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Inspection report

Enfield Secondary Tuition Centre

Unique Reference Number 101972
LEA Enfield

Inspection number 275231
Inspection dates 20 and 21 April 2005
Reporting inspector Mr K Gilbert, Additional Inspector

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.

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Type of School | Pupil Referral Unit | School address | Eldon Road |
| School category | Community | | Edmonton |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 years | | London |
| | | | N9 8LG |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 020 8 8078633 |
| Number on roll | 36 | Fax number | 020 8 3456648 |
| Appropriate authority | The Management Committee | Chair of Management Committee | Mr D Goddard |
| Date of previous inspection | February 2003 | Headteacher | Mr M Dingwall |

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|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Age group | Published | Reference no. |
| 11 to 16 years | 27 May 2005 | 275231 |

Introduction

When the Enfield Secondary Tuition Centre was inspected in February 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 five occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the centre in April 2005.

Description of the centre

The Enfield Secondary Tuition Centre provides education for up to 40 pupils of secondary age who require to be educated other than at school because they have been permanently excluded. The majority of the pupils attend full-time although a part-time induction programme is used to introduce pupils to the centre; a small number attend a local college. The centre operates mainly on the Eldon Road site but has an additional building approximately a mile away, where some subjects, including physical education, are taught. The pupils arrive with a broad range of attainment, but this is often adversely affected by their previous experiences and poor attendance. The pupils have a range of special educational needs, which include complex social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. One of the pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need. All of the pupils receive a free school meal and nearly three quarters are other than of white European heritage.

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Overall effectiveness of the centre

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

The headteacher provides sound leadership and management and the ethos of the centre is positive. It has not been easy to recruit permanent staff but, generally, teachers have responded well to the improvement measures introduced by the leadership team, and teaching is satisfactory. However, the role of subject co-ordinator remains underdeveloped. Standards are below national averages, largely because of the pupils' intermittent attendance and the resulting gaps in their knowledge and skills. Even so, standards are rising as a consequence of improvements in the quality of teaching and the management of the pupils' behaviour. The curriculum is developing well and there is an improving range of opportunities for the pupils. This is related to the programme of refurbishment with specialist areas for science, information and communication technology and art. The centre has developing links with schools in the area and has developed good practice in supporting opportunities for reintegration.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of February 2003 required the centre to address key issues concerned with monitoring all aspects of the work, the breadth of the curriculum, the progress made by pupils and value for money. Good progress has been made on providing a suitable curriculum with resourcing and accommodation to match. Monitoring procedures are now sound with improvements evident across the range of provision. The centre now provides satisfactory value for money.

Capacity to improve

The centre is well placed to improve. There has been rightly an emphasis on improving the quality of teaching, broadening the curriculum and providing accommodation to meet the needs of the subject specialists. All pupils understand the expectations of the centre with regard to behaviour and attitudes to learning, and most comply with the requests made of them by teachers and senior staff. There are improved monitoring procedures; the management committee has a well-informed view of all of the work that has taken place. Standards are rising and examination and test entries have increased. The local education authority (LEA) meets its responsibilities and the guidance and support of advisers and consultants has been well received.

What the centre should do to improve further

The key priorities for the centre's development plan are to:

- continue to raise standards;
- implement procedures and practices to ensure a consistency of approach among all teachers and support staff;
- develop the role of subject leader to provide the headteacher with good operational support;
- continue to improve attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

There are significant gaps in the pupils' learning as a result of their disrupted educational experience. Hence, the standards achieved by most are below those expected of pupils of a similar age. However, standards are rising and some pupils are making good progress over time in a range of subjects. Few of the pupils were entered for the GCSE examinations in summer 2004, with those that were entered obtaining grades from D to ungraded in English and B to ungraded in mathematics. The pupils entered for double science and business studies obtained grades C and B respectively. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3, five of the six pupils gained Level 4, the standard expected at the end of Key Stage 2. Many more pupils were entered for the entry-level certificate in numeracy and the relevant tests in literacy; several achieved creditable results. There are an increased number of entries for examinations and tests in summer 2005 and the centre is optimistic that more pupils will achieve A* to C grades in the GCSE examinations. Overall, the pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in their academic, personal and social development, especially those for whom reintegration into mainstream schools is planned.

Personal development

The pupils' attitudes to their learning were good in a quarter of the lessons and satisfactory in a further half where they were appropriately challenged and employed on tasks they enjoyed. Most of the pupils have good attitudes towards the staff, their peers and to their work. A small number of the pupils find it difficult to maintain their composure throughout a series of lessons, allowing their emotions, on occasions, to get the better of them and then losing concentration. Several of the pupils enter the centre with chequered histories of attendance, and with emotional and social difficulties. A small minority continue to display challenging attitudes and are on occasions reluctant to settle.

The behaviour of the pupils in classrooms and around the centre was mostly satisfactory. Incidents that happen outside of the centre, particularly after a weekend or a holiday, can for some pupils result in bouts of poor behaviour and the use of unacceptable language.

The pupils understand the code of conduct and the expectations of the centre and most readily conform to the requests of the teachers. There have been no permanent exclusions and only three that were for a fixed-term. Periods of isolation and time out of social activities are used to good effect. The teachers secure good behaviour through friendly and respectful relationships and engaging activities.

Breaks and lunchtimes are valuable social occasions and the high numbers of staff on duty participate, alongside the pupils, in table-top games and computer generated activities. Key Stage 4 pupils may leave the premises, and unacceptable incidents out of the centre are few. Following a period when sandwiches were provided by a local school, a wider range of foods is purchased and act as an incentive for more mature and responsive attitudes and behaviour.

The commitment of the staff to supporting the personal development of the pupils is a strength at the centre. A number of the pupils face complex difficulties in their lives. The staff have developed good relationships with the pupils, their parents and the welfare services in the LEA and are swift to respond to immediate and longer-term needs.

The attendance of many of the pupils is improving. A quarter of the pupils have achieved an attendance rate of over 90 per cent since September, while another half have attended for over 75 per cent during a similar period. A few poor attenders depress the overall rate of attendance and the centre recognises that there is still much to do. Phone calls to check on reasons for absence and home visits by the education welfare service have all helped to improve the statistics. Punctuality at the start of the day for some pupils remains an issue and the centre has instigated a variety of sanctions and rewards to challenge this.

The centre's ethos is now good and pervades all aspects of its work. The provision for the pupils' personal, moral and social development is good. Throughout the day, the staff explain, demonstrate, and reinforce appropriate attitudes and behaviour. This is generally successful, although an even greater consistency is necessary from some staff. At the daily meeting of all staff and pupils, complaints and concerns are discussed openly, the pupils are reminded about the choices available to them, and the results of irresponsible behaviour are made clear. The pupils' development is also enhanced by the centre's programme for citizenship and personal, social and health education. To support this part of the curriculum, visits to places of interest take place.

The centre's provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development is unsatisfactory. The headteacher is aware of this and has started to broaden the pupils' experience in these areas. An assembly has been introduced where mainly moral themes are considered, although displays around the centre now bring festivals and other cultural experiences to the pupils' attention. There is still much that the centre could do to celebrate the wealth of cultural experiences evident locally and more widely across the Borough.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching was very good in two lessons, good in three and satisfactory in the remaining seven. However, in two of the lessons the strengths and weaknesses were finely balanced. The proportion of good and very good teaching remains too small but the present situation is a considerable improvement over that found in February 2003, when 15 per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory. In the good lessons, the work captured the pupils' interest and the teachers broke down the tasks into suitable steps to ensure that the objectives were met. The teachers explained the basic concepts clearly, recognising that some pupils had significant gaps in their previous learning. In all of these lessons the planning was thorough, with the needs of the range of abilities in the group being met. Good questioning techniques and an enthusiasm for the subject sustained the pupils' interests throughout the session. The time scheduled for the lesson was used effectively with a useful concluding plenary session, which helped to prepare the pupils for the next lesson.

In the satisfactory lessons, some pupils completed too little work in the time available. The more vociferous individuals in the group were allowed to dominate and the conclusion was shortened by the pupils' urgency to go to break or lunchtime. In these lessons the tasks were not always wholly appropriate to the pupils' needs; some pupils completed the task quickly because they were too easy. Too little thought had been given as to how the pupils' poor literary skills could be improved. Literacy is not given a high enough profile in the short-term planning and is not sufficiently emphasised in the development plan.

The support staff and the learning mentors play a significant and valuable role in the work of the centre. They work effectively alongside the teachers in supporting the pupils' social and personal development, especially in improving their behaviour. They are also particularly valuable in engaging the pupils in sporting and recreational activities, and they are available for support during their college placement.

The centre is working effectively towards a broad and balanced curriculum and provision now better meets the needs of the pupils than was the time of the inspection in February 2003. A large proportion of the pupils now benefit from provision on five days each week, with a teaching week in excess of 25 hours. There is sufficient emphasis on English, mathematics and science and the foundation subjects with the exception of religious education and design and technology. The centre is negotiating with a local secondary school for time in workshops for design and technology. Courses are also run in conjunction with the local college of further education and there is a drive to increase the number of pupils engaged on work experience. The centre has undergone considerable refurbishment with modifications to certain teaching areas. Several laptop computers have been purchased but their use was not evident during this inspection.

The centre has an agreed policy for assessment, recording and reporting, including an achievement day involving parents and pupils. Three quarters of the pupils were represented at the last of these occasions. The policy is generally applied satisfactorily but some teachers do not use the evidence available sufficiently well when planning lessons.

Because of the past poor attendance of several of the pupils, Key Stage 2 and 3 national test results are often unavailable. Baseline tests are conducted which give some guidance towards attainment levels. In some subjects there are good assessment procedures, but in others these are less well developed. Some teachers are, therefore, not able to use their assessments effectively to set realistic and challenging targets for the pupils. All of the pupils' work is marked, but some teachers give better guidance towards improvement than others. All pupils have suitable individual education plans. The targets are appropriate and procedures for review are in place. Reviews are held each term, but short-term targets are not revised frequently enough.

Leadership and management

The headteacher was absent during this inspection. He does, however, provide sound leadership and management. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who has grown in confidence over the period of special measures. There is now a clear sense of purpose and morale among all staff is good. The larger number of pupils on site was a considerable challenge at first but staff are now more confident in managing the increase in roll. The headteacher and the deputy have led the team of teachers and three support staff well through the evolving changes of practice; the initiatives have been well managed. Working parties meet and there is some dissemination of their findings, but this practice is at present not involving all staff in developing their experience over a range of issues. The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher and his deputy, but at present there is too little use of the experience of individuals in a broader forum. The headteacher has a vision for the future but this is not articulated clearly and procedures and practices require greater definition to ensure consistent implementation in classrooms and social areas.

The management committee has been well led and has committed and knowledgeable membership. Although supportive of the headteacher, appropriate questions are asked to ensure progress is being made. The LEA's attached adviser has done much to assist with the developments that have taken place and has called upon other consultants and advisers as required. Funding has been found to support a number of initiatives, including the refurbishment of parts of the buildings and the purchase of resources and a minibus.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

The Enfield Secondary Tuition Centre was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in February 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 October 2003, in February, May and October 2004 and in March 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of February 2003.

In April 2005, one Additional Inspector 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 centre to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Twelve lessons or parts of lessons and a centre gathering were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the centre during lessons and at breaks and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the LEA's attached adviser 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 February 2003 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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