



The New Broadwalk PRU

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132741
Local Authority Salford
Inspection number 299766
Inspection dates 6–7 February 2007
Reporting inspector Angela Westington HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	Belvedere Road
School category	Pupil referral unit		Salford
Age range of pupils	11–14		Lancashire M6 5EJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 7780920
Number on roll (school)	32	Fax number	0161 7376736
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Cllr J Murphy
		Headteacher	Mrs Debbie Horlock
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–14	6–7 February 2007	299766

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The New Broadwalk Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) for boys and girls aged 11 to 14 who live throughout the metropolitan borough of Salford. There are currently 32 pupils on roll, 6 of whom are girls. The centre provides mainly for pupils who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream secondary schools. The centre's remit is to reintegrate pupils back into mainstream provision or to facilitate assessment to identify more appropriate provision. Many of the pupils have fractured educational backgrounds, some having been excluded from more than one school, and the vast majority are involved with the Youth Offending Service. Approximately half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Two are in public care. One has a statement of special educational need and seven others are undergoing formal assessment to request a statement. In the fortnight before the inspection the centre admitted a large number of pupils, some from the same school, including a group of girls who exhibit particularly challenging behaviour.

When the New Broadwalk PRU was inspected in May 2005 it was judged to require special measures. This is the fifth monitoring visit to the centre to judge its progress.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the New Broadwalk Pupil Referral Unit no longer requires special measures.

The New Broadwalk PRU has come a long way since the last inspection. At that time it was judged to be failing in several areas: attendance and punctuality; pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour; the quality of teaching and assessment and weaknesses in leadership and management. These issues have all been rectified and the centre is now well placed to continue to improve.

Overall provision within the centre is now satisfactory, but there are notable strengths. These include: the centre's tireless work, and links forged, with other agencies and partners for the benefit of its pupils; the care guidance and support for pupils and their families and the way in which all pupils are encouraged to achieve as well as they can irrespective of their previous history and background. The centre receives good support from the local authority, especially from the Head of the Inclusion Service.

Most pupils at the PRU have academic skill levels below or well below average for their age but, because teaching and learning are now satisfactory, they make satisfactory progress in lessons and during their time at the centre. The recently established assessment systems have improved the ability of staff to prepare lessons better matched to pupils' needs, but they do not yet consistently assess on a lesson-by-lesson basis the very small gains or errors in pupils' understanding, thus inhibiting pupils' rates of progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with real strengths in the range and variety of enrichment and enhancement activities. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour have improved and are now satisfactory. However, the very recent large intake of pupils, in particular a group of girls with especially challenging behaviour, threatens to undermine the behaviour within the established groups. Some members of staff, understandably, have difficulty managing these extreme levels of behaviour.

Leadership and management of the centre are now satisfactory. There is a clearer management structure in place, with better-defined roles for individuals. Subject leaders work together as a team and contribute to the action planning for the centre.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop further the behaviour management skills of all staff, especially in response to the extremes of behaviour presented by the recent intake.
- Formulate a strategic plan to manage the very challenging groups now being admitted to the PRU, especially the girls.
- Improve further still the subject knowledge and skill levels of staff to enable them to assess and act upon the small steps in progress made by all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Because of their fractured and often disrupted educational histories most pupils at the PRU have academic skill levels below or well below average for their age. Overwhelmingly, the weakest subject is English and pupils' writing skills are particularly weak. Of the current cohort, half have reading ages below 12 years, and a quarter have reading ages more than 4 years lower than their chronological ages. All but two pupils are working at below Level 4 in mathematics and in science.

Nevertheless, most pupils now make satisfactory progress in lessons as a result of the better assessment systems and lesson planning. New reading programmes have been established to fill the large gaps in pupils' knowledge and all but two pupils have made good gains on these. The new short, sharp units of work and revised lesson planning have improved the pace of learning within lessons, so that the majority of pupils are able to maintain an interest in what they are doing and make at least satisfactory progress. Some individuals are succeeding in reading and basic mathematics for the first time.

Pupils make good progress however in practical subjects; the opportunities on offer at the PRU allow some pupils to show their strong aptitude for such subjects. For example, in Gears+, an external engineering project, boys and girls develop above average levels of skill in welding, soldering and using tools to fabricate high quality product such as clocks and models. In cookery lessons pupils make appetising meals, from scratch, using fresh ingredients. In drama lessons they plan storylines and perform pieces related to the termly themes which are then filmed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Relationships in Broadwalk are positive and contribute well to pupils' social and emotional development. Their spiritual and cultural development, however, are less developed. Pupils generally respond positively to others and their behaviour is satisfactory overall. They enjoy practical work and are willing to take part in discussions and to answer questions, such as considering their rights and responsibilities. They understand the importance of keeping safe and what a healthy lifestyle means and their self-esteem and confidence are beginning to develop well.

Attendance is much improved, and at 86% for the latest recorded month, is satisfactory and is well above the target originally set. A small group of pupils though have recently recorded 100% attendance, a significant achievement for them. The centre's reward system, based on points awarded for punctuality, behaviour and attitude in every lesson, is now fully embedded and all pupils understand how it works and how they can work towards gaining a range of rewards.

A key factor in pupils' improved engagement is that the curriculum is better than it was. Pupils are keen to participate, for example, in the 'Gears+' engineering project and, through the school council, they are beginning to work as a team to consider

improvements for their school community. In such ways pupils develop the skills needed for the world of work.

The very recently admitted group of pupils, some from the same school, is in danger of undermining the behaviour of established groups. The centre has already decided upon alternative options to cater for such challenging pupils, especially the girls.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some strengths. These include the planning, the range of activities within lessons, the use of information and communication technology and well chosen software, the use of the interactive whiteboards which engage pupils well and the better assessment which is leading to tasks better matched to pupils' needs. The tighter assessment procedures mean that some pupils are now succeeding where previously they have failed. Reading is the most obvious example of this: a boy who entered the centre with the reading age of a six year old, now has a reading age of almost nine and is able to read simple texts. More importantly, in the lesson observed, he wanted to read, constantly, to his support assistant. The boy had finally gained an understanding of what reading is about and the pleasure it can bring.

Staff remain calm and good humoured in the face of sometimes extreme provocation so that, by and large, pupils manage to achieve the objectives of the lesson and make progress. However, the behaviour of the very recent intake of a large group of pupils, especially the girls, has challenged even the experienced staff of the PRU and on occasions, the learning of the established pupils is disrupted.

The centre knows that staff need to develop further the skills of assessment and that this will require continued improvement of subject knowledge and teaching skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's review of the curriculum and the changes made have improved pupils' engagement in their learning. Short, sharp units of work linked by a topic ensure that most of the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught; this in turn helps pupils to return successfully to mainstream school.

Appropriate attention is given to the core subjects with increased provision in literacy to help the least able; the 'Toe by Toe' initiative, for example, is used to improve pupils' reading for those in most need. The personal, social, health and citizenship education curriculum is appropriately planned to support pupils' emotional well-being and understanding of health issues and makes a positive contribution to pupils' raised self-esteem.

A real strength of the curriculum is its enrichment and enhancement provision. For example, the 'I Can' programme is designed to motivate pupils, identify interests and

abilities, make learning fun and develop team working as well as pupils' leadership skills. Exciting opportunities, such as 'dirt biking' and boxing, are planned in effective partnership with other agencies and demand responsibility and commitment from all pupils involved. Pupils respond positively to these challenges.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Adults are supportive and sensitive and make a concerted effort and a major contribution to raising the self-esteem of pupils and giving them confidence. The adults succeed in creating an environment where pupils can begin to benefit from the teaching and curriculum on offer despite their many barriers to learning.

The start of the day 'preparation for learning' sessions help pupils to settle into the daily routines of the centre. The reward of breakfast for those arriving on time encourages punctuality. Teachers and support staff engage pupils in various activities in an informal setting with a friendly atmosphere and this helps to foster a climate conducive to learning.

Teachers support pupils effectively in lessons, enabling learning to take place and encouraging them to develop responsible attitudes. Despite unsatisfactory behaviour and significant provocation on occasion, teachers remain calm and maintain friendly and dignified relationships. They are assisted in lessons by teaching assistants and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) who support and guide individuals and small groups of pupils. Although not always successful, this usually does help them to control their behaviour and focus on learning.

Learning mentors do very valuable outreach work with families, particularly in supporting pupils' reintegration into permanent educational placements. Other mentors' work involves initial assessments and they manage the points system dealing with rewards and sanctions. This functions well. Pupils understand it and are enthusiastic about the prospect of rewards. Mentors also support those excluded temporarily from lessons. Achievement is regularly celebrated formally in assemblies, as well as in lessons.

The appointment of a SENCO with experience of behaviour management is proving beneficial. As well as actively collating the necessary data and pursuing formal assessments where necessary, she is able to offer useful suggestions to staff about dealing with difficult behaviour and to provide one to one support on occasion. She has also worked with staff to ensure that individual education plans are more workable documents. This has led to improved setting of targets, focusing on small achievable steps rather than expecting large, unrealistic, improvements in behaviour.

The family liaison officer plays a valuable role in supporting families and helping to engage parental support for their son's or daughter's education. She also helps with arrangements for reintegration of young people to the centre when they leave custodial placements, aiming to ensure that they do not miss out on this critical stage of their education.

Local authority vocational advisers discuss options and guide pupils who are ready to make Key Stage 4 choices to ensure that their needs are met and that those who have missed the normal process in secondary school do not miss out.

The PRU has established increasingly effective relationships with a wide range of agencies. The welfare of the pupils is prioritised and procedures are in place to ensure their safety.

Academic guidance remains an area for further improvement. Targets are beginning to be used more effectively in lessons and pupils generally understand the levels they are working at. Monitoring of pupils' progress towards their targets has been strengthened recently but remains an area for development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Last year, of the 19 pupils reintegrated back into mainstream provision, none was returned to the PRU. The successful reintegration of youngsters into permanent educational placements is evidence of the successful work of the PRU with pupils who often present difficult and challenging behaviour and attitudes.

The appointment of a centre deputy has enabled the head of the PRU to delegate many operational matters and to focus on more strategic issues. She and her staff are committed to providing the best quality education for young people who have significant gaps in their learning for a variety of often complex reasons. She is well supported by local authority officers and the management committee.

Monitoring and evaluation are now more effective and the benefits are beginning to be seen in the improved quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher recognises that there is still some way to go, for example, in assessment and tracking of pupils' progress.

The role of subject leaders continues to develop with the support of the headteacher of the PRU. They now have opportunities to join with colleagues on local authority training days and are beginning to benefit from links with, for example, local Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs).

Most staff are appropriately qualified. Significant staff training has taken place, for example, in behaviour management and subject knowledge.

The centre's self-evaluation is broadly accurate in its judgments, although some aspects lack an in-depth analysis. Resources are deployed appropriately and the success of the centre in reintegrating many pupils means it provides satisfactory value for money.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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	3
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?	2

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Hello again. You probably remember that recently three ladies visited the PRU to inspect it and see how you were getting on. Thank you to those of you who talked to us, showed us your clocks, your cheese pies and your art work!! I don't think you realise just how good these things are! And a big thank you to those of you who showed us how well you are doing in your reading or talked to Mrs James about how the centre looks after you.

Well, after a lot of discussion, we decided that the centre is doing OK now, so we no longer feel that it needs to be in the category that we call 'Special Measures'. This means that we think that Ms Horlock and the staff can manage the work of the centre pretty much on their own, (with the help of the local authority still) and that we won't need to visit for a good while.

There are some really good things going on at the PRU. For example, Ms Horlock and all the staff really care about each and every one of you (yes, I know you won't believe this, but it is true) and other people behind the scenes put a great deal of thought and care into trying to help you to make something good of your lives. Look at the Gears+ work that you do. That's really good. Some of the things you make are fantastic. And how about all that cooking you do? And the drama? And the art work?

You told us you like all the 'I Can' activities and you enjoy trying to get the rewards on offer. The trip to 'Man United's' ground was a big favourite.

We were pleased that by and large, those of you who have been at the PRU some time now know how to behave and want to get on. And, you are beginning to make progress in reading and mathematics and science, filling in some of the gaps that you have in your education. That's good isn't it?

We have asked Ms Horlock to make sure that everybody in the centre behaves as well as they can, including the new people (!) and to focus some more on how much you learn in lessons every day. It would be great if those of you who know the ropes and have been at the centre for a while could help with this. That way, you all get the chance to make things better.