



The Study Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131753
LEA Ealing LEA
Inspection number 282252
Inspection dates 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005
Reporting inspector James Bowden AI

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	Greenford Site
School category	Pupil referral unit		485 Greenford Road
Age range of pupils	12 to 16		Middlesex UB6 8SR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02085759561
Number on roll	129	Fax number	02085759562
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Tracie McNeil

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
12 to 16	3 October 2005 - 4 October 2005	282252

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Study Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) on three sites for learners aged 11 to 16 years. The Greenford site provides group provision and there is provision for individual learner support at the Boston and Longfield sites. The Study Centre also has a key role in providing interim education for learners aged 5 to 16 years with a range of medical needs. This is provided at either the Boston site or at home. Learners may also receive support from the teacher based at Ealing hospital. Approximately 60% of learners come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Boys outnumber girls by about 5 to 1. The majority of learners are at the School Action Plus stage of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when they are referred to the Study Centre and about a quarter have statements. The overall nature of provision has changed significantly since the previous inspection. no mention of multi ethnic groups

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The Study Centre provides effectively for a diverse range of learners. The leadership recognises the strengths of the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as areas for further development. Recent changes to the management structure of the PRU have yet to become fully embedded. For instance, the monitoring of teaching quality is not sufficiently rigorous, but there are already early indications that these changes are for the better. During their time in the PRU, learners make satisfactory progress overall and, because of the commitment of teachers and other staff, their personal development is good. Learners comment positively about their learning and personal development. Parents and carers value highly the work of the PRU in helping their children make progress in all areas. However, parents, carers and learners are not yet routinely consulted in order that their views can influence decision-making. Staffing is now more settled and teaching is sound overall. The curriculum, though satisfactory overall, has particular strengths in Years 10 and 11. The PRU has a firm commitment to ensuring that all learners reach their full potential and recognises the difficulties many learners have had in their previous schools. It provides sound value for money. Leadership identifies accurately areas in which improvements could be made. Since its previous inspection the significant changes to the PRU have been managed well and progress is satisfactory. Effective leadership, new management structures, and proposed improvements in accommodation, mean that the PRU is well placed to improve further. However, the management committee does not provide sufficient challenge so that overall capacity to improve is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

* Ensure a consistent approach to checking the quality of teaching and the progress made by learners.* Use more formal means of seeking the views of learners, parents and carers to judge the impact of developments on provision.* Strengthen the role of the management committee in checking the work of the PRU..

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The PRU judges the progress of its learners as satisfactory. The inspector agrees. Learners enter the PRU at different stages of their education depending on their particular circumstances. For many learners, their standard of attainment on entry is well below what is expected for their age. Often this is as a result of long-term absence and disaffection with mainstream school, which means they have to work hard to catch up. Learners in Years 7 to 9 follow the National Curriculum and, as a result, some make enough progress to enable them to be reintegrated into mainstream schools. For those learners who take national tests at the end of Year 9, results have been improving over recent years. Others move on to continue their education in other special provision. Learners in Years 10 and 11 take advantage of the broad range of academic and vocational courses. Some make good progress in their GCSE courses and achieve higher

than expected grades. Most achieve accreditation in key skills courses as well as in a range of vocational courses. However, in 2005, the PRU's target for all learners to have the opportunity of achieving 5+ A* to G grades passes in GCSE or the equivalence was not met. The reasons for this have been identified and appropriate action taken to enable the target to be met this year. There are no significant differences in the progress of different groups of learners. Those with individual education plans make satisfactory progress in achieving the targets set to meet their learning difficulties.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of learners is good. Learners' personal development contributes to the overall progress they make throughout their time in the PRU. Older learners readily opt to take a range of accredited courses to help them prepare for the future. Many value and enjoy the chance to 're-start' their education, for example, one pupil commented, I have learned to work in groups and not be frustrated. Relationships between learners are generally good and, with adults often very good, which contributes to the quality of learning. Attitudes and behaviour in and around the PRU are usually good. Learners' spiritual and cultural developments are satisfactory and their social and moral developments are good. The PRU does a considerable amount to improve attendance, which is slowly improving but often dependent on individual learners' circumstances. A small minority of learners who do not attend contribute disproportionately to the rates of unauthorised absence. Well-established induction procedures set the tone for learners' education. The nature of the PRU's provision means it is difficult to have representative groups of learners to contribute their views. However, learners report that their individual concerns are listened to and acted upon and some are consulted about the quality of courses they follow in other locations. Learners have a secure understanding of safe practices and have the opportunity to develop a healthy life style by participating in planned physical activity. Some learners have the opportunity to be involved in charitable activities, which contribute to their working together and their economic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Leadership knows the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers well and provides support where it is needed. Class management is usually effective in ensuring learners remain on task and effective questioning helps them to be actively involved. At the same time, this enables the teacher to gauge the progress learners make. This was seen clearly in a Year 10 English lesson where learners were discussing examples of essay openings for their coursework. Learners comment that some teaching is good and, as a result, feel they are making good progress. Learners have ample opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning. Though satisfactory, some teaching lacks pace and variety

and means that, on occasion, some learners with a statement are not always challenged sufficiently. Teachers know their learners well and assessments, including targets in individual education plans are helpful in enabling them to plan their lessons. Marking is up-to-date and encouraging but does not indicate sufficiently well how learners might improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum and other activities are satisfactory. In Years 7 to 9, learners follow the National Curriculum in order to help them reintegrate into mainstream schools if possible. In Years 10 and 11 there are considerable strengths in the curriculum and other activities. A broad range of courses, both in the PRU and in other locations with other providers, ensures the diverse range of needs and aspirations of learners are met. As a result of these individually tailored courses, learners have the opportunity to develop their confidence and personal skills and to be well prepared for life beyond the PRU. Some have gone on to study A-level courses, others have joined further education colleges and many have quickly found employment. Across all years, learners are encouraged to develop their health and well-being through specific personal, social and health education lessons. These also usefully include work on citizenship, careers and work-related learning. The nature of the PRU's provision means that there are limited opportunities for learners to be involved in the life of the community but there is appropriate provision for extra-curricular trips and activities. Present accommodation, particularly at the Longfield site, limits scope for group work and there are no facilities for teaching practical science at any site. Recent improvements for students at the Greenford site, including improved ICT resources, enhance the quality of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of learners are good. There are some areas where care, guidance and support are outstanding in meeting the diverse needs of learners, such as the PRU's close working relationship with a wide range of external agencies. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good. Teaching ensures learners are aware of how to keep themselves safe and also how to deal with other aspects of personal relationships and health matters. Some pupils at the Greenford site question the healthiness of the cold packed lunches prepared for them. Support from personal tutors, learning mentors and other adults ensure the well being of learners is developed. A parent commented that since attending the PRU her child was gaining in confidence and learning, adding, This has been a big help. Learners who are unable to attend school because of medical needs are well supported by the PRU and are fully prepared for their return, even after long illnesses. Support, care and guidance for those learners with a statement are now becoming more focussed as a result of the input from an external support agency. This is ensuring that the necessary annual reviews take place. The ability of the PRU to be involved in intervention work for learners at risk of

exclusion from mainstream schools has been limited recently as a result of factors beyond its control.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. Good leadership has provided a clear focus and vision for improving provision at all levels, including for the impending accommodation move for two sites. Development planning shows school leaders are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and, when appropriate, have sought external evaluation and taken appropriate action. This contributes well to ensuring learners make progress and that they all enjoy an equal opportunity to reach their full potential. Consultations with learners, parents or carers, however, are limited. School leaders report regularly to the management committee. However, the latter meets only once each term and does offer sufficient challenge to the PRU. The leadership and management structure has recently been broadened and there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This has also resulted in more stable staffing. The structure is still in its infancy and has yet to become fully embedded. Middle managers have already started to improve subject provision and a new structure for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching has been developed. Though this has taken place on a regular basis in the past, there has been no consistent approach to it. The analysis and use of data to inform planning in the PRU is developing well but this is not yet coordinated sufficiently across the various sites. Funds are used appropriately to secure improvements in provision.

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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?	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	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	2	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?	2	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	2	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	3	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	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to let you know about the judgements I have made about your PRU. Many thanks for taking part in the inspection by talking to me about your work, your life in the PRU and all you do.

* I believe your PRU is effective.* The headteacher and other people with responsibility make decisions with your best interests in mind. Your individual concerns are listened to and acted upon.* Most of you are positive about the education you receive despite many of you having bad experiences of education at other schools. Many of you are also positive about the quality of teaching you receive.* Most of you get on well together and have good working relationships with teachers and other adults in the PRU

* The PRU supports your personal development and cares for your health, safety and well being very well. Adults have your interests at heart and work hard to ensure all of you have an equal chance to improve.* Though overall attendance figures are improving some of you still need to make an effort to attend more in order to improve your chances of making more progress.* The courses provided by the PRU enable you to prepare well for your life after you leave the PRU.* Staffing has improved and more teachers now stay on longer as a result of them being given more responsibility. Many of you will benefit from new accommodation in the near future.Your PRU needs to:* make sure it checks the quality of teaching and your learning in a more consistent way;* use more formal ways to seek your views and those of your parents and carers about provision, for example, on a healthy eating programme and the quality of courses you take in other locations;* make stronger links with the management committee to enable it to oversee the work of the PRU effectively.

Best Wishes

James Bowden, Lead Inspector