



# St Matthias Park Pupil Referral Service

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 133160  
**LEA** Bristol, City of  
**Inspection number** 282298  
**Inspection dates** 2 March 2006 to 2 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Kathleen Smith HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit	<b>School address</b>	Old School
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		St Matthias Park St Judes
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16		Bristol BS2 0BA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9031320
<b>Number on roll</b>	33	<b>Fax number</b>	0117 9031321
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Miss Vicky Heath
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Valerie Neel

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
5 to 16	2 March 2006 - 2 March 2006	282298

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an HMI.

## Description of the school

St. Matthias Park is one of two pupil referral units (PRU) in the City of Bristol. The unit is housed within a converted Victorian school building near to the city centre and works with pupils who have been permanently excluded from school or who are at risk of exclusion. It is a 47-place unit for children aged 5 to 16. Numbers vary considerably during the academic year and at the time of inspection, there were 47 pupils on roll. Many of the pupils come from areas of Bristol with high levels of social and economic deprivation. Since its establishment in 2002, the unit has undergone considerable change, which has included a new head in October 2004 and a more recently appointed senior management team.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

St. Matthias Park PRU makes satisfactory provision for its pupils. This judgement agrees with the unit's own self-evaluation. The unit is successful in working with community groups and agencies to achieve positive outcomes for the pupils. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in social and personal skills. Systems to identify pupils' progress in behaviour and literacy and numeracy are underdeveloped and need further improvement. There is satisfactory provision made for the pupils' personal development and well-being although pupils are reluctant to adopt healthy lifestyles. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good aspects. Staff have good working relationships with pupils. Behaviour management is inconsistently applied and target-setting is in need of further development. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of subjects and activities. Inadequate accommodation limits pupils' learning. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory and individual support given to pupils is good. Although attendance is carefully monitored, attendance rates are low. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Many improvements have been made to provision with good capacity to embed the systems recently introduced and to make further improvements. The PRU provides satisfactory value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- improve systems to clearly identify improvements in behaviour made by individual pupils
- manage pupils' behaviour more consistently
- improve accommodation to widen the range of curriculum activities offered to enhance pupils' learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils are accurately assessed when they arrive at the unit and are found in most cases to have standards generally below, and sometimes well below, average. They are given challenging targets to achieve and make satisfactory academic progress in meeting them. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in their assessed reading ages and Key Stage 3 pupils perform satisfactorily according to SAT'S results. The introduction of entry-level courses has meant that most pupils, where entered, gain a good range of certificates accredited by external award bodies. A small number of pupils achieved grades E to G in GCSE mathematics, English and Science in 2004-2005. The unit was successful in obtaining positive outcomes for the majority of its leavers in 2005. They were successful in gaining placements with local colleges, apprentice schemes and local training providers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Many pupils when they arrive at the centre have histories of long periods of non-attendance at schools.

In some cases, the unit is able to improve attendance of individual pupils through the implementation of initiatives which include rewards and incentives. However, rates of attendance are low and improvements in punctuality are hampered by the distances pupils have to travel to the unit. Although there is good provision for the pupils' personal, health and social education which effectively promotes healthy lifestyles, pupils are resistant to adopting healthier ways of living. They enjoy the activities and subjects on offer. Most pupils' behaviour improves and all make satisfactory progress. However, progress is not clearly identified, as the quality and rigour of behavioural targets are in need of further improvement. Pupils are able to express their views clearly due to the good relationships which exist between themselves and staff. They feel safe and confirm that incidents of bullying and intimidation are dealt with appropriately. Pupils' views about the provision are actively sought but there is no council or forum where they can put into practice and reinforce aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although pupils learn to cook and much emphasis is placed on healthy eating within the curriculum, school meals are inadequate and of a poor quality. Pupils are effectively prepared for the next stage in their lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good aspects. The lessons are well planned, with activities matched clearly to the needs of individual pupils. Staff know the pupils well and are aware of issues which may impact on pupils' performance during lessons. Good techniques are used to check pupils' understanding. Teachers are enthusiastic and pace activities to sustain the pupils' interest. Behaviour management was inconsistently applied by staff in one lesson observed. This resulted in pupils' behaviour not being dealt with appropriately. In some cases, the allocation of support given to pupils was not adequately deployed.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities for pupils. Younger pupils follow a primary school curriculum, staying with the same small group of staff. Older pupils have a broad curriculum covering subjects and activities which relate well to their lives outside the centre. Good links are made with local community groups and agencies which provide useful support for pupils dealing with issues such as substance misuse and crime. The curriculum has been improved recently to include art, music and additional entry level award schemes. Projects are appropriately organised to enable pupils to gain skills and experience within different learning environments. Work experience opportunities for pupils to gain work-related skills are satisfactory. Placements are arranged for individuals on request and taster days are provided for pupils at local colleges. A group of pupils successfully take part in a course with the local fire service. Pupils have limited opportunities across year groups to learn practical

or vocational skills within the PRU. Boys have a wide range of physical activities on offer to improve their health and fitness. More opportunities for the girls to take part in these activities have recently been arranged but, at the time of inspection, were insufficient. Although structured physical activities are arranged for pupils off-site, these are not provided within the unit due to the inadequate accommodation.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory. Individual support given to pupils is good. Staff are strongly committed to pupils' welfare and personal development. They meet regularly to discuss issues involving individual pupils. The quality of support given to pupils during lessons varies, and the deployment of staff does not always provide for effective behaviour management or learning. There are extensive links with outside support agencies and the PRU is able to draw on their expertise to counsel and support pupils with personal issues as required. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place for safeguarding pupils. Incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately. Individual risk assessments are in the early stages of development and need further attention. Individual behavioural plans have been recently developed and identify targets for pupils to improve their behaviour. These targets vary in quality, and ways for pupils to assess their own progress are not clearly thought out. Links with the Connexions service are good and pupils are being satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in their lives. The Learning Mentor liaises effectively with pupils and parents to improve attendance and punctuality.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with good capacity to maintain improvements. The PRU has undergone considerable change since its establishment in 2002. The current senior management team have worked hard to improve provision, which now has a clear vision shared by all staff members. The unit's self-evaluation of provision is good and broadly in line with inspection judgements and clearly identifies areas for improvement. Systems to evaluate and monitor the quality of key processes have recently been introduced and are well thought out. Through careful monitoring, actions have been implemented to improve overall attendance and punctuality rates. Lesson observations by senior staff are conducted at least twice a year for each teacher. Comments made on the records of observations identify useful pointers for staff to improve teaching and learning. They are used effectively in discussions at performance management meetings to identify targets for improvements in performance. Training and development are also clearly identified and staff have the opportunities to further their knowledge and expertise. The devising of Individual Behavioural Plans (IBPs) and tracking systems to improve the collation of pupils' achievements is at an early stage of development and needs further attention.

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Staff morale is high. The senior management team are supported well by teachers with responsibilities for curriculum areas. They are aware of the changing requirements of the pupils who attend the PRU and are fully committed to developing their roles to ensure that subjects and activities reflect their needs.

Parents are fully involved with their children's education and progress and are contacted regularly. The PRU works effectively with parents to improve pupils' attendance and behaviour.

The management committee is playing an increasingly active role in supporting and providing guidance to the senior management team. There is good support from the LEA, with regular meetings held and useful reviews conducted by the school improvement officer. Good use is made of the accommodation but it is not fit for its purpose. It limits the activities available for pupils to learn the full range of skills appropriate to their needs and for the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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	4	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Thank you for talking to me and telling me about your work when I came to inspect the unit. I think that it does a good job in making you feel better about yourselves and helps you to return to mainstream school or move to your next school, college or job when you leave.

I was impressed to see that most of you improve your behaviour when you are at the unit and that you are getting rewarded for this. I thought you got on well with the staff and that you enjoyed being at the unit. Most of you also get better at learning and have opportunities to get certificates of achievement in subjects and award schemes.

I have asked Mrs Neel and the staff to look at some things that will help the unit to continue to improve:

- ways of knowing how well you are learning and improving
- ways of helping you to improve your personal and social skills to make it easier for you to return to school or to move on to your next placement
- the accommodation, so that you can do more practical activities.

I wish you every success in the future.