



The Wycombe Grange Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110205
LEA Buckinghamshire LEA
Inspection number 278381
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Melvyn Blackband AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary	School address	56 Amersham Hill
School category	Pupil referral unit		High Wycombe
Age range of pupils	11 to 17		HP13 6PQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01494 445815
Number on roll	83	Fax number	01494 465860
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Elizabeth Hutton
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr George Lloyd

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 17	12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	278381

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two additional inspectors over two days.

Description of the school

The Wycombe Grange Pupil Referral Unit provides a wide range of services on two sites to support young people by working in partnership with them, their parents, other schools and related professionals. The Referral Unit provides education for pupils who have been excluded from school, are in hospital or are out of school because they have a chronic illness, are pregnant or are young mothers. The units also provide support in schools for those pupils who risk exclusion because they find it difficult to cope in a school setting. During 2004-5 the unit supported 283 pupils at some time during the year, both at the units and in the pupils' schools.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The pupil referral unit provides an outstanding service and has maintained the standards noted at the last inspection. Inspectors agree with the unit's self-evaluation. The management and staff continually strive to improve the provision for all the learners. Pupils who attend lessons at the unit are happy to be there. Parents feel that the staff support their children well. Pupils generally make outstanding progress although their learning targets should be more clearly written and regularly reviewed. All pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development. Well established checks give the management a clear view of the unit's performance. The unit is led by an outstanding headteacher who is very well supported by a talented management team. The unit has a strong capacity to maintain its improvement, driven by the skill and enthusiasm of the whole staff. The unit's finances are well managed and overall the provision gives outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

* Further develop clear procedures to establish pupils' learning targets and to review the targets regularly* Improve the teaching accommodation at the Chesham site

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' attainment on entry is often at a low level because they have been excluded from school or have a poor record of attendance. There are very good procedures for measuring pupils' abilities when they join the unit. Teachers know the pupils well as individuals and plan their teaching to ensure pupils take small positive steps in their learning. Pupils are thus able to succeed in and to enjoy their academic work which has a very positive impact on their self-esteem and motivation. Pupils are continually challenged to do well by their teachers and most make outstanding progress. Many pupils are part-time and also attend mainstream schools. There is effective and regular assessment of pupils' progress. Teachers' records are efficiently shared with the relevant mainstream schools. This further supports the excellent progress which pupils make. Staff negotiate learning targets with each pupil. These targets provide clear achievable goals that motivate pupils to give of their best. This process would be made even more effective if some of the pupils' targets were more clearly written and their review of progress towards these targets was more formally organised. Pupils aged 11 to 14, many of whom have missed substantial amounts of schooling, generally improve their attainment well enough to successfully rejoin their mainstream schools. Pupils aged 14 to 16, who often have a history of low attainment in mainstream schools, achieve highly in terms of nationally accredited courses ranging up to GCSE level. There is no evidence of under achievement by any groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Behaviour at the unit is excellent. Pupils feel safe and confirm that there is no bullying or intimidation. Pupils enjoy their education and this is demonstrated by the high levels of attendance by most pupils, although there are a very small number of pupils whose attendance is very poor. There is excellent provision for the pupils' personal, health and social education which underpins all activities. Staff make it plain to pupils that they value their presence and are keen to listen to and act on their opinions. Each pupil receives a very high level and standard of personal care. As a result pupils are happy to attend and make excellent progress in all aspects of their personal development. The pupils' spiritual and moral awareness is appropriately emphasised, for instance in the daily assemblies for pupils. Pupils are polite towards each other and staff. Cultural awareness is very well developed through effective teaching in citizenship lessons and through learning about people less fortunate than themselves, generally linked to appeals for aid. The unit is outstandingly successful in helping pupils to contribute positively to the community when they leave school. Parents are very pleased with their children's positive attitudes to the unit and to their education in general.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

There are some outstanding features of teaching and learning. Teachers make excellent use of their knowledge of pupils' ability and progress to plan relevant and interesting activities. The teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils. They set and maintain a good pace in their lessons through their enthusiasm and their use of appropriate questions to extend and challenge pupils' understanding. Most teachers are specialists in their subjects and have very good subject knowledge. They have extremely high expectations of their pupils. Teachers plan lessons very carefully to extend each pupil's understanding, based securely on their assessment of the pupil's ability. As a result pupils behave very well in lessons and concentrate for long periods. They enjoy their work. Teachers are very effective in working with individual pupils. This gives the pupils confidence to attempt new learning and ensures that pupils' achievements are very good and often outstanding. Pupils co-operate well with the teachers and with each other. In an excellent Year 11 English lesson pupils worked together very effectively to analyse the quality of advertisements. Parents are well informed about progress and so are able to play an important role in supporting and encouraging their children further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding in the degree of flexibility and variety which the staff have built into the provision. Teachers design specific timetables for individual pupils and continually review these to ensure they are relevant and interesting. Courses are suitably tailored to pupils' interests and aspirations. For example, individual pupils have been able to study astronomy and Latin. The curriculum for pupils aged 11 to 14 at the Chesham site covers all national curriculum requirements. Specialist staff deliver subjects very well despite the cramped accommodation and restricted specialist resources. There is a very wide range of accredited courses at the Wycombe Grange site which allows each pupil to work to his or her potential. The provision for extending the pupils' economic understanding and learning about work is very good and has some outstanding features, such as the care which is taken to match pupils' interests to work experience opportunities. The unit has created very strong partnerships with outside agencies such as the Connexions service and these partnerships give the pupils an exemplary level of support when they leave school. There are very good opportunities also for pupils to enhance their education in other ways. All pupils have the chance to learn canoeing and to take part in Yoga sessions. These are popular activities which many pupils enjoy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The procedure for welcoming pupils into the unit is exemplary. There is careful assessment of pupils' ability and personal development. The wishes and opinions of pupils and their parents are effectively built into educational programmes. Pupils in their last year of school are very well informed about their future options and the unit maintains close links with further education colleges. The pupils are safe. Procedures for child protection and those for children in care are very good at both sites. Health and safety requirements are very well met. The home tuition and hospital service are well organised. The unit maintains a highly regarded support service to mainstream schools for pupils at risk of exclusion. Schools value this service highly. Teachers from the unit regularly train staff from the mainstream schools in aspects of behaviour management.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher shows outstanding leadership through his commitment to pupils and staff. He is supported by a very strong senior team. Communication is excellent. Daily staff meetings are focused on pupils' progress and well-being. The management team very effectively ensure that staff promote pupils' all round achievement, raise attainment and increase pupils' personal skills. The management committee has a very secure knowledge of the unit's work and performance. Staff work well together as a strong team. Morale is high and staff take every opportunity to extend their

professional knowledge. New staff members receive extensive training and support. They are also encouraged to regularly review their own effectiveness. The unit is held in extremely high regard by mainstream schools and the local authority. There are very effective systems to self-evaluate and improve on aspects of the unit's provision. Therefore, senior staff are extremely well informed about the unit's performance. The unit has a very good capacity to maintain improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Not long ago we came to the unit to see how well you were getting on and whether there was anything we could suggest to make the unit better. You made us very welcome and we enjoyed your company. Well done and thank you!

We were with you for two days. That was long enough for us to realise that Wycombe Grange PRU is an excellent place. One of the reasons is that you show very mature behaviour and a desire to learn. I especially enjoyed sitting in an English lesson about different forms of adverts. There were other things that we liked. Here are a few: * I can see that you have started to enjoy your work and make good progress. * The many different adults in the centres are all trying hard to work with you to make sure you succeed. * You are given a lot of responsibility to evaluate your own work. This will help you to become mature adult members of the community.

One of the things that I felt would make the provision better is if staff would work with you to identify clearer learning targets for you to aim for. Then you could do even better!