

Out of School Provision PRU

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100889
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	307519
Inspection dates	5–6 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	180
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mr T Crisp
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2003
School address	Inclusion Support Centre 110 Globe Road Stepney London E1 4DZ
Telephone number	020 7790 5170
Fax number	020 7265 8544

Age group	5-19
Inspection dates	5–6 February 2008
Inspection number	307519

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) constitutes very wide-ranging provision based on six sites, including The Royal London Hospital, for pupils who are permanently excluded; at risk of permanent exclusion; chronic school non-attenders; pregnant schoolgirls and school age mothers; sick children requiring home or hospital tuition and vulnerable pupils subject to multi-agency concern. The PRU also supports pupils on fixed-term exclusions from the sixth day of their exclusion. In addition to the pupils based in the PRU, about 40 are supported in mainstream school or at other locations. The Royal London Hospital is the only site which makes provision for primary aged pupils and sixth form students. At the time of the inspection, there was only one sixth form student who was just being admitted so there was insufficient evidence to report in detail on the effectiveness of the sixth form. Most pupils and students spend a very short period of time in the hospital and, where necessary, continue to receive tuition at home whilst recuperating.

About half the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, a third are Bangladeshi. 40% of students have English as an additional language, but the number who are beginners in English is small. The high levels of deprivation locally are reflected within the intake and nearly all students are eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry is well below average. Other than those with medical conditions, almost all students have learning difficulties. A very small proportion of students have a disability usually as a result of their medical condition (The Royal London Hospital has a trauma unit where children with head injuries are given medical care. Sometimes, their injury results in a disability). About 12.5% have a statement of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The PRU provides good quality education and support for its pupils and students. As a result, the number of non-attenders and excluded students who return to a mainstream school to complete their education is high. Students in Years 7 to 11 make good progress in their learning. Those in Year 11 achieve particularly well gaining very creditable results in the examinations they take. These enable them to continue successfully to post sixteen education, training or employment. Consequently, students are well prepared for the next step in education and future life.

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve satisfactorily. They do not achieve as well as older students because the primary curriculum is not as well developed as that for secondary aged students. Nonetheless, the overall curriculum is good with strong provision for visual and performing arts. In both art and English, there is good emphasis on developing students' skills of analysis and evaluation. However, opportunities are missed in science to develop students' investigative skills. The excellent range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities enables students to participate in a rich mix of arts and community projects, outdoor activities and short, often accredited, courses. Students enjoy these immensely and they contribute well to students' learning. They contribute particularly well to personal development and well-being, which are good. Students make a good contribution to their local community through many of the projects and activities provided off-site. In addition, their involvement ensures their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly enabling them to develop better social and teamwork skills.

Overall, pupils and students enjoy their education at the PRU. For many excluded and vulnerable students, the PRU provides a safe place where they receive well targeted support to deal with personal issues. Excellent links with partner agencies and support services mean that these are brought together to support individual pupils and students at key points. This enables students to pick up their learning and begin to fill the gaps in knowledge and skills. Attendance is low in comparison to national averages but good when compared with similar institutions. Students attend the PRU far more regularly than they did their mainstream school. Overall, care, support and guidance are good though there are some inconsistencies in marking and assessment.

Good teaching is a key to the good progress made. Most lessons are well planned and work is successfully tailored to the needs of individual students and pupils. However, there is some overuse of worksheets in science and in work provided at the hospital. This slows learning and limits the opportunities for students and pupils to develop their own ideas and extend their thinking around the topics they are studying. In the best lessons, work is exceptionally well structured to enable students to think for themselves.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides an excellent strategic lead and his high profile in the Local Authority benefits the work of both the PRU and the Local Authority. There is good support from the Local Authority and the management committee. Effective systems are in place to manage the six sites and communication between the sites is good. However, organisation and management of aspects of work, such as assessment and marking, at the different sites is not consistent in quality or how it is done. This detracts from the overall sense of cohesiveness and common purpose of the PRU. Leadership promotes strong partnership with parents. The following comment is reflective of parents' views and of the

impact the PRU has on the majority of its pupils: 'My daughter's learning life has changed 100% for the better since coming here. It has given her a real chance to become an adult.'

The hospital, and tutors providing individual tuition, draw well from the mainstream schools of sixth form students to provide an effective curriculum. Consequently, students have suitable work and support in their chosen subjects of study. Staff engage exceptionally well in multi-agency and partnership work to ensure that the needs of the whole child are met.

What the school should do to improve further

- Reduce the use of worksheets in science to improve learning opportunities for students and extend their thinking.
- Improve the progress of pupils in Years 1 - 6 by ensuring that the primary curriculum is better planned to meet their specific needs.
- Ensure that there is greater consistency of practice, especially in relation to marking and assessment, across all the sites of the PRU.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most students have significant gaps in their learning due to poor attendance, illness or a history of challenging behaviour. Many have weak literacy skills. As a result, their overall standards of work are well below average. However, they make good progress whilst at the PRU and consequently achieve well. Students' practical work in art is often of a high standard. Many in Year 11 make very good progress and achieve very creditable results at GCSE including some who gain five or more GCSEs at grades A* - C.

Students in Years 7 to 9 make good progress. Some demonstrate significant strengths in a particular subject area, such as mathematics or art. The teaching they receive enables these individuals to reach a high standard of work in the subject in which they show natural talent. Lack of a sufficiently well developed curriculum for primary aged pupils prevents them from making better than satisfactory progress.

Boys achieve as well as girls. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who have English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve at least as well as others. GCSE results for 2007 indicate that these pupils attained slightly better results than other groups. Students and pupils with learning needs do well in relation to their targets in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students and pupils behave well across all sites. Occasionally a small number behave inappropriately. Staff deal with such situations very effectively minimising disruption to the normally calm atmosphere and learning. Pupils and students are courteous towards visitors and speak of how much they enjoy the PRU. They say it is much better than the schools they have come from because the classes are small. Attendance is satisfactory and records show a great improvement for many individuals during their time here. Students and pupils feel safe and are confident about raising anxieties or concerns with an adult. They know the difference between right and wrong and usually take pride in doing the right things. Relationships between students and pupils with staff are good and they value the help and support they receive. Most pupils and students have a good understanding of healthy living. On one of the sites, they and staff

work together to plan and prepare healthy meals for lunchtimes. Students participate in a wide variety of sports activities and enjoy links with a local sports centre and a professional football club. Students and pupils benefit from the close liaison with families especially in helping them to budget within the family situation and prepare healthy meals for their children. Overall, pupils and students grow in self-confidence and self-esteem.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most of the teaching is good and there is some that is outstanding. Learning outcomes are clearly communicated to students at the start of lessons. Consequently, they know what they are expected to learn. Good relationships with students and pupils go a long way towards securing their good behaviour in lessons. Teachers also have very good knowledge of medical or other needs. Work is reasonably well matched to the needs of individual students and teaching assistants are well deployed to support them. However, this is less the case where teaching is only satisfactory. For example, in science lessons and at the hospital, too much use is made of worksheets. These reduce the opportunities for students to become more independent thinkers and learners and can make learning less interesting. Vibrant and colourful displays in the art areas creates a highly stimulating working environment. Where teaching is outstanding, work is exceptionally well structured to enable students to develop skills of analysis and evaluation. Whilst good quality marking is evident, this is not consistently the case across the different centres.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall and provides a well balanced mix of vocationally orientated and academic courses. Good emphasis is placed on English and mathematics. The primary curriculum on the hospital site is not sufficiently developed to fully meet the learning needs of pupils in Years 1 to 6. This results in teachers relying too much on worksheets to support teaching. There are instances, on the different sites, where the curriculum is constrained by lack of specialist facilities particularly in science and design and technology. Excellent provision for the arts promotes students' skills in exploring ideas and their own sense of identity.

Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance the teaching in many subjects and students appreciate this. A wide range of sporting activities are very popular with students. The curriculum is enhanced greatly through work experience programmes. Many of these have been so successful that they have resulted in some students being offered week-end jobs and even full time employment. The PRU has been very innovative in seeking out externally provided courses and community projects to broaden the main curriculum. This provision is excellent and makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Child protection procedures are robust and safeguarding procedures meet national requirements. Good attention is generally paid to health and safety making the PRU a safe place for pupils. The partnership and multi-agency work of

the PRU is an outstanding feature. A very wide range of agencies and external professionals are brought together to help individual pupils and students to deal with their personal issues, be these medical, behavioural or related to attendance. There is very close liaison with families and local schools. The high level of success in integrating students back into a mainstream school is a reflection of the high quality of the PRU's partnership work. Staff are persistent advocates of pupils' needs when it comes to securing external support from medical or psychiatric professionals - they do not give up easily. There is much good use of assessment to support and guide pupils' learning and to set clear targets for learning. However, this is not consistently the case across all the sites of the PRU, and opportunities are missed to make better use of information from assessment to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher plays an outstanding part in establishing a clear vision and direction for development for the PRU across the whole authority. His work at authority level plays an important part in coordinating the work of the PRU with that of mainstream schools. This ensures timely return of pupils and students to mainstream schools as well as swift placement in the PRU where pupils, for whatever reason, are not in mainstream education. Other leadership and management roles are clearly defined and carried out effectively in most cases. Individual centre managers on each site in particular provide a strong link between the site and the main centre. The headteacher works proactively to develop a sense of common purpose and cohesion across the various centres. However, there are some inconsistencies in practice and in the quality of provision across the centres such as implementation of policies in marking or recording of information. Regular and accurate monitoring of the work of the PRU ensures that it knows itself well. Strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified and action taken to address issues. This gives the PRU good capacity for further improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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 ¹ 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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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

18 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Out of School Provision PRU, London, E1 4DZ

We enjoyed visiting the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Thank you for making us feel welcome and for speaking to us about your work. We agree with you that the PRU is a good place to be because it is so effective at helping you to learn and develop. Your progress is good and the large majority of you do well enough to go back, when you are ready, to a mainstream school. You are also doing well in improving your social skills and confidence in yourself.

There are lots of interesting and worthwhile activities for you to do and we were pleased to see how much you enjoy these. In particular, there is an excellent range of offsite activities and projects that get you out and about in the local community. Overall, there is a good curriculum in place to support your learning.

You are well taught and looked after. The way the PRU works in partnership with a whole host of other organisations and professional agencies to meet your needs is an outstanding feature of the PRU's work. Staff willingly go the extra mile to make sure that you get the support you need to help you move forward with your education and future life.

Your headteacher is doing an outstanding job of making sure that the PRU works with all the necessary people across the whole of Tower Hamlets to meet your needs. Other staff support him well.

We have asked the staff of the PRU to focus on the following things to help it improve by:

- reducing the number of worksheets in science
- developing a better curriculum for science and for primary aged pupils at the hospital
- making sure that staff work to the same set of systems for marking, recording and assessment across the different centres.

We wish you all well for the future.

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead Inspector