



Denewood Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122401
LEA CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LEA
Inspection number 281252
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 15 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Alan Lemon LI

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	Dene Wood Crescent
School category	Community		NG8 3DH
Age range of pupils	5 to 14		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9153128
Number on roll	51	Fax number	0115 9153126
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr.E Dewinton (Chair of management committee)
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Michael Buist (Acting)

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
5 to 14	15 May 2006 - 15 May 2006	281252

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The pupil referral unit (PRU) admits boys and girls who have been permanently excluded from school. They have significant social and emotional difficulties and most are growing up in deprived circumstances. Some are in public care and high proportions are supported by social services and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Their behaviour is very often challenging and they have shown they are reluctant to learn in school. Attendance at school has often been poor. By the time pupils join the PRU most have underachieved considerably and many also have learning difficulties and disabilities. In general, the level of what they know, understand and can do is very low for their age especially with regard to literacy and numeracy skills. The PRU is included in the City of Nottingham's re-organisation of children's services. Since the last inspection significant changes to how it provides for pupils have been implemented. Pupils are now offered full-time education, whereas in the past they attended either mornings or afternoons. The PRU also aims in the longer term to establish the means for returning pupils to schools within a 20 week timeframe. The headteacher has been unavoidably absent since September 2005 and a senior teacher has been the acting headteacher since then.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspection confirms the PRU's effectiveness is satisfactory and this agrees with its own evaluation. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strong leadership from the acting headteacher who has been well supported by all staff have brought about satisfactory improvements. The PRU has had reasonable success in remedying the weaknesses identified in 2004 by a local authority review. In particular, the curriculum now provides pupils with an appropriate range of activities and the large majority are achieving satisfactorily. The majority of pupils are now in full time education at the PRU. A minority are not and can attend only part-time because the PRU lacks the accommodation and staffing to provide fully for them. In all of this, the PRU demonstrates a sound capacity for further improvement and is providing satisfactory value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some teachers use effective teaching methods which make learning more interesting. Teaching has some areas for improvement, some of which are not being readily identified because the amount of monitoring undertaken is rather limited. Better means than existed previously are being established to assess pupils' progress, although the assessments in place are not always being used effectively to plan teaching or to set targets for pupils. However, pupils enjoy lessons with the result that they are now prepared to make reasonable efforts to learn. Pupils behave appropriately and get on well with staff and each other. As a result, pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and are given adequate guidance and support. Pupils with learning difficulties are being identified and their needs are being met as a result of effective management of provision for these pupils. A good number of pupils leave the PRU and return to school as a result of the well led and managed programme of re-integration.

What the school should do to improve further

- Complete the extension and implementation of assessment procedures and make sure assessment information is being used by all staff to plan teaching and for setting pupils appropriate targets.
- Monitor and evaluate all teaching regularly so that its quality is consistently that of the best.
- Take action in conjunction with the local authority and the management committee to provide all pupils on the roll of the PRU with full time education.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils are making reasonable progress and they achieve satisfactorily. This is partly because pupils are motivated by the variety of work and activities on offer. Enjoyment in attending the PRU, improved attendance and the many successful returns to mainstream schools clearly illustrate some important achievements. Challenging targets were met last year. The care and support coming from the close attention of staff means they moderate the worst aspects of pupils' behaviour and they settle quickly.

Pupils show willingness to cooperate and accept support meaning they engage in purposeful learning and begin making progress. Much individual attention helps build pupils' confidence. It also ensures pupils learn at the pace that suits them and they make gains, sometimes quite rapidly, in knowledge, skills and understanding. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were quick to grasp the principles of probability and energetically investigated problems. Pupils with learning difficulties also make satisfactory progress as their needs are quickly identified and extra support is being found, especially in helping them improve their literacy skills. Standards are particularly low and this is partly because pupils enter the school with rather basic levels of literacy and numeracy. While teaching contributes adequately to pupils' progress, better progress and higher achievement is restrained at present by inconsistencies in the use of assessment in planning lessons. As a result, pupils' targets are not always sharply focused enough to support increasing the rate of their progress. Pupils prevented from attending full time are not benefiting as much from the range of learning opportunities, which affects the amount of progress they can make.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory and this is achieved through the hard work of staff in dealing with the challenges pupils present. The consistency with which all staff respond to pupils has a beneficial effect on their behaviour. Together with the contributions in personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn adequately to stay safe. Pupils also develop a sound awareness of healthy lifestyles through the PRU's active promotion of a good diet. Teaching on sexual health and the ill-effects of smoking, alcohol and drugs all keep pupils informed about their health and safety. Pupils find some of their work interesting, especially the practical activities planned for each afternoon, which do much to motivate them. Overall, these have a positive effect on their attitudes and this is reflected in improved attendance, which is adequate. Pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory. They demonstrate acceptable behaviour in the community and they learn the advantages of using local facilities. This helps pupils' moral, social and cultural development and they make good progress in these respects. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are gaining the confidence, reassurance and skills that are helping them to return successfully to school. This means that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Most effective teaching results from the good use of the new planning. In these instances, teaching is based on a sound knowledge of the topic, particularly in relation to literacy, numeracy and PSHE. This has a positive affect on the organisation of the lesson and builds pupils' confidence. Pupils are given a clear illustration of what they are expected to learn and have time

at the end to discuss what they have learnt. Teachers and classroom assistants are patient and encouraging, and pupils get their close attention. They stay engaged and keep active for the entire lesson. Pupils have a clear sense of purpose and learn effectively. They take an interest in their work, ask questions and listen carefully to explanations. Teaching expertise in a few instances is not always as secure with the result that planning and lesson organisation suffers. Here, work starts without much explanation of lesson intentions. Pupils are not able to concentrate effectively or work independently. The role of assistants is sometimes not clear and they sometimes help pupils too much. The lack of clear knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do accounts for the fact that tasks are frequently not matched closely enough to pupils' capabilities, either being too hard or too easy. Assessment procedures are partly in place. Their extension, in order to measure accurately the small amounts of progress pupils are likely to make, is a priority on which the PRU is taking action. Methods are well underway that are strengthening how assessment is used in meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A considerable improvement in the planning of work and activities since January 2005 has increased the expectations of pupils and is ensuring they have a broad and sound range of learning experiences. The new planning for English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and PSHE has been supported with training for all staff. This has helped establish these subjects, although at this stage there is a mixed picture of how well staff use the programmes of work. Many new resources, such as reading schemes, have been added and the PRU's good accommodation supports the work and activities available well. The curriculum is a good balance of the academic, emphasising literacy and numeracy, and activities that pupils find challenging and fun, such as horse-riding, climbing and expressive arts. Good use is made of community resources to extend learning opportunities. Art and design is enjoyed and contributes soundly to pupils' cultural development. It is also used skilfully as a vehicle for involving pupils in conversations about the problems they face. The opportunities for pupils to make progress have been improved with the introduction of a full teaching week for most. However, the PRU is limited in its capacity to extend this to all the pupils on its roll and some are still having to be taught part-time, with fewer opportunities to make progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, the care guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for in the PRU's friendly, supportive environment. The staff are successful in building good relationships with pupils. Much work is done on raising pupils' self-confidence and in convincing them they can succeed in school. Good support and guidance for those pupils who return to school, often results in them in sustaining their place there. How the PRU manages pupils' behaviour is effective with the result that the PRU is

calm and orderly. This does much to improve pupils' outlook. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and there is good multi-agency support for pupils. Due care and attention is paid to health and safety, with risk assessments used where appropriate. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory, overall. However, pupils identified with specific literacy difficulties are beginning to get good individual support. While an effective development of individual educational plans (IEPs) is underway, the plans in current use in lessons are not often sharply focused on what pupils need to improve and how this will be achieved. The improvement of IEPs is going hand in hand with the development of the PRU's assessment systems, which is still underway.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory, overall. However, this belies the substantial amount of hard work and determination to raise the PRU's educational provision to an acceptable standard. The acting headteacher has provided the strong drive and clear direction so that this could be achieved. He has been supported by all of the staff, who are committed to ensuring new initiatives are embedded successfully. However, subject leadership is at an early stage of development and not at a point where all staff can be supported in implementing the curriculum effectively. The management committee and the chairman of governors fulfil most of their responsibilities satisfactorily but could play a stronger role in holding the PRU to account for its effectiveness, for example, in tackling the fact some pupils are barred from full time education. However, the local authority's (LA) yearly reviews of the PRU have set a clear agenda for its improvement. The monitoring of the PRU's work is sufficient in guiding developments, although the overview of teaching is not extensive enough to ensure the consistency of its quality. The recognition of what needs improvement largely comes from the assessment of the PRU's strengths and weaknesses by the LA. The acting headteacher adds urgency and a clear lead in this respect. In what has been achieved so far and what is currently prioritised, the PRU demonstrates a sound capacity to improve. The programme for returning pupils to mainstream school is well led and managed. There are good professional links with schools, and pupils' re-integration is well supported with plans and reviews of their progress. Likewise the coordination of provision for pupils with learning difficulties is being expertly led. As a result, these pupils' needs are better understood and they are getting increasingly effective support.

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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

thoroughly enjoyed the day we spent with you recently. All of you have been very friendly and helpful and we thank you for assisting us in doing our job. We left most impressed by how sensible and mature you all are and how well you are preparing for returning to school. This is what we found out about your PRU: - all of the staff are friendly and helpful towards you, which is helping you behave appropriately and get the best from what the PRU offers - one of the good things the PRU does is to get many of you back successfully to school - the staff are making sure you are supported satisfactorily and are given close attention in lessons, which is helping you to learn and make progress - the PRU is providing you with an interesting and useful range of work and activities which most of you really enjoy. There are a few things we found out that the PRU can do with your help to make it even better: - develop better ways of assessing your progress in the PRU and use the information from these assessments to plan work for you that is appropriately challenging including giving you good targets to achieve - pay closer attention to how good teaching is throughout the PRU to make sure all of it is as good as the best - because some pupils can only come into the PRU part time, take the necessary steps to make it possible for all pupils to be there all day and get the benefit of everything that is on offer. Once again, many thanks for the pleasant time we spent with you.