



# Springwell Centre

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 134055  
**LEA** Barnsley  
**Inspection number** 284576  
**Inspection dates** 9 February 2006 to 9 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Kath Halifax CfBT Lead Inspector

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>	St Helens Boulevard
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit		Carlton Lane
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 2AY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 283068
<b>Number on roll</b>	65	<b>Fax number</b>	01226 779244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Mike Evans
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Cresswell

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 9 February 2006 - 9 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 284576
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The centre serves the whole of the local authority. It caters for pupils who have been excluded, or who are in danger of being excluded from mainstream secondary schools. In addition, there are two satellite units, one for pupils with mental health problems and a second for schoolgirl mothers. Currently, there are 65 pupils on roll of whom six are girls. All are of white British heritage. At 75%, the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is high. All pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with 22 having a statement of special educational need for emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Most pupils have a negative attitude towards education and their attainment on entry is well below that expected of pupils of this age.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good unit that is moving forward at a considerable rate and has the capacity to continue to do so. From a very low base two years ago, when managers had difficulty recruiting and retaining staff, it has progressed to a provision held in high esteem within the local authority. Good teaching, an interesting and relevant curriculum and outstanding links with other professionals have resulted in good achievement and in much improved behaviour and attendance. Achievement is good overall, but satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT), where a lack of suitable resources is affecting progress. Most pupils improve their attendance well, but the irregular attendance of a few is affecting their progress. Pupils with a history of violence and aggression have been helped to confront their difficulties, and those who are anxious or phobic frequently come to terms with their problems. As a result, a significant number have made a successful return to mainstream education while others have gone on to further education or employment. Leadership and management are good, with outstanding leadership shown by the head of centre. Rigorous analysis of all aspects of the provision demonstrate an effective understanding of what the centre does well and what needs to be improved. However, the centre was overly cautious throughout all areas of its self-evaluation because it knows there is more to do. Very good work with staff and pupils in secondary schools throughout the borough has meant that a significant number of pupils in danger of exclusion have been helped to stay in their local school. The Centre provides good value for money.

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

- Improve attendance by working even more closely with families.
- Further improve achievement in ICT by improving resources and providing opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good from low levels on entry. This is obvious particularly in English, mathematics and personal, social, health and citizenship education. Managers have been cautious in their evaluation because of the short time some pupils have been in the centre. Evidence from effective individual education plans shows that pupils who attend regularly make good progress academically and in their behaviour. Lower attaining pupils make particularly good progress in reading. Despite a useful link with a City Learning Centre, a lack of suitable resources in ICT and too few opportunities to develop their computer skills in other subjects limit progress to being satisfactory. However, good use is made of the existing equipment to promote media studies. Pupils on short-term placements achieve well and within a few months, most return to their local school. This is because of good teaching, a relevant curriculum and well-thought out plans for how pupils should reintegrate. The introduction of a suitable range of accreditation allows pupils to leave with nationally recognised awards through

organisations such as the Assessment Qualifications Alliance (AQA) and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). These are equipping pupils well for life after school and, alongside a successful work related learning programme, have led to pupils moving on successfully to further education, courses and employment. Girls in the schoolgirl mothers' unit strive hard for their Child Care certificate, which they say helps them with parenting as well as having a useful qualification.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils join the centre at a time of major disruption in their lives. Nevertheless, staff have very successfully helped pupils to curtail outbursts of violence and verbal excess; behaviour is now outstanding. Pupils are friendly and keen to succeed. Their spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils' moral and social development is outstanding, as demonstrated in how they work together and support each other; they celebrate spontaneously the achievement of others. Pupils understand the importance of 'playing by the rules', allowing others to speak thus showing respect for all. Through the enthusiasm of adults, pupils regain an interest in learning, particularly in vocational skills. They understand the rewards of earning a living through self discipline, and talk positively about getting a job. Older pupils take responsibility for their learning, drawing up programmes with centre staff and local businesses. All understand the need to live a healthy lifestyle, to be safe, and say 'no' to dangerous situations. As a result, reported instances of substance misuse out of school have significantly reduced. Exclusion is used as a last resort and instances of this have fallen considerably. Whilst the majority of pupils show good improvement in their attendance from low levels prior to starting, overall, the level reached remains unsatisfactory and is an area for development.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils gain knowledge and skills at a good rate because teachers are confident in the subjects they teach and in managing pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. Relationships are outstanding, and adults are good models of how to behave appropriately. Teachers have high expectations and endeavour to make learning fun. This was demonstrated well in an outstanding English lesson where pupils acquired an insight into the Shakespearian characters of Macbeth and Banquo. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to improve speaking and listening. Equally, pupils improve their reading, writing and numeracy well in other subjects. Some use is made of computers, for example to present work and in handling data, but more needs to be done in this area. While teaching is good overall, on occasions the pace of the lessons slow and sometimes the high number of adults reduces pupils' opportunities for independence. Though often a source of conflict for pupils in their previous schools, homework is used well to extend learning. Assessment is good, consistent between

subjects and used well to identify gaps in learning. The monthly review of individual progress ensures no pupil is left behind. A focus on individual targets at the start and end of each lesson contributes considerably to academic progress and improved behaviour.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets the expectations for a pupil referral unit. An emphasis on numeracy and literacy and the resulting achievement aids pupils' return to mainstream. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good. Topics such as 'vandalism' increase pupils' awareness and understanding of being a good citizen. Pupils say that work towards the Healthy School award has made them more conscious of what they eat; the good physical education programme contributes to their fitness. Pupils are well prepared for life after school through work placements and links with numerous businesses and college, though there is no enterprise scheme. Though an all-white population, pupils have a good awareness of cultural diversity. They speak proudly of the displays of their work around the centre, particularly the high quality artwork. The provision for pupils who are anxious or phobic about school is managed sensitively through sessions after daytime pupils have returned home. This leads to a gradual increase in hours during the school day.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff are committed to providing high quality care. Health and safety arrangements exceed local authority guidance. The support which staff provide enables all pupils, including those looked after by the local authority and those from the Traveller community, to make excellent progress in managing their behaviour and attitude to learning. Links with numerous voluntary agencies and community support groups are outstanding. This is particularly so for pupils who are especially vulnerable, such as pregnant schoolgirls, those who are offenders and those who are anxious or phobic. Strong links with secondary schools mean that most pupils arrive with useful information about their past achievements. This reduces significantly the time taken to pinpoint precisely what their needs are. Pupils returning to mainstream schools are very well supported, which contributes significantly to their success. The progress pupils make is tracked accurately. The work of the centre prepares pupils extremely well for life after school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Managers were modest about their self evaluation of the centre because they feel there is much more they are capable of doing. This shows clearly in their improvement plan. The centre has gone through some difficult times. Until the arrival of the head of centre two years ago, the management committee recognises there was little by

way of improvement planning, limited assessment and a narrow curriculum. The management of behaviour and attendance was inconsistent. Since then, backed by the management committee and with very good support from the head of service, she has turned the centre around. Very high expectations of staff and pupils, coupled with a wealth of meticulous analysis of all aspects of the centre's work have resulted in much improved behaviour, attendance and achievement. Links with secondary schools have been strengthened, enabling more pupils to make a successful return. Support by the local authority has been effective. Other professionals based in the Centre are contributing significantly to pupils' well-being and improved attendance. This is particularly so in meeting the needs of the large proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The skills and knowledge of the management committee contribute positively to the provision. Pupils, staff, parents and other professionals report they feel valued and consulted about developments.

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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>	2	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	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>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	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>	2	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	2	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	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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**

As you know we met a number of you during the recent inspection of the Centre. Thank you for talking to us, for being so polite and friendly, and helping us in our work.

What we liked most about the PRU

- You are extremely well behaved, and have a good attitude to your work.
- Mrs Cresswell and staff have worked very hard to make the Centre the success it is.
- Work with other professionals such as education welfare officers and Connexions advisors make a significant contribution to your well-being.
- The Centre helps many of you return to your local secondary school and prepares you well for your working lives.

What we have asked your teachers and the management committee to do now

- Work with you and your families to improve your attendance.
- Improve the resources and opportunities to use information and communication technology.

We enjoyed our short time with you and wish you well for the future.