

Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130339
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	301389
Inspection date	25 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Kath Halifax

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms J Everett
Headteacher	Mrs Samantha Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	59 Grove Road Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 5EP
Telephone number	01423 536111
Fax number	01423 538031

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The pupil referral unit (PRU) is for students who have been excluded, or who are at risk of exclusion, from mainstream schools. Those in Years 7 to 9 undertake a 12 week intensive programme before returning to mainstream education. The majority in Years 10 and 11 stay longer. Almost all students are of White British heritage. Four students have a statement of special educational need, with a further two undergoing assessment. The Centre has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award, the Achievement of Quality Standards for Careers Education and Guidance, and is one of a very small number of PRUs to gain the Department for Education and Science (DfES) School Achievement Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding PRU is extremely successful in meeting its aim to give all the young people a 'chance to succeed'. Comments from students such as, 'Because of you I have not just taken a giant step towards my future, but I have finally made my family proud of me,' echo the feelings of most students. Attendance is good, because students enjoy the exciting and challenging activities and want to succeed. They relish the physical activities, knuckle down to improve their academic work and show great potential in the creative arts. Students are justifiably proud of their outstanding achievements, particularly their high quality photographs which are on display at a Royal Horticultural Society garden.

From their below average starting points, students make outstanding progress both academically and in their personal development because of first-rate teaching, an excellent curriculum and exceptional care, support and guidance. Adults go 'the extra mile'. They are not complacent and are continuously reviewing their practice, looking far beyond the Centre for any opportunity that will improve the prospects of students. Exceptional links are firmly established with secondary schools, health professionals and other agencies. In addition, training for staff in mainstream schools provided by the Centre enables a high percentage in Years 7 to 9 to make a successful return to their 'home school' after just one term at the Centre. Though standards remain below average, students in Years 10 and 11 also make outstanding progress, gaining a range of qualifications, which alongside an excellent work preparation programme, enables the majority to go on successfully to further education, training or employment.

Teaching is of a high calibre because staff are conscientious, skilled and work very closely as a team. Their planning for lessons is exemplary. All are specialist subject teachers and this shows in the accuracy of their teaching. All have taken on board the focus to improve spelling and writing and this is reflected in raised standards. Students improve their reading at a good rate but, unlike spelling, there is no structured programme so this limits slightly their overall progress. Meticulous records are maintained on all aspects of students' lives and are used very effectively to bridge gaps in learning and set aspirational targets for improvement.

Though the Centre is operating with reduced numbers because of problems with the building, staff have not sat back. They are spending time in secondary schools providing advice and programmes for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Similar work is being undertaken with four groups of pupils in different primary schools. Alongside the very successful results gained in the Centre, this preventative work contributes to the very good value for money provided. Students, parents, carers and other professionals hold the Centre in high esteem.

It is the outstanding and charismatic leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher that has enabled the Centre to become so effective. Since the last inspection, leadership tasks have been shared, so staff now feel they are key players and have an important role in the success of the Centre. All are part of measuring the Centre's effectiveness. While they are spot on in knowing what they do well and what needs to be improved, they are modest in their view of themselves because they are not complacent and want to develop constantly. Exceptional progress has been made since the last inspection with very good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure higher achievement in students' reading through a structured approach.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Attainment on entry is below average because most have had periods out of school and have lost interest in education. Students settle quickly and in Years 7 to 9 make impressive progress. They quickly make outstanding gains in science, mathematics, and information and communication technology. Good progress is made in English, especially in writing and spelling. Most improve their reading age, but because there is no structured programme, students do not always acquire all the skills necessary to make sense of new vocabulary. By Year 11, all students gain nationally recognised qualifications. Higher attaining students gain GCSE, including grade A in art. Others achieve Adult Literacy and Numeracy Awards, Certificates of Achievement, and the Award Scheme and Development Accreditation Network Bronze and Silver levels. In addition, vocational qualifications, for example, in retail work and food preparation encourage students to plan their career. Students who display a gift or talent are enabled to achieve challenging awards through National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level II and links with specialist sport and science colleges.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The outstanding provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the Centre's work. As a result, students make remarkable progress in their attitude, behaviour and attendance. From the very good examples set by adults they learn to trust others and show respect. With the support of staff they learn to control their emotions and gain a good awareness of citizenship. Experiences gained through the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme have enabled students to work as team members and push themselves to the limit. Students report they are 'happy being me now' and, 'I don't mind my own company. The Centre has helped me realise I like doing things such as fishing and gardening in my free time instead of messing about.' Self-centred thoughts and actions are replaced by a consideration for others. Students are generous fundraisers. They have an appreciation for the beliefs, celebrations and difficulties experienced by other cultures. They have a keen interest in world affairs and, for example, have written letters to a world leader on behalf of Tibetan children fleeing their homeland.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Students make rapid progress because of outstanding teaching. Highly effective assessment systems identify gaps in learning and are the basis of lessons being pitched at the right levels for students of all abilities. In addition to the knowledge and skills each student is expected to acquire, individual social and behaviour targets are set for each lesson. Teachers have in-depth knowledge of each student's circumstances and their preferred style of learning which results in challenging tasks and continuous progress. Skilled support assistants make a major contribution, not just to classroom activities, but also to the successful programme of reintegrating students to mainstream schools. Though most students come with a history of aggressive and disruptive behaviour, they respond very well to the high expectations of adults. Though some have the occasional outburst, these are managed extremely efficiently so causing

minimum disruption to learning. Excellent relationships allow students to be honest and accepting when grading their behaviour and performance at the end of each lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Students benefit considerably both academically and in their personal development because of the excellent curriculum. The focus on numeracy and literacy puts those in Years 7 to 9 in good stead for their return to mainstream school. Very detailed personalised learning plans ensure the curriculum for those in Years 10 and 11 is matched to their interest and capabilities. The success of careers education, including work experience, and personal, social and health education and citizenship is demonstrated in the high number of students aspiring to college and apprenticeships. In addition to the requirements of the examinations boards, teachers ensure topics capture students' imagination. Students, for example, spoke knowledgeably and enthusiastically about probability when playing games of chance, and have used their understanding of 'nets' and 'tessellations' to construct biodegradable pots for seedlings.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Centre staff do an exceptional job in helping students overcome their problems by providing outstanding support and guidance. Teachers compile thorough information about students' complex needs. Working alongside other agencies, such as the Youth Offending Team and the Childhood and Mental Health Support services, everyone works very effectively to improve attitudes, relationships, attendance, and to encourage independence. Staff show high levels of commitment in promoting students' health and safety. Measures to safeguard students are in place and known to all staff. Every effort is made to involve parents, for example, using weekly 'parental reaction to progress' reports or support for those whose children present problems at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The enthusiasm and vision of the headteacher are infectious and instrumental in the development of the Centre. Staff say they feel valued and want to be part of this dynamic PRU. Mutual respect, alongside very good training has resulted in a very effective team. Subject leaders constantly strive for improvement in students' achievement and enjoyment. Annual subject audits are integral to management and show staff never stand still. Systems to track students' academic and personal development are detailed, easily understood and carefully analysed to ensure no aspect of a students' needs is overlooked. The management committee, comprising of professionals who are knowledgeable in the difficulties faced by the students, provide considerable support for both staff and the young people. They have a very good overview of the work of the Centre and are not afraid to challenge staff about how the Centre can improve even more. The committee is familiar with all the legal requirements and members are currently leading termly working groups, and preparing to meet the new requirements for governance.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Inspection of Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit, Harrogate, HG1 5EP

First may I say how much I enjoyed my short time with you and how fortunate you are to attend the Centre. Thank you for taking time to talk to me and for showing me around.

The Centre gives you an outstanding education. These aspects are especially good.

- Those of you in Years 7 to 9 make exceptional progress so, after one term, most of you are able to return to your mainstream school.
- Those of you in Years 10 and 11 make equally good progress leading to good qualifications including GCSE and NVQ Level II.
- You are very well prepared for life after school. Despite the difficulties you have experienced, most of you go on to further education, training or employment.
- You make significant improvement in your attitude, behaviour and attendance.
- You have an extremely good curriculum that is matched to your interests and needs.
- Adults care about you and provide excellent care, support and guidance.
- All the above have been made possible because of first-rate leadership by your headteacher and deputy headteacher.

There is one area I have asked your teachers to improve.

- Make sure there is a more structured approach to teaching reading.

I wish you well for the future.