

# Bishopton Centre

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111521
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees
<b>Inspection number</b>	310616
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mel Blackband

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	64
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graham Leck
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Ewart
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Wrensfield Road Stockton-on-Tees TS19 0AT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 393565
<b>Fax number</b>	01642 393577

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–16
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 April 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	310616

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The Bishopton Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provides for pupils who have been permanently excluded or who are on the roll of a mainstream school but undergoing a 12 week intervention programme. Some pupils are awaiting an alternative full-time placement. The great majority of pupils in Years 4 to 6 and Years 7 to 9 either return to mainstream schools or move to alternative provision. The pupils in Years 10 and 11 remain at the unit until they leave at the end of Year 11. All the pupils are White British and there are four times as many boys as girls.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good pupil referral unit. Its overall effectiveness has improved since the previous inspection, when standards were satisfactory. This is because systems and procedures, introduced after the inspection to monitor all the work of the centre, have been effective in helping raise standards.

As a result of their social and behavioural problems, the standards attained by pupils at the time of their entry to the centre are below average. Most pupils have experienced previous disruption to their schooling and many arrive with negative attitudes to education. Almost all the pupils, however, achieve well and a few make outstanding progress. For instance, nearly all the pupils who attend for short term placements are able to return successfully to their previous schools or to alternative provision within the 12 week timescale. This is because of their good academic progress and also because they make good progress in building their confidence and improving their attitudes to school and learning. The centre is equally successful in helping those pupils in Years 4 to 9 who have been permanently excluded to adjust to a different school. Older pupils in Years 10 and 11 remain at the centre until they leave at the end of Year 11. They make good progress in gaining a range of vocational qualifications which prepares them well for life after school.

The quality of teaching continues to improve and overall the quality is good throughout the centre. In most cases, specialist well qualified teachers from colleges and training providers teach pupils in Years 10 and 11. The teachers of younger pupils ensure that their lessons are interesting and well paced. As a result, the pupils enjoy their work and respond by trying their best. Teachers know their pupils' abilities well. This is a result of a thorough assessment of their abilities when they enter the centre. Pupils then follow individually tailored activities in English and mathematics. The results from the re-assessment of their progress after six weeks confirm that the pupils make good progress in these basic skills. This success plays an important part in preparing them to return to their schools. There are very good activities to provide the pupils in Years 10 and 11 with practical experiences of working life and which lead to a variety of challenging vocational qualifications. This provision is a strength of the school. The curriculum is further enriched by a variety of educational visits and residential experiences to extend the pupils' social and cultural understanding.

The pupils make good progress in their personal development. This underpins their motivation to learn and their good achievement. Their behaviour is monitored very effectively. All the pupils clearly understand their personal targets. Pupils with continuing behaviour problems are quickly identified and supported. The school's learning mentors provide a very high quality of support for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and this is one of the main reasons for the improvements in the pupils' behaviour and in their emotional and social development. As a result of good programmes in personal, health and social education (PHSE), the pupils learn to keep themselves safe and healthy. Their good progress in learning and using basic skills, prepares them well for their future learning. Most pupils value their school. This is evident through the good relationships they have with staff. The attendance of most pupils is satisfactory and overall is improving. While many pupils attend regularly, a minority, especially in Year 11, have poor rates of attendance despite the centre's best efforts. This has a negative effect on their progress. Parents are happy for their children to attend, knowing that they enjoy their lessons and that the centre has high expectations of their achievement.

The headteacher has led the centre well in improving its overall effectiveness, particularly in ensuring that staff work as a close-knit team and share a common vision. Leaders monitor the pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance robustly and have a clear overview of their progress in each separate area. There is however, insufficient use made of the results. Although the pupils have a good understanding of their behaviour and attendance targets, their learning targets are not always as focused as they should be and so pupils do not always know how to improve their work. This can slow down the pace of learning.

The management committee has developed a clear understanding of the centre's strengths and weaknesses. This is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. The centre evaluates its work accurately and as a result, development planning has improved, to focus more clearly on the priorities for improvement. There is therefore a good capacity for the centre to improve further.

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

- The centre should raise achievement further by working with pupils to set challenging targets which give clear guidance about how they can improve their work.
- Further develop strategies to ensure the better attendance of the minority of pupils with high rates of absence.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' attainment on entry to the centre is generally below average. Once in the centre, however, pupils make good progress in improving their attitudes to learning. As a result, standards have risen consistently since the previous inspection. The pupils in Years 4 to 6 and in Years 7 to 9 achieve well and a few make outstanding progress over the 12 weeks they spend at the centre. Most of these pupils are able to return successfully to a mainstream school. Girls and boys make equally good progress. Many pupils in Year 11 achieved well last year and gained the equivalent of at least one GCSE (A\* to G) through accreditation in vocational courses. Almost one in three gained the equivalent of five GCSEs (A\* to G). Most pupils leave with qualifications in Adult Literacy and Numeracy and in a range of NVQ, Entry Level and City and Guilds accredited subjects. Some Year 11 pupils achieve less well because of their poor rates of attendance. Most pupils make good progress in reaching challenging behaviour targets.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' good progress in all aspects of their personal development reflects the centre's emphasis on moral and social values. Their spiritual development is satisfactory. The pupils' understanding of cultural issues is good because they develop a strong sense of their local community through work and college placements. They learn about other nations, customs and beliefs in well planned curricular activities. As a result, they have a good awareness of diversity amongst races and cultures and they develop understanding of the cohesiveness of the local and wider community. Within the centre, pupils recognise that everything possible is done to give everyone a fair deal, no matter what their background might be. The pupils generally behave well. They value the centre's clear and consistent procedures to manage their behaviour. Pupils respond well to the praise and support they are given for their efforts and especially to the well organised reward system. As a result, they work harder, behave better,

and therefore improve their rates of progress. The achievement of some older pupils, however, is affected in some cases by low levels of attendance.

Parents confirm that their children usually enjoy their learning and this, combined with clear targets, helps them to improve their attendance compared with that before they joined the centre. Overall levels remain satisfactory but a small number of pupils in Year 11 are still poor attenders. The pupils develop an understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles through the emphasis on healthy eating and in the many opportunities to take part in physical activity, including rock climbing and other outdoor pursuits. The centre provides a safe environment and pupils are mindful of the need to assess risks and adopt safe practices. They make good gains in their social skills through their involvement in the pupils' council, on residential trips and through the well supervised leisure opportunities during breaks and lunchtime. The pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills and this, combined with the excellent range of opportunities which the oldest pupils have to learn about the world of work, prepares them well for when they leave school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and this reflects the effectiveness of the monitoring procedures by senior staff. Teachers and their assistants work in effective teams and they know their pupils very well. Individual pupils receive a high level of support when necessary. As a result, they become much more confident in attempting new things and this has a positive impact on their achievement. Teachers work from clear lesson plans and make good use of published schemes and national strategies in literacy and numeracy for delivering their subjects. This adds rigour to their teaching. Although teachers mark and assess the pupils' work thoroughly, this does not always translate into clear and focused learning targets. The pupils like their teachers and the support staff, and so respond well in lessons. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour very well. Pupils understand and respect the clear routines, and this assists in keeping a strong focus on learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum for pupils in Years 4 to 6 and in Years 7 to 9 is well balanced and matched appropriately to pupils' learning styles and needs. This helps the pupils to make fast progress and so to return successfully to mainstream schools or to enter alternative provision. There is a clear emphasis on developing the pupils' skills in English and mathematics. The pupils enhance their learning well through a range of extra activities. This adds considerably to their enjoyment of their learning and has resulted, for example, in improvements in the attendance of most pupils.

There has been continuing improvement to the arrangements for vocational and work related learning. The centre has developed excellent partnerships with many community based learning organisations. Year 10 and 11 pupils have an outstanding range of opportunities to develop skills off-site, with training providers or at local colleges. These courses all lead to nationally approved qualifications. This results in pupils becoming familiar with other places of learning and provides an excellent bridge to further study or training when they leave school. Almost all pupils leave for further education, training or employment. The range of learning activities,

however, has not yet been tailored sufficiently to motivate the small group of pupils whose absence rate remains high.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The centre provides a high standard of care for all of its pupils. Safeguarding procedures exceed national expectations. Support for pupils is outstanding. Learning mentors maintain excellent liaison with pupils, parents and other agencies. Parents report a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of information they receive from centre staff. The school makes determined and effective steps to improve the pupils' attendance although this remains lower than normally expected, particularly amongst a minority of pupils in Year 11. Due to good procedures for managing the pupils' behaviour, exclusions have been reduced over the previous year and bullying is a rarity. The pupils have a very clear understanding of their behaviour targets and how to improve their conduct. This has a significant positive effect on their self control and behaviour. However, teachers do not generally write the pupils' learning targets with sufficient precision to enable them to understand how to improve their academic work. Pupils gain valuable experience of a range of work related learning opportunities and they receive good advice and support as they are about to leave school. This successfully paves the way to further study or training.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and his senior staff have driven through substantial improvements since the previous inspection. The tracking and analysis of pupils' progress, of their improvements in behaviour and in attendance are much more effective. The senior team have a good overview of provision and this enables them to intervene decisively where underachievement is detected. The centre monitors its work well and has evaluated its own work accurately. For instance, leaders are aware that teachers do not yet set clear enough learning targets for the pupils.

The excellent communication and a strong team spirit enable staff to feel fully consulted, involved and valued. The quality of professional training is good and appropriately linked to the high quality of monitoring and performance management of teachers. This has made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The effectiveness of the management committee has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Members now monitor the centre's work rigorously and provide a good standard of strategic management.

**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](http://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 <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/or disabilities make progress	2

---

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

6 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishopton Centre, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 0AT

When I came to the centre recently, you made me welcome and I enjoyed meeting you. Thank you for your good manners and the way you helped me with my work. The Bishopton Centre is a good Pupil Referral Unit and it is obvious that you enjoy being there. These are some of the good things I found:

- you work hard and make good progress in your work and in being responsible for your own behaviour
- you have a good range of activities, which means you can successfully and quickly return to mainstream schools if that is appropriate for you
- lessons are interesting and you are well taught. This means that you enjoy learning and do your best
- older students have excellent opportunities to learn skills, which will be useful when you leave the centre in Year 11. This will help you to be more confident when you go into new situations or start further education or training
- all the adults at the centre look after you very well
- the centre is well managed.

The centre's work could be made even better if:

- the centre used the information about your progress in learning more effectively to give you a clearer idea of how you can do even better
- there should be even more effort made to encourage those of you with poor attendance to come to the centre more regularly.

You can help too, just by going on trying as hard as you have been doing to improve your behaviour, your attendance and your work in the classroom.

Yours faithfully

Mel Blackband

Lead inspector