

# Pupil Support Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121270
<b>Local Authority</b>	York
<b>Inspection number</b>	292065
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Emerson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	112
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Chris Nicholson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Danesgate Fulford Cross Fulford Yorkshire YO10 4PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01904 642611
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<b>Age group</b>	11-16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The Pupil Support Centre is a pupil referral unit for students aged 11 to 16 who have been excluded, or are in danger of being excluded, from mainstream schools. The centre is part of the York Behaviour Support Service and serves the whole of the city. Many of the students come from less prosperous areas of the city and around a third of them are entitled to free school meals. There are far more boys than girls. There are 19 students with a statement of special educational need, primarily for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and 10 students are looked after by the local authority. Almost all students are from White British backgrounds. The length students stay at the centre varies from six weeks to two years. Of those on roll, 40 attend the centre. However, at the time of the inspection, students in Years 10 and 11 had finished their accredited courses and were no longer attending. The centre plans and monitors a wide range of flexible educational packages for individual students. These are delivered in a variety of settings such as the Boxing Club and the York Training Centre. Since January 2008, students aged 14 to 16 have accessed vocational training at the new Skills Centre which has been built on the Danesgate site. The service has a high turnover of students. In 2006-7, 140 pupils accessed the service. The local authority is in the process of reorganising the Behaviour Support Service. As part of the re-organisation the Pupil Support Centre will be amalgamated with another pupil referral unit for students aged 11 to 14.

## 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 pupil referral unit, which is successful in re-engaging students who are disaffected with education. The centre has a good track record of returning younger students successfully to mainstream schools. Attainment on entry is often weak and standards are exceptionally low. However, because teaching is good, students achieve well. Students in Years 7 to 9 make good progress in achieving their targets for personal development and English. Their progress in mathematics is satisfactory rather than good because the quality of teaching is more variable in this subject.

Due to the strong programme for students aged 14 to 16, which includes the opportunity to gain GCSE qualifications in one year, and excellent vocational training at the Skills Centre, students achieve well. They make very good progress in acquiring skills which will equip them to succeed when they leave school.

Although satisfactory, the curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 is limited and the centre recognises that it needs reviewing. Parents and carers are pleased with the progress their children make. Students enjoy coming to the centre a good deal and their attendance, which is generally good, has improved as a result of innovative strategies such as the 'continental' timing of the school day. During the inspection, several students who have successfully moved back to mainstream schools explained how the centre had put them back on track. For example, one former student said of the staff: 'They understand you more and help you straight away. They know what they are doing. If I stayed at a mainstream school, I don't reckon I would have got so far.'

Excellent links with a variety of agencies, such as the Education Welfare Service, contribute to the good, strong care and support students receive. There are also extremely good links with mainstream secondary schools in York. Senior managers from these schools praise the work of the centre highly. They particularly value the support they are given to ensure that disaffected young people in their schools move on to college, training or work rather than becoming unemployed. Students respond well to staff and very good relationships are evident throughout the centre. Any incidents of challenging behaviour are managed confidently so that lessons are not disrupted. However, teachers do not always make it clear enough exactly what individual students are expected to achieve in lessons.

Students are assessed thoroughly on entry to the provision and the key skills coordinator tracks their progress well. Sessions of individual support are highly effective in ensuring that students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make as good progress as other students. The personal development and well-being of students is good. Students are involved well in setting and reviewing their targets for behaviour and learning. There are effective and consistent reward systems and high expectations regarding appropriate behaviour. Consequently, students make good progress in improving their attitudes and behaviour and in distinguishing right from wrong. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Students learn well to behave safely and there is little evidence of bullying. The centre holds the Healthy Schools Award and students make good progress in understanding the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably assisted by the assistant headteacher provides strong 'hands-on' leadership and sets an outstandingly clear direction for improvement at the centre. The newly established management committee provides satisfactory support. Good self-assessment procedures are in place to evaluate the work of the

centre. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement. This is clearly seen, for example, in the successful development and impact of the Skills Centre. Consequently, there is a good capacity to improve further. The centre provides good value for money.

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

- Ensure that all teachers make it clear what individual students are to learn during lessons.
- Ensure that teaching of mathematics in Years 7 to 9 consistently enables students to make good progress.
- Improve the curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Students in Years 7 to 9 make good progress and achieve well overall. This is because they are given good individual support to enable them to achieve their challenging targets for English and personal and social development. However, because targets are not routinely set for mathematics and work is not always sufficiently adapted to meet students' needs, progress is less evident in this subject. Accredited results for students aged 14 to 16 who attend the centre are good. Students in Years 10 and 11 follow accelerated courses to gain GCSEs, Entry Level qualifications and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) accreditation within a year. In 2007, all Year 11 leavers gained recognised qualifications, with the majority gaining between one and four GCSEs at grades B to G. Assessment evidence indicates that the results for 2008 are expected to show an improvement with seven Year 10 students also entered for GCSE and Entry Level accreditation. In addition, several students achieved NVQ Level 1 in vocational subjects such as horticulture. Outcomes are equally good for the students who attend the centre, and those on the alternative programmes. There is a good success rate for students in Years 7 to 9 who re-integrate to mainstream schools. The proportion of leavers who are not in employment, education or training has dropped with the majority of students moving into constructive occupations.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Students respond well to the supportive and structured regime. They like the individual monitoring books which provide a detailed account of their behaviour each day. Consequently, they make good progress in improving their attitudes and behaviour and acquire personal skills which enable them to become successful learners. This underpins the good progress which they make in lessons. Students enjoy attending the centre and begin to realise that they can make a success of their lives. They are generally polite and keen to express their opinions. As a result of very strong links with the Education Welfare Service and a variety of well planned interventions, students make good progress in improving their attendance. Students respond well to the good opportunities for physical education and understand the importance of using the centre's well equipped fitness suite to keep fit. Good support also enables some students to make healthy lifestyle choices such as giving up smoking. Challenging behaviour is managed confidently and there are few exclusions. Students make a satisfactory contribution to the community by, for example, raising money for charity and recycling. However, they would benefit from more opportunities to take on responsibilities in the centre.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Very good relationships are evident throughout the centre and staff know students very well. Support staff are skilled and well deployed. As a consequence, teachers and support staff are effective in engaging all students in lessons, including those who are reluctant to learn. Ongoing assessment in lessons is good and teachers check regularly to ensure that students understand. Students are involved well in monitoring their own learning. However, teachers are not always sufficiently clear about exactly what they want individual students to achieve in lessons. Inconsistencies in the teaching of mathematics in Years 7 to 9 means not all students make good progress in the subject. Lessons are usually lively and move at a good pace. Rewards are used effectively to promote good behaviour and motivate students. Students benefit from access to a number of specialist teachers. This is evident, for example, in the high quality art work which is on display around the centre.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. There is a good variety of enrichment activities. Although students in Years 7 to 9 benefit from the focus on developing key skills in literacy and numeracy, difficulties with staffing and accommodation have restricted the delivery of science and information and communication technology (ICT). This limits students' opportunities to engage in practical work and follow GCSE courses. The centre has worked hard to develop a flexible and exciting curriculum for students aged 14 to 16. These students benefit from good, and developing, opportunities to gain recognised qualifications. The new Skills Centre provides an excellent vocational programme in an inspirational setting. This is very effective in engaging students from the Pupil Support Centre as well as disaffected students from other settings. As a result, 91% of students attending the Skills Centre have achieved an NVQ Level 1 qualification in the two terms that it has been open.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Systems to ensure students health and safety, including child protection procedures and the safe recruitment of staff, are very robust and meet legal requirements. Excellent links with a variety of agencies ensure that particularly vulnerable students, such as those who are looked after by the local authority, are supported very well. Behavioural programmes and individual reward systems are effective in improving students' behaviour. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Students are involved well in setting and evaluating their own targets for behaviour and learning. However, they do not yet have learning targets for all key subjects. The centre has been effective in developing procedures, such as the 'contract meeting', which involve parents and carers well in developing students' programmes and reviewing their progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has shown outstanding leadership in developing the concept of the Skills Centre and ensuring the successful outcome of the project. He has also been instrumental in developing the excellent links that are in place with secondary schools throughout the city. Both the headteacher and the assistant headteacher are excellent practitioners who have very good skills in working with disaffected young people. They provide very good role models for staff and students. Self-evaluation is good and accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses of the centre. The management committee brings a very good range of relevant expertise to the centre. However, as the committee is only recently constituted, the members are still getting to know the centre and are not yet in a position to act as 'critical friends'.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming me to the Pupil Support Centre. I really enjoyed finding out about the things you are doing and talking to you. It was very useful to know what you think about the centre. I judged that the centre is good. It enables you to achieve well and is effective in helping you to improve your behaviour.

There are some things that are particularly good about the centre. These are:

- the very good individual support and guidance you are given to help you to improve your attitudes and behaviour
- the great relationships you have with staff which make you want to try hard and achieve well
- the range of qualifications you get in Years 10 and 11 so that you can go on to college or work
- the fantastic new Skills Centre and the exciting courses you can do there.

I have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve a few things to make the centre even better. These are as follows.

- Make sure that you all know exactly what you are aiming to achieve in lessons.
- Ensure that the teaching of mathematics for students in Years 7 to 9 is consistently good so that they make good progress.
- Improve the curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9.

I hope you carry on enjoying what you are doing and continue to help the staff all you can.