



Inspection report

Primary Partnership Centre

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 133678
LEA Salford

Inspection number 273585
Inspection dates 15 and 16 February 2005
Reporting inspector Mr E Craven HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Type of School	Pupil Referral Unit	School address	Canterbury Gardens
School category	Community		Eccles New Road
Age range of pupils	5 to 11 years		Salford
			M5 2AG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 778 0950
Number on roll	26	Fax number	0161 707 6129
Appropriate authority	The management committee	Chair of the management committee	Cllr N Clarke
Date of previous inspection	October 2003	Headteacher	Mrs M Cowperthwaite

Age group	Published	Reference no.
5 to 11 years	22 March 2005	273585

Introduction

When the Primary Partnership Centre was inspected in October 2003, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the centre on three occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the unit in February 2005.

Description of the school

The Primary Partnership Centre is a pupil referral unit for boys and girls aged 5 to 11 years who live throughout the Metropolitan Borough of Salford. There are currently 26 pupils on roll, three of whom are girls. The centre provides mainly for pupils who have been excluded from their previous schools although there are a few who have been placed at the centre because they are at risk of exclusion. In accordance with the local education authority's (LEA) remit for the centre, pupils are reintegrated into mainstream and special schools wherever possible; nine pupils have moved from the centre to other schools since September 2004 and seven are currently undertaking programmes of re-integration. Three pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need and eight others are in the process of statutory assessments of their special educational needs. All of the current pupils are of a British heritage and none is in public care. All but three pupils are entitled to free school meals. The centre is located on a busy main road in accommodation originally used by a nursery school.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

The centre has improved markedly since it was deemed to require special measures. The headteacher provides good leadership and management, and the ethos of the centre is positive. The staff have responded well to the improvement measures introduced by the leadership team. However, the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators are underdeveloped. The management of the pupils' behaviour is consistently effective and the pupils' attitudes to learning are positive overall. Standards are below national averages but they are rising in response to the improved quality of teaching and because the behaviour of the pupils no longer inhibits their learning. The curriculum is suitably matched to the pupils' needs. The accommodation is inadequate, particularly the outside areas, although the centre does all that it can to compensate for the resulting restrictions.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of October 2003 required the centre to address key issues concerned with leadership and management, the quality of teaching, management of behaviour, and for the LEA to produce a curriculum policy and observe the terms of reference for the centre. There has been good progress in relation to leadership and management, the quality of teaching and the management of behaviour, and reasonable progress in the LEA observing the terms of reference for the unit.

Capacity to improve

The improvements since the last inspection have been built on robust management systems and clear and determined leadership; as a consequence the centre is in a good position to continue to improve. Advances in the quality of teaching and the management of behaviour have accelerated the progress the pupils make and have resulted in an upturn in standards. Monitoring of the centre's performance is becoming increasingly effective. The leadership team uses the information gathered to prioritise appropriately further developments and to make sensible adjustments to existing practices. The staff have become more self-evaluative. However, most subject co-coordinators do not exert sufficient influence across the centre. The headteacher has an accurate view of the centre's strengths and weaknesses, and she and the acting deputy headteacher have the confidence of the LEA and the management committee. The centre's further progress is jeopardised by its inadequate accommodation. The LEA has suitable plans to reduce the amount of support it provides for the centre to a level where it can monitor developments and still continue to provide help where needed.

What the centre should do to improve further

The centre's emerging development plan recognises the areas where improvement is needed. However the key priorities are to:

- continue to raise standards;
- develop the roles of subject co-ordinators;
- work with the LEA to address the inadequacies of the accommodation.

Achievement and standards

The standards achieved by most of the pupils are below those expected of pupils of a similar age. Their uneven educational histories and in some cases their special educational needs have had detrimental effects on their achievements overall. Nevertheless, there are a few pupils who do attain the standards expected nationally; for example two pupils took the national end-of-Key Stage 2 tests in summer 2004 and both of the pupils achieved Level 4 in English, the standard expected for their ages. One pupil also achieved Level 4 in mathematics and science and the other pupil achieved Level 3 in both of these subjects. The school predicts a similar profile of results in the 2005 national end-of-Key Stage 2 tests. No pupils took the end-of Key Stage 1 national tests in 2004 and none is eligible in 2005. The progress of the two pupils in Key Stage 1 has been hampered by weak planning in the past. However, this is now being suitably addressed and has improved. Overall, the pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in their academic, personal and social development, especially those for whom re-integration into mainstream schools is planned. There are a small number of pupils who the LEA recognises are inappropriately placed at the centre; generally, they make less progress than their peers.

Personal development

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were unsatisfactory when the school was made subject to special measures in 2003. They have improved significantly. They were never less than satisfactory in the lessons observed, and in six out of ten lessons they were good or very good. The frequent and meaningful use of praise and rewards has become firmly established practice and most of the pupils work hard to achieve acclaim. The centre has developed its nurturing role effectively: the staff know the pupils well and respond to their individual needs; care and respect are demonstrated; and there is due emphasis on raising the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Many pupils take the opportunities offered to them to make a contribution to the work of the centre; roles as monitors and other jobs are undertaken readily by the pupils, and some of the older ones are given specific tasks in supporting their younger peers. The pupils generally respect their classmates; most of them listen when others are talking and they have improved their abilities in taking turns and sharing. The relationships between the staff and pupils are good. The staff

demonstrate positive role models for the pupils, most of whom show reciprocal respect to the staff and are generally polite and courteous.

At 96.3 per cent the rate of attendance has improved markedly since the 2003 inspection. It is above the average for mainstream primary schools and is very high in comparison to the majority of other pupil referral units. There have been no exclusions for nearly a year, and this reflects the positive ethos of the centre and the staff's improved skills in preventing and managing difficult behaviour.

The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A daily collective act of worship is held and daily assemblies are used profitably to encourage the pupils to reflect on their own achievements and those of others. The centre uses the resources of its local community fruitfully to widen the pupils' experiences; visits to educational and social facilities are regularly undertaken and visiting adults add to the curriculum offer for the pupils. Despite the challenges of transport difficulties, the centre provides a very popular, weekly after-school activity club for the pupils.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved since the inspection in 2003. It was never less than satisfactory and in nearly half of the lessons observed it was good. The management of the pupils' behaviour is much improved and lessons have been made more interesting. In lessons for the youngest pupils the frequent changes of activity and the practical nature of the activities helped to sustain their interest. The provision for these pupils has improved and good support has been provided by the LEA's school improvement officer for early years and primary education. The best lessons for the older pupils were characterised by suitably detailed planning, readily available resources and high expectations for good behaviour and productivity. Planning has improved and is now good overall. The work of teaching assistants is at least sound, and often good, and is consistently included in the teachers' lesson plans. Continuing professional development has been used effectively to enhance the quality of teaching. Displays in classrooms and on the corridors are attractive and informative; they are treated with respect by the pupils.

The curriculum is appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils and has been enhanced by the imaginative use of local community facilities, visits and visitors. Each pupil has an individual education plan and many know their own targets. Provision for those pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is satisfactory.

Senior staff are developing the use of assessment data. The pupils' levels of performance are assessed termly and a suitable commercial database is being used to collate this information. This work is in its infancy but shows much promise.

Links with parents are developing well. A small number of parents visit the school regularly to provide support in classes, and teachers are meeting with parents on an increasingly regular basis.

The centre is making the most of its restricted accommodation. The classrooms are small in size but other areas such as the aquarium room, where pupils receive therapeutic support, enhance the provision. However, the outdoor facilities are inadequate for recreational and physical activities. In spite of this, the centre makes good use of facilities in the local community to lessen the impact of its accommodation restrictions. There have been delays in the erection of a secure fence around the perimeter of the site.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides good leadership and management for the centre and she is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher; they provide good support and appropriate challenge to staff. They have led the staff well in developing a positive ethos at the centre. The staff work closely as a team and are receptive to the school improvement measures promoted by their senior colleagues and the LEA.

The centre's self-evaluation documentation demonstrates an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Planning is regularly scrutinised by the headteacher and, together with the acting deputy headteacher and the LEA's project officer, she undertakes lesson observations. Moreover, a programme of monitoring has been planned to evaluate the impact of recent training for teachers in the development of the pupils' writing.

The work of most of the subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped and their influence on their subjects across the centre is limited. The headteacher recognises this as one of the centre's priorities for development. She has identified a series of other important areas for improvement and is at an early stage in forming a school improvement plan.

The management committee has a suitable membership. Its role has developed and it provides the centre with appropriate challenge and support. Some members are regular visitors and they have a good view of the progress made by the centre. This is helped by the reports received by the committee and the questions asked of the headteacher.

The LEA's support has been well co-ordinated and has made a valuable contribution to improvements in teaching and learning and the management of the pupils' behaviour. They have brokered the support of a behaviour consultant, which has been greatly valued by the centre, and they have engaged a mentor for the headteacher. However, illness has restricted the opportunities for the mentor to make an impact. The LEA has steadily addressed the issue of some pupils being inappropriately referred to the centre.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Primary Partnership Centre was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in October 2003. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the centre and, in accordance with that Act, the centre was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The centre was visited by HMI in March, June and October 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of October 2003.

In February 2005, two HMI returned to inspect the centre for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Eleven lessons or parts of lessons, and a whole-school assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the centre and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, the vice chair of the management committee, representatives of the LEA and informally with other staff. A wide range of the centre's documentation was scrutinised. Account was taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the centre has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of October 2003 and the action plan prepared by the unit to address those key issues.

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