory.

86. In **art** provision is **satisfactory** in Years 4 to 9, but **unsatisfactory** in Years 10 and 11. It was only possible to observe a few sessions. Pupils and students in Years 4 to 9 work through a

sustained programme on a half termly basis, alternating with Music. The programme imaginatively interprets the National Curriculum for the needs of these students with the limited range of media and learning resources available.

87. In the morning sessions, provided for each group in Years 10 and 11, a mentor and a teacher share the leadership, but the mentors have greater interest in, and knowledge of, art. Little technical guidance is provided for students and not enough discussion and sharing of work takes place. Activity sessions are available in the afternoons, on a similar basis.

88. Contact has recently been made with an experienced Head of Art at a nearby school, whose initial review of work indicates that some students could achieve a grade in a GCSE short course with support and a period of intensive focus. The ongoing discussion reflects the service's commitment to improve provision. The priority now is to establish whether specialist teaching can be incorporated in the coming year so that the most able students can achieve accreditation for their work.

89. In **history and geography**, not enough evidence was secured to make a judgement about provision, standards and achievement. Only one lesson was observed in **geography**, where Year 9 students learned about Richard Arkwright and his inventions. They demonstrated good listening and speaking skills and a general positive inquisitiveness.

90. In **modern foreign languages** not enough evidence was secured to make a judgement about standards and achievement in French. The subject is taught to students in Years 7 to 9, but only one lesson was observed during the inspection. The standard of work students attain is low, but they made good progress and achieved well because the quality of teaching was good. The achievement of better standards is adversely affected by a lack of suitable learning resources.

91. In **physical education** provision is **satisfactory** overall, but varies. Pupils participate in a variety of activities including circus skills, swimming and soccer. In circus skills they learn how to improve their hand/eye co-ordination through engaging in a variety of juggling activities. They improve their overall balancing skills through activities such as tightrope walking and the most popular activity of them all, uni-cycling. Importantly, they show determination and good independent learning skills by sticking at something they initially find difficult and frustrating and eventually they see the rewards for their efforts. In soccer, older boys benefit from well-organized games, although their 'off-pitch' social interactions often let them down. There are not enough physical opportunities for girls who do not wish to be involved in soccer.

92. Currently there are no opportunities for outside field or playground activities at break or lunch times. This means that an opportunity to contribute to pupils' social skills as they learn to control their behaviour under competitive and challenging circumstances is missed. Good use is made of facilities away from the centres, including a sports centre. There are no additional opportunities outside of regular hours for sporting participation due to distance and transport difficulties.

93. In **Religious education** there is only provision for the youngest Key Stage 2 pupils. This consists of one lesson per week. The LEA has given approval for this. Elements of social and moral education are integrated into personal, social, health and citizenship education programme (PSHCE).

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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