



Fordway Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124916
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293138
Inspection date 26 September 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Smith

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Stanwell Road
School category	Pupil referral unit		Ashford
Age range of pupils	5-11		TW15 3DU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01784 243365
Number on roll (school)	8	Fax number	01784 423664
Appropriate authority	The local authority	Headteacher	Mrs Susan Simpson (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Fordway Centre provides for a small number of primary-aged pupils who have been permanently excluded, or who have a part-time, 'respite' placement from their mainstream school. Pupils' previous attainment is generally below that expected for their age. Pupils come from a broad socio-economic background and there is currently only one pupil who is not from a White British background. Pupils either have a statement of special educational need or are waiting to be assessed. There is currently only one girl. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2006, but is currently off sick and was not present during the inspection. An acting headteacher is in place. The Centre is on the Additional Support and Intervention Programme (ASIP) and is part of a school's federation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than, in all the circumstances, it could be reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of leadership and management. The Centre provides unsatisfactory value for money.

The Centre is inadequate because of serious weaknesses in leadership and management. So far there has been little formal monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by leaders and consequently the impact of initiatives is unclear. Teachers have not received performance management reviews and they do not have identified targets that are linked to improving pupils' achievement. The Management Committee are supportive, but have not been involved in first hand monitoring or strategic management, and communication between it and the Centre has been too infrequent. Consequently, weaknesses have not been clearly identified and the school's provision has not improved sufficiently.

The Centre does provide an acceptable standard of education. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress due to satisfactory teaching. Through teachers' support and guidance, pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. The recent appointment of an acting headteacher has already led to the addressing of weaknesses, boosting staff morale and concentrating on improving pupils' opportunities and achievement. Pupils come to the Centre with standards that are below average as a result of their behaviour and learning difficulties. Some pupils make sufficient progress to enable a successful re-integration to mainstream schooling. Although there is some good practice in teaching, there are some inconsistencies too, such as in assessing pupils' needs and monitoring their progress. This means that not all the pupils receive good academic guidance and do not always know what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory and offers appropriate opportunities that support reintegration to mainstream school. However, it does not fully meet the wide range of individual needs. Pupils are well supported and pastoral care is strong. Pupils are learning to be responsible for their own behaviour which is satisfactory; pupils enjoy their learning, get on with each other and improve their attendance while at the Centre. Pupils understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and staying safe. They also understand the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and are learning skills that will help them succeed when they move on from the Centre.

The Centre has suffered from inconsistent leadership and management since the last inspection and as a consequence progress, although satisfactory, has been too variable. There has been good progress in the key issues regarding the management of pupil behaviour and the setting of specific and individual pupil targets. The Centre now receives support and guidance from being involved in the Additional Support and Intervention Programme (ASIP) and the recent Action Plan correctly identifies what the Centre needs to do to improve provision and pupil achievement. The acting

headteacher clearly knows what needs to be done and the staff are now motivated to ensure that there is continued development and improvement. Better leadership, recent progress, the strength of external support, and the clearly identified strategies for raising standards in the ASIP Action Plan means that the capacity to improve is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the improvement areas identified in the ASIP Action Plan are successfully carried out and the management committee fulfils its monitoring and strategic role.
- Ensure there are systematic processes in place for monitoring the quality of education and subsequent improvements.
- Ensure that the performance management of all staff is clearly linked to pupils' targets and achievement.
- Ensure that assessment and pupil-tracking systems give a clear picture of pupils' progress and that the pupils are told what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although overall standards are below the national average, given their starting points, pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory. Some pupils make good progress, for example, those who successfully re-integrate back into mainstream schools. These pupils improve their literacy and numeracy skills as well as improving their behaviour, attitudes to learning and their confidence. One parent commented in the home/school diary, 'My daughter sang the alphabet to herself this evening for the first time. She succeeded in singing it all the way through. This is brilliant'.

Pupils make satisfactory progress across all subjects and good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Their achievement could be improved if the curriculum planning and assessment of their progress gave them clearer guidance as to how to improve to the next stage of their learning. The Centre is aware of how to improve provision in order to improve pupils' achievement as recent development planning clearly demonstrates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy attending the Centre and show an enthusiasm for activities provided. They learn satisfactorily about the importance of exercise, eating healthy food and keeping safe. Social and moral development is good and pupils are encouraged to support and respect one another. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, with pupils increasingly learning how to improve and manage their own behaviour. Pupils learn about a sense of community from visiting members of the community such as the

police and fire officers and get involved in national fund-raising events for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils gain in confidence and learn skills that will be of benefit when they move on from the Centre into mainstream schooling. One pupil said, 'I do well with my targets and will be going back to school soon'. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Personal achievement is regularly celebrated and pupils take delight in their own and each others' achievement. They learn about living in a culturally diverse community, although this area could be improved.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are examples of good classroom practice that ensure pupils are motivated with challenging activities that have meaning for them, and that prepare them for their next stage of learning and re-integration back into mainstream schooling. There is good team work between teachers and assistants and they ensure that appropriate support and encouragement is given to all pupils. The Centre is aware that lesson monitoring and opportunities to share the best practice is currently insufficient and there are clear plans to rectify this. The ongoing feedback to pupils in class on their progress is satisfactory. However, the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress is inconsistent and does not sufficiently inform planning to ensure that pupils are clear as to what they need to do to improve. Relationships are good and staff ensure that pupils are confident and happy in their learning with humour being used to good effect.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good emphasis on the core subjects and PSHCE which is appropriate in terms of the needs of the pupils. The curriculum supports Every Child Matters' outcomes well in healthy living and staying safe and in preparing them for re-integration back into mainstream schooling. Planning does not always take account of the widely different needs of the pupils. The curriculum is supported by visits from external providers with specific subject knowledge. For example, there is an excellent dance and drama teacher who visits weekly. In these very active lessons, pupils gain confidence to communicate and express themselves and consequently improve their confidence and self-esteem.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. While pastoral care and support is good, there are weaknesses in academic guidance and the assessment of pupils' progress. There is good communication with external support agencies and mainstream schools to ensure that pupils' personal and emotional development needs are met. Pupils feel

that they are well supported and one parent remarked, 'Thank-you for all the Centre is doing for our son'. The same parent added, 'I would like lots of information on our son's progress and attitude to his work'. Those pupils who are able, are well prepared for re-integration back into mainstream schooling and the Centre supports the transition arrangements well. There are appropriate systems and procedures to minimise risk and to ensure the pupils' well-being. Child protection procedures are clearly understood by staff and appropriate training has taken place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The quality of leadership and management is inadequate. The recently appointed acting headteacher is very aware of the deficiencies of the past and accepts that the pace of change has previously been too slow. Together with the support of the local authority and advisory consultants she is addressing the issues and there is already evidence of improved provision that is starting to raise pupils' achievement. For example, procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress have been developed and all staff are aware of what they need to do to improve their planning. A system for reviewing the performance of teachers has been agreed which will be firmly connected to pupils' targets and their progress and achievement. Self-evaluation processes have been weak and have resulted in the Centre's own judgements being too generous and not based upon recorded evidence. It has improved, and is now satisfactory as the ASIP Action Plan clearly points the way forward by identifying the necessary improvements that will have most impact on raising pupils' standards and achievement. Importantly, it identifies the monitoring role of the management committee and their strategic involvement in ensuring the provision is enabling pupils to achieve the best they can. The recognition of weaknesses and the clarity of planning and strategies for improvement, together with the recent improvements, indicate that the Centre is going in the right direction.

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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I would like to thank you for 'putting up with me' yesterday while I visited your Centre. It was good meeting you and seeing you working so well in your lessons. I am writing to tell you what I found out about your Centre. My main finding is that the Centre needs to make a big improvement in its leadership and management. I also find that with the support of the local authority, the teachers now leading the Centre are capable of making the necessary improvements. I particularly liked the fact that;

- All staff care and support you very well.
- You are friendly and get on very well with everybody. Many of you improve your attendance and learn how to manage your own behaviour.
- You are happy in your lessons and enjoy making personal progress.
- You are learning skills that will help you to return to a primary school or start a secondary school.
- Your parents/carers like what the Centre does for you.
- All staff do their best to make sure you are happy and have everything you need to succeed. They listen to you and are interested in what you like doing.

There are areas that can be improved:

- The plans for improving your Centre should be carried out as soon as possible with the support from the local authority.
- The headteacher needs to be clear as to what is going on in lessons and make plans to improve things, so you can make even better progress.
- Your teachers need to ensure that their plans include how you are going to reach your targets and make the best progress you possibly can.
- Your teachers need to ensure that your progress is clearly recorded and that you know exactly what you need to do to improve.
- You can help yourselves make better progress in lessons by making sure you know what your personal targets are, and how you are going to achieve them.

Another inspector will come back in six to eight months time to see how things have changed. I really enjoyed my visit. Keep up the good work and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely M.J. Smith (Inspector)