

The Pendlebury Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106022
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	309007
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Hunt

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	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Campbell
Headteacher	Mrs J Cahill
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	Edgeley Road Cheadle Heath Stockport Cheshire SK3 0RJ
Telephone number	0161 4289305
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Age group	11-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The centre serves the whole of Stockport and operates on three sites. On the Pendlebury site, education is provided for secondary aged students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who are at the risk of permanent exclusion either through poor behaviour or self-exclude due to their emotional vulnerability; at the Cedars site, it provides for students who are primarily LAC with high tier mental health needs. Pendlebury also provides education for children who are inpatients at the local hospital. In addition, the pupil referral unit oversees the assessment centre at the hospital and home tuition. A multidisciplinary mental health team and the Pendlebury Outreach service provide support for approximately 44 students within their mainstream schools. The total number on roll at the centre is 18; these students are dual registered with their mainstream school. A very small number have statements of special educational need, and a similar number of Local Authority LAC. The majority of students supported by the centre are registered with their mainstream schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding centre offering excellent value for money. It was judged excellent when it was inspected in May 2003 and has continued to improve. A high percentage of students have had a disrupted education prior to admission to the centre because of behavioural difficulties, health concerns or mental health needs. As a result, attainment on entry for most is below average, although students achieve exceptionally well from this point because of teaching that is outstanding on all three sites. Excellent resources contribute to the quality of teaching, for example, with interactive whiteboards and a sufficient number of computers for the students to access regularly. In 2007, Year 11 students at both Pendlebury and the Cedars gained very good results in the GCSE examinations in a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Those students who were unable to access GCSE courses sat successfully basic skills or entry level examinations. Excellent behavioural management and positive reinforcement of self-esteem ensures that all students make very positive progress in managing their own behaviour. This means that by the time they are reintegrated into their mainstream school or go on to college, they are far better placed to respond to education and to further raise their achievement. The curriculum is outstanding; it provides a wealth of richness, excitement and challenge that stimulates students' learning extremely well. In addition, students at the Cedars benefit from a more holistic and therapeutic approach to learning, designed just for them.

Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. During the time they attend the centre, students make excellent progress in understanding themselves better and in developing in confidence and self-esteem. They have time to consider and think about others and this shows, for example, in the support they give to the young people of Eastern Europe and Africa through their 'Operation Christmas Child Boxes' appeal. Whilst discussion between students and between students and staff is a strength overall, in a small number of lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for students to discuss and assess their own progress against the targets set for them. Nevertheless, all students build very strong relationships with staff and learn to support each other. There is very little bullying or harassment and any incidents of challenging behaviour are dealt with very well. Attendance of students is good and has improved tremendously. Students make excellent progress in learning to be healthy and this is recognised in the centre having achieved a Healthy Schools Award. Care, guidance and support are excellent with superb links with a large variety of outside agencies, such as the team from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service which supports the more vulnerable students.

Parents are delighted with the work the centre does for their sons and daughters. The centre has become one of excellence providing inset on behaviour and mental health issues for mainstream schools. It works very closely with a local university in providing accredited training in 'Identifying and developing mental health in secondary schools.' Such success is only possible through first class leadership and management. The headteacher and her deputy headteacher make it abundantly clear that in every facet of the centre, only the best will do, and staff rise to this challenge. The Management Committee contributes well to the strategic planning and smooth running of the centre. Self-evaluation is extremely comprehensive and rigorous and is one reason why the Pendlebury Centre has an outstanding capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all students have the opportunity to discuss and assess their own work against the targets set for them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Baseline assessments and student records at the centre indicate that many students have weak attainment on entry due to poor attendance, mental health problems and negative experiences in mainstream education. Although the attainments of most students are below those expected for their age, they progress extremely well and confidently in their work because of the outstanding teaching given. All students within the main centre enter for accreditation at Key Stage 4, the majority sitting GCSE, basic skills and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses. In 2007, all the students on roll were entered and they achieved extremely well. For example, nine students gained English language and literature passes A* to E at GCSE, 13 students gained C to E grades in mathematics and 11 gained C to F grades in science, a good number achieving better grades than predicted. As well as achieving so well in the three core GCSE subjects, they do equally well in a wide range of subjects such as art, food technology, and information and communication technology. Key stage 3 students achieve equally as well gaining at least one grade higher in their standard assessment tests than they did at the end of Key Stage 2. The majority of the students at Key Stage 3 transfer successfully back into mainstream; 93% in the summer of 2007. Students from the Cedars and hospital links transfer successfully into mainstream school with support or if more appropriate to full time education at the main centre.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students at all three centres flourish because teachers are always boosting their confidence and personal development. Students are all very appreciative of the support they receive. They state that they have never felt happier. Bearing in mind their health and mental health needs, students' attendance overall is good. There is a small nucleus of non-attending students but the centre is doing all in their power to improve attendance, with very positive results. Across the centre behaviour is excellent and students are considerate towards others. There is great respect for staff and a deep appreciation of what they are trying to do for them. When asked, students say they feel safe and very well cared for, for example, the dangers of cyber bullying is reinforced regularly through their personal development lessons. They are very knowledgeable about the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. Through the curriculum, especially through work with Connexions, vocational courses and work placements, students are very well equipped to face adult life in the wider world. Students have great opportunities to make a contribution to the local and wider communities in working together, for example, raising money for a very broad range of local, national and international charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Consequently, students make excellent progress and achieve substantially more than they might have expected before coming into the centre. In outstanding lessons assessment is very thorough and students contribute as fully as they might to assessing their own work, including against their targets set. In a small number of lessons this approach is not as effective. Nevertheless, all teachers set very challenging work and offer close support to students, if needed, to ensure they are successful. Marking clearly shows students how they can improve their work. Teachers keep totally up to date with the trends and changes within their subject areas through attending courses with their mainstream school colleagues. Students say they enjoy their lessons and feel very confident and happy with the work they are given. Relationships in the classrooms are superb.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum and other activities provided throughout the centre are outstanding. A very broad range of GCSE and entry level courses are on offer, together with activities and opportunities for personal development that are essential to the education of the 'whole student'. For example, every week an advanced skills art teacher from a local secondary school takes a GCSE art group of Year 10 and 11 students with excellent results. College links are very strong with Year 11 students attending regular courses at two local colleges. Also, there are taster courses on offer which provide students with the opportunity of experiencing, for example, floristry, bricklaying and beauty therapy. During the lunchtime break at the main centre there are opportunities for enrichment with activities such as snooker and badminton. The curriculum is very well planned to meet the particular needs of all students at all three units and within the hospital provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The centre provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Through continuous and very careful monitoring, the academic progress and personal development of each student is kept under review. Staff are very skilled at supporting the most vulnerable students, such as those in the hospital and Cedar unit who have very complex mental and health needs. For example, students here become able to express themselves much more freely than they had in the past. All students are given excellent individual support to promote their personal development and to prepare them for reintegration to mainstream schools. Excellent links with a wide variety of agencies promote students' care and personal development exceptionally well. Parents are very confident about the care and support their children receive, for example, 'the caring but firm structure has helped my daughter', and, 'it has helped my family get back on track', are just some of the comments the parents have made. All procedures for child protection, the safe recruitment of staff, health and safety, and risk assessments are in place for all three units.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are exceptional. The headteacher has ensured the excellent practice noted at the last inspection has improved even more. Achievement has continued to rise; the curriculum has been adapted to be even more responsive to students' needs. There is a positive ethos. The working environment is exceptionally bright, cheerful and stimulating. Planning for improvement is exceptionally clear and focused. The centre has a justified high reputation in the area for supporting pupils on site and in other schools. The management committee carries out well its role of overseeing the centre and, for example, scrutinising and supporting the development proposals of the leadership. Having developed even further the centre's outstanding effectiveness as noted at the last inspection, it has excellent capacity to improve.

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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?	1
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	1

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

Inspection of The Pendlebury Centre, Cheadle Heath, SK3 ORJ

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I came to your centre recently. I enjoyed finding out about the things you are doing and talking to you. It was very useful to know what you think about your centre.

These are some of the things that are outstanding:

- You enjoy your lessons and achieve really well.
- Your attendance improves to a good level.
- During your stay at the centre you achieve superbly in the external examinations you take.
- The staff work as hard as they can to keep you safe and to offer you the support you need.
- Your teachers make lessons interesting and make sure you know how you can improve your work even more.
- The Pendlebury Centre is led and managed very well.

I have asked your teachers to ensure that an excellent approach used in some classes is used in all classes to equal effect. This is:

- to encourage you to assess your own work and your friend's work within class and to discuss this with each other as well as your teacher.

Thank you again for making me feel so welcome and good luck for the future.