



Thompson House Tuition Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133744
LEA Isle of Wight LEA
Inspection number 282362
Inspection dates 29 June 2006 to 29 June 2006
Reporting inspector William Geoffrey Robson AI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Sandy Lane
School category	Pupil referral unit		Newport
Age range of pupils	6 to 16		PO30 3NA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01983533523
Number on roll	43	Fax number	01983528383
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Douglas Wright
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Stephenie Greenslade

Age group 6 to 16	Inspection dates 29 June 2006 - 29 June 2006	Inspection number 282362
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Thompson House Tuition Centre was first registered as a pupil referral unit (PRU) in 2002. It has not previously been inspected. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and some have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. Older pupils have social and emotional difficulties or mental health problems such as anxiety or depression, which have previously prevented them from attending schools. The unit also provides home and hospital tuition for sick children and monitors the education of pupils being taught at home by their parents. Eleven pupils have statements of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspection evidence shows that the PRU rightly judges its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, especially in light of their previous social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in mainstream schools. They achieve well in Years 10 and 11. Attendance often improves significantly when pupils are admitted to the PRU. Teachers quickly establish very good relationships with pupils and enable them to grow in confidence. Good communication with support agencies and parents also helps pupils' personal development. However, targets for improving their behaviour and social skills are too vague to enable pupils to know how they can improve. A good curriculum meets the range of needs well, although the accommodation limits opportunities for physical education and sport. The restricted accommodation also results in younger pupils disturbing the concentration of older pupils at times. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher leads a dedicated team of staff who work together as an effective team. Self-evaluation has led to the recognition of the need to improve links with other schools so that more pupils can return successfully to mainstream education. However, the PRU does not use data sufficiently to evaluate its overall effectiveness or set targets for further improvement.

The PRU has satisfactory capacity to improve, as shown by its response to a recent local authority inspection. This led to significant improvement in careers education and the range of accreditation offered to Year 10 and 11 pupils. The PRU provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop links with mainstream schools so that all are clear about their responsibilities for supporting the reintegration of pupils.
- Improve the analysis of data so that the management committee can set challenging targets and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the PRU's work.
- Set clearer targets for pupils' personal development so that they know how well they are doing.
- Explore ways of improving accommodation to provide more physical education and avoid younger pupils disturbing older pupils' concentration.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most pupils enter the PRU with standards below those expected for their age. This is because of their previously poor attendance, difficulties experienced in mainstream schools and, for those with behavioural difficulties, frequent exclusions from their previous school. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. In Years 10 and 11, pupils achieve well because of their increasing confidence and improving attendance. Last year, all four pupils gained GCSE qualifications in English, mathematics and art. Most are on track to achieve similar qualifications this year although they have studied science instead of art. In addition, several pupils are working successfully towards level two

qualifications in information and communication technology (ICT). Most pupils achieve these standards in one year instead of two. Younger pupils make satisfactory progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT, although several continue to be hampered by poor attendance and behavioural difficulties. Pupils who receive individual home tuition make satisfactory progress, given the limited number of hours that the centre is able to provide.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and their attitudes to education improve during their time in the PRU. Although overall attendance remains below the average of mainstream schools, many pupils improve their attendance significantly and enjoy the opportunities that the PRU provides for them to make a fresh start. Pupils trust teachers and feel safe. Pupils' behaviour improves and is good overall, even though there are occasional angry outbursts from younger pupils, which staff deal with well. Older pupils sometimes find these outbursts disturbing but some are sufficiently confident and understanding to help the younger ones to talk about their problems. This growth in confidence and ability to establish relationships is a sign of pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development. A Year 11 pupil said, 'As soon as someone comes here you see they have problems, but they leave a much better person.' However, several older pupils would like more opportunities to take responsibility and contribute to decisions, as there is no student council.

Pupils respond well to the recent introduction of healthier rewards for good behaviour, such as the opportunity to make and drink fruit 'smoothies'. However, a lack of suitable facilities and limited accommodation means that they are unable to take part in enough sport or physical activity. Pupils develop good skills for their future economic well being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A real strength lies in teachers' and assistants' very good relationships with pupils. They work very well as a team and, through the trust that they establish with vulnerable pupils, manage classes very well. They avoid confrontation skilfully when necessary so that pupils experiencing behaviour difficulties return to work with the minimum of disruption to others in the class. They organise a variety of activities in lessons that interest and motivate pupils. They use computers effectively, especially to help pupils to improve the presentation of their work. However, teachers make insufficient reference to learning objectives so that pupils know what they are supposed to be doing but not what they are expected to learn. In particular, teachers do not remind pupils regularly enough about their

behaviour targets. These targets are not sufficiently specific and pupils with behaviour difficulties are not clear about what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The PRU provides a good curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. In Years 2 to 9, appropriate emphasis is placed on developing their skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT through a motivating range of topic work. In Years 10 and 11, pupils can study for a variety of awards, from GCSE in the core subjects to entry level certificates, to meet their individual needs and interests. The hospital and home tuition service maintains good links with mainstream schools to help pupils keep in touch with schoolwork. Extra, 'twilight' sessions in the PRU provide some pupils with valuable extra support and experience of group work. A well organised course in personal and social education reinforces information about healthy, safe lifestyles. It is enhanced through very good use of outside speakers and educational visits. A regular morning 'social time' develops pupils' social skills effectively. Older pupils have good work experience opportunities. However, lack of adequate facilities means that they have insufficient physical education. Several would like more opportunities to contribute to the school and local communities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This area of the PRU's work is satisfactory. Students are well looked after and arrangements for safeguarding their well being are rigorous. Effective links with agencies such as the child and mental health services help teachers to meet pupils' individual needs. Good communications with Connexions ensures that students have good careers guidance, leading to suitable opportunities to study at colleges when they leave the PRU. Relations with parents and carers are good. They are kept well informed and have positive views about the way the unit supports their children. There are regular reviews of pupils' progress. However, targets for pupils with behaviour difficulties are not specific enough for teachers to monitor their progress accurately. Communication with mainstream schools is inconsistent. It is good for pupils receiving home tuition but unsatisfactory for permanently excluded pupils and some with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result, despite the efforts of the PRU's staff, some of these pupils do not return to mainstream schools as quickly as they should.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the PRU are satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher has settled in well and gained the confidence of staff and parents. As a result, staff work well together as an effective team. They show a common aim to provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve and develop personally and socially.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory and important priorities for development are being identified. These include the improvement of links with some mainstream schools to enable more pupils to reintegrate successfully and enable support staff to work more efficiently in these schools. However, the management committee has not established a policy to ensure all schools are aware of and agree to their responsibilities when referring pupils to the PRU. It does not set targets for success related to how well pupils achieve or how many return successfully to mainstream education. As a result, although data is available, it is not analysed sufficiently. Teaching is monitored systematically but a lack of precise criteria for judging lessons means that specific ways of improving teaching and learning are yet to be identified.

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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	NA	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	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?	2	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	2	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

Pupils

I very much enjoyed inspecting your centre. Many of you told me how you get on very well with your teachers and that, although you have difficulties when you arrive at the centre, you 'leave as a much better person.' I agree with your views and know that you make good progress personally and socially. Many of you improve your attendance and behaviour and begin to enjoy school more.

The main strengths of the centre are: • Teachers help those of you who are going through a difficult time in your life to become more confident and enjoy learning. • Many Year 10 and 11 pupils make particularly good progress. • The courses and lessons are interesting and meet your needs well. • Staff work closely with your parents, carers and different support services.

To make your centre even better I have asked staff to improve four main things: • Work more closely with mainstream schools so that they all know their responsibilities for helping you to go back to school. • Improve the analysis of data so that the management committee can set challenging targets and evaluate how well the PRU is doing. • Set clearer targets for your personal development so that you know how well you are doing. • Try to improve accommodation to provide more physical education and avoid younger pupils disturbing older pupils' concentration. The teachers know what needs to be done and will make plans to do it.

Best wishes,

Bill Robson

Lead Inspector