

# Paradise Park Pupil Referral Unit

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100388
<b>Local Authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	307379
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	James Bowden

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>	5-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	18
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jill Faulkner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Islington Behaviour Support Service Lough Road London N7 8RH
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7527 5717
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7527 5806

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The unit provides for learners with complex needs, including behavioural, emotional and social needs. All have experienced a disrupted education and have either been permanently excluded or at risk of being excluded from mainstream school. As a result, learners' attainment on entry to the unit is well below the average for their age. Half has a statement of special educational need and a third is having a statutory assessment for a statement. There is a high turnover of learners, which means the unit has to adapt on a regular basis to their challenging individual needs. Currently, almost all learners are boys. Half the learners are of White British origin, a third is of Black origin and a sixth is of Black Caribbean origin. All are entitled to free school meals.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Paradise Park Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provides a good education for learners. It meets its objectives in ensuring they all make progress and have the best set of skills possible to enable them access future education and life opportunities. Though there have been difficulties with staff recruitment and retention, the unit is maintaining its effectiveness in improving learners' enthusiasm for learning and reintegrating them into mainstream or special schools. It has significant strengths, particularly in the quality of care, guidance and support for learners. The unit is highly effective in supporting each learner in specific ways that meet their personal and learning needs, which enables them to make good progress despite their difficulties. It works especially well with other schools and specialist agencies to support learners and has outstanding partnerships with others to support their well-being. The unit's work with parents is highly effective. They are very appreciative of the support they receive and the difference it makes to their children. One of the large majority who returned the parental questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection commented, 'The PRU has taught my child to read more confidently and helped him to manage his behaviour much better.'

Achievement is good. Standards on entry to the unit are generally well below what is expected for learners' ages, with literacy levels of younger learners being particularly weak. Because of the unit's focus on improving behaviour and interest in learning, those who remain at the unit until the end of Year 6 make significant improvement so the majority reaches age appropriate expectations in reading, writing, number and science.

Learners' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are good overall. Well-planned assemblies enable learners to celebrate and share success and provide time for reflection. For many, their negative attitudes diminish as their confidence and self-esteem improve. However, there are still occasional outbursts, sometimes resulting in fixed term exclusion, but behaviour and relationships are generally positive. Learners respect their learning environment and many show a pride in their work. Attendance rates have improved considerably for many compared to that in their mainstream schools, but for a small number, unauthorised absence remains a problem and has an adverse affect on overall attendance statistics for the unit.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors know their learners very well. They work together in lessons very effectively to ensure learners make progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs) and their daily targets set at morning 'meet and greet' time. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, it is dealt with in a calm and safe manner. Though learners' work is marked regularly, the quality of this is variable. The curriculum is good because it meets the needs of learners, reflecting well the curriculum they would follow in mainstream schools. This supports well their academic progress and personal development. A particular strength is the broad range of enrichment activities within the school and opportunities for educational visits, including annual residential trips.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and her deputy provide a very clear direction for the school and focus on improving the quality of education it offers. Consequently, there is a very strong sense of teamwork, which promotes improvement in behaviour, learning and achievement. However, the recent arrival of a number of younger permanently excluded learners and the requirement to provide appropriate full-time education from day six has placed extra demands on resources and planning for reintegration. Governance of the unit is

satisfactory. The unit's track record of reintegration of learners to mainstream or special schools, improvements since the last inspection, its clear focus on improving learners' behaviour and learning and the clear direction set for further improvement show there is good capacity to improve further.

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

- Ensure marking makes clear to learners what they have to do to improve the quality of their work.
- Ensure the work of the unit is not adversely affected by the arrival of excluded learners who are not vetted by the unit's referral panel.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Although standards overall are below average because of the extent of learners' special needs and, for some, their negative experience of mainstream education, the progress they make is good. In relation to their starting points, many are meeting the expected rate of progress for learners in mainstream schools, some achieving standards comparable to those expected for their age and a few achieving levels higher than expected in some areas. There are no significant differences in the rates of progress made by different groups of learners.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Learners eat healthily throughout the day and, apart from formal physical education lessons, benefit from daily exercise at break times. Older learners have recently learned about the dangers of substance abuse, having produced some good quality display to show their understanding of the issues involved. Learners say they make friends at the unit and generally get on well with each other and their teachers and teaching assistants. One younger learner was particularly keen to show the inspector his daily target book and indicate how well he thought he had improved in relation to these. There have recently been no permanent exclusions and fixed-term exclusions are falling. Learners participate actively in the school community through the school council, involvement in teacher appointments and in work to raise funds for charities. Learners are well prepared for their future education because they are improving their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

At the time of the inspection, the morning timetable was changed because of the unit's 'arts week' and learners were not working in their usual class groups. This change proved difficult for some learners but the purposeful approach of staff eventually enabled them to settle, become interested and learn how to produce some good work. Those in the 'puppetry' group, for example, planned well their 'monster' glove puppets using a range of materials to good effect and those in the 'Banksy' group used ICT effectively to produce their own versions in the required style. A scrutiny of learners' work in literacy, numeracy, science and topic lessons showed teachers' planning to be good. Work is matched well to the capabilities of individual learners and ensures they make good progress. However, teachers' marking of work does not

focus enough telling learners what they actually need to do to improve the quality of their work and does not always show what levels they are actually working at.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum ensures all learners are prepared well for part-time and full-time reintegration into mainstream schools. There is also a clear focus on provision for improving literacy and numeracy skills as well as provision to support learners' personal development. The unit regards the whole school day as time for learning, which ensures constant supervision and involvement of learners. Teachers' use of ICT enlivens the curriculum, which in turn enhances learners' involvement and enjoyment. The learning environment is enhanced greatly by displays celebrating learners' personal achievements.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The wide range of support and guidance offered by the unit supports learners' well-being extremely effectively, which results in learners improving their personal attributes and academic achievement. Close working relationships with a wide range of other specialist agencies and professionals also contribute extensively to learners' development. The school has been particularly successful in ensuring improvements in attendance. Arrangements to support learners' reintegration into mainstream schools are highly effective with currently a quarter of learners ready to move. The unit tracks closely learners' personal development as well as their individual performance in relation to National Curriculum levels and IEP targets. Because of this, the unit has been able to identify areas for improvement in learning, plan overall priorities and set individualised programmes to meet learners' precise needs.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Effective self-evaluation and monitoring and evaluation of teaching have enabled the unit to identify accurately its strengths and areas for improvement. There is effective support for new and inexperienced staff and for the well-being of all staff. Strong liaison and collaboration between all staff ensure that every learner really does matter, improving their life chances beyond the unit. Resources are used well but the recent arrival of a group of younger learners who have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools has placed extra demands on the unit. These learners include some who have not been vetted by the unit's referral panel. Because of this, reintegration planning is made difficult and their stay at the unit may be longer than necessary. The new management committee formed to meet recently introduced statutory regulations for PRUs is developing its effectiveness as a critical and supportive friend of the unit.

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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	3
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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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	2
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

09 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Paradise Park Pupil Referral Unit, London, N7 8RH

I recently spent a day at the unit seeing you in lessons and joining you in other activities. Thank you for making me feel welcome. I also chatted to some of you who told me what you were doing in lessons, how your behaviour was improving and what you thought about the unit. I was impressed with your friendliness and your openness.

You receive a good education. This is because:

- all the staff have your best interests at heart and make every effort to make sure you will do well in the future
- the school makes sure you are safe and well cared for and use lots of other people to help you
- the school works very closely with your parents and carers
- you make good progress and are well prepared for integration to mainstream schools
- you are involved in the life of the school
- teachers make your lessons interesting
- the curriculum is interesting and includes some very good extra activities for you to take part in
- the leaders of the school have plans to make things even better for you.

To make things even better for you I have said the school should:

- improve marking of your work to make sure you know what you have to do to improve
- ensure that the unit is able to place you in a mainstream school as quickly as possible.

Once again, many thanks for making me feel welcome and good luck for your future.

Yours sincerely

James Bowden

Lead Inspector