

# Fordway Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124916
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	315088
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Charlesworth

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	15
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Simpson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Stanwell Road Ashford TW15 3DU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01784 243365
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The Fordway Centre is a pupil referral unit. It caters for up to 24 primary-aged pupils from north and west Surrey who have been, or are at risk of being, permanently excluded from mainstream school. Nine pupils currently attend the Centre full time, and six attend part-time, returning to their mainstream school for the rest of the week. Pupils are admitted to the Fordway Centre at any time during the year. The pupils all have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). Some also have mild autistic spectrum condition (ASC), and all have some learning difficulties due to their problems and disrupted mainstream education. There are currently no girls, all are White British and none are looked after by the local authority. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils under seven, and most were aged nine to eleven years. The school has been on the local authority's Additional Support and Intervention Programme (ASIP) for the past 16 months and was given a Notice to Improve after its last Ofsted inspection in September 2006. The acting headteacher, who has led the school for the past year, was appointed as the permanent headteacher in the week of the inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The Fordway Centre is improving well and now provides an adequate quality of education and care. The leadership and management are much improved and, having previously been inadequate, are now good. The ASIP team and management committee have provided effective guidance and support over the past year. The management committee is now led well and successfully fulfils its monitoring role. It contributes effectively to strategic planning for improvement. The headteacher has a very clear vision of how the Centre should improve. She has led and revitalised the staff very effectively, and they are now fully supportive and united in their pursuit of excellence. The Centre's capacity for further improvement is good.

In the last inspection, almost all aspects of the Centre's work, other than leadership and management, were judged to be satisfactory. The great majority are now good and reflect the impact of improved leadership and management. Teaching and learning are good, and pupils achieve well. The standards attained by individual pupils range from low to above average, but are broadly average overall. Over the past year, performance management has been implemented and staff have undertaken training to improve their skills. Teaching is more closely focused on supporting individuals because of the introduction of better assessment systems, rigorous individual education plans (IEPs) for each pupil, and support and training for teaching assistants. This has helped them focus on learning as well as behaviour, both of which they do effectively. The pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their IEPs, and their work and data from the new assessment systems show that they make good academic progress. However, the assessment information is not yet used effectively enough. This is because the targets set for each pupil in their English and mathematics books do not always derive from the assessments, and are often neither challenging nor relevant to the subject. Termly predictions for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics are not set in relation to individuals' capability, but as a 'blanket' expectation of progress. This means that only about one third of the predictions are met. The data are not yet used effectively to underpin school self-evaluation, or to set targets for the Centre's overall improvement.

The Fordway Centre has a strongly nurturing atmosphere, and pupils are very well cared for and supported. As a result, their personal development and well-being is good. The staff are very keen that pupils enjoy their education, as they feel this gives them the best chance of re-engaging with learning and gaining the skills they need for returning to mainstream and for their future lives. The curriculum is good and includes some outstanding enrichment activities. A programme of interesting visits and visitors to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned a year in advance. For example, an Aboriginal poet visited the school a short time before the inspection and the pupils' delight and involvement in the activities he presented are shown clearly in photographs. Individual pupils' attendance and behaviour improve as they start to experience success and gain self-esteem and confidence. Good systems are in place to help pupils learn to manage their own behaviour. Those who return to mainstream school generally manage themselves more appropriately and stay. The Centre assesses and tracks some aspects of pupils' personal development and uses the information effectively to set targets for behavioural improvement. However, it does not yet use the information to gain a wider view of improvement in personal development, or to contribute to school self-evaluation. The Centre puts considerable effort into helping pupils make safe and healthy choices, through

its everyday work and by specific curricular topics. Nevertheless, a few of its policies and practices do not meet the latest government requirements. In some cases, the responsibility for these lies with, or jointly with, the local authority, and there is not always sufficient clarity about where that responsibility lies.

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

- Use the data collected on pupils' progress in English and mathematics to set clear targets for each individual so they know what to do to improve, and to contribute more effectively to self-evaluation and whole school improvement.
- Together with the local authority, review policies to ensure they meet the latest government requirements.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' attainment on entry is generally below average due to their difficulties in mainstream school and the impact this has had on their learning. The Centre's first priority is to help pupils enjoy school and learn how to learn again, so they can fill in the gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This enables them to transfer successfully back into mainstream, or on to their next school. The Centre does this effectively, and pupils achieve well. In last summer's national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' performance was, on average, one level below that expected for their age, which is a good achievement. Assessment data show that most pupils make faster progress than expected for their age in English and mathematics. They use these improved skills to good effect and achieve well in other areas of the curriculum. The assessment data are used well to set appropriate targets in pupils' IEPs and they make good progress towards these.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils benefit from the family atmosphere of the Centre and the individual attention they receive. Behaviour and attendance are both satisfactory, which is a considerable improvement for almost all individuals from their pre-entry position. Incidents of challenging behaviour observed during the inspection mostly arose because pupils still find sharing and working collaboratively difficult. This is particularly so in the class for part-time pupils. Attendance has improved steadily over the past year as the Centre's effectiveness has increased. The pupils respond well to a broad programme of events to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils contribute back to the community by conforming to the Centre's expectations, behaving well in public, raising money for charities and developing an understanding of different faith communities. This supports the development of community cohesion. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities given for staying healthy. They suggested some very effective changes to the outside play areas, and particularly enjoy the traditional playground games that have been introduced under the 'Huff and Puff' scheme. Pupils learn to make safe choices, and understand and appreciate the 'posisteps' reward system and other means of commending success. The pupils clearly know right from wrong. They are developing the social and academic skills they need to continue to learn and become better prepared for adulthood and the world of work.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection because of the focus on developing the skills of the staff, the curriculum and resources. Central to the most effective teaching are consistent support for pupils' SEBD, good relationships, and the provision of interesting lessons with a strongly practical basis. Pupils are rewarded for ignoring incidents of challenging behaviour, for concentrating and for trying hard. Tasks are set to broadly match pupils' age and abilities, the pace of lessons is brisk, and teachers check pupils' understanding by the effective use of questioning. The interactive white boards are used very well to motivate and support pupils' understanding. On one occasion, a group of four boys showed real, sustained interest in learning about rhythm in poetry. This was because a film clip with appropriate sound effects and visual aids, and their own use of percussion instruments to make rhythms, reinforced the teaching very effectively.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum effectively underpins teaching and learning. All subjects of the National Curriculum are included for full-time pupils. The curriculum for the part-time pupils emphasises English, mathematics, and personal, social and health education because the centre's priority is to help them catch up in these core subjects so they can return full time to their home school as soon as possible. Recently, the pupils have been grouped into three mixed-age classes according to their prime need. These are: part-time shared placement, BESD and ASC. Planning is thorough and good use of commercial schemes of work successfully addresses the range of learning needs within the classes. Curriculum activities are short, practical and multi-sensory to help pupils remain interested and learn effectively. The staff's own skills and interests are used to motivate and engage the pupils. For example, in a recent activity fun day, pupils took part in a range of different activities set up and run like fairground stalls by each member of staff. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development very well. A recent successful topic day focused on an assembly entitled 'Is giving better than receiving?' The Centre is working towards the Healthy Schools award and the curriculum includes many suitable activities to support the development of healthy and safe lifestyles and community responsibility.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The personal care and support given to pupils is very good. However, some of the Centre's policies and practices do not meet current requirements. Staff are genuinely concerned about pupils' welfare and want them to enjoy their work, achieve well and make the right choices for leading safe, healthy and successful adult lives within their own communities. The Centre has close working relationships with the local authority, for example in relation to child protection and therapeutic support. Parents are welcomed at all times and are invited to celebratory events and to regular reviews of their children's IEPs. Any incidents or concerns are dealt with and recorded appropriately. The Centre carries out thorough risk assessments of all pupils and for all excursions. However, this good practice is not always underpinned by suitable systems and policies. For example, some necessary staff training has lapsed, a central record of staff checks and details has not been made, and the Centre has not yet written suitable policies to address

some equality issues. Regular assessments are made of pupils' personal development and academic progress. The information is used effectively to give pupils clear targets to help them improve their behaviour, and to set IEP targets. However, the academic targets entered in the front of pupils' books for them to refer to on a daily basis are not derived from assessment information and are often behavioural rather than subject based. Therefore, they do not give suitable guidance to the pupils on how to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The last inspection noted that although leadership and management were inadequate, the (then) new acting headteacher clearly knew what needed to be done to improve the Centre. Support from the ASIP team was already in place, and the management committee was strengthened shortly after the inspection to help it carry out its responsibilities and contribute more effectively to school improvement. The impact of this strengthened leadership and management has had a very positive effect on the Centre and it has improved steadily over the year. Performance management linked to raising pupils' attainment, together with suitable professional development have improved the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership team has high expectations of all staff to undertake continuous professional development in order to refine and improve their skills, and new appointments are made on this basis. The curriculum and resources have been developed, and effective new procedures have been implemented to help pupils manage their behaviour. As a result of these measures, pupils' achievement and personal development are now good. Effective systems are in place to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress, but these are not yet used sufficiently well to help pupils know what they need to do to improve their skills, or to underpin school improvement. The Centre does not have full autonomy and remains 'an arm' of the local authority; this is customary for a pupil referral unit. However, there has been a lack of clarity about the Centre's budgetary position and who exactly is responsible for certain required policies and practices. The local authority is currently addressing these matters.

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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?	3
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?	2
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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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?	3

<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>	3
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
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

1 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fordway Centre, Ashford, TW15 3DU

Thank you for letting me come into your lessons when I visited your school recently. I came to the Fordway Centre to see how it was working and how well you were all doing. When the Centre was inspected in September 2006, the inspector found that it was not working well enough and needed to improve in some important areas. I am very pleased to say that these improvements have almost all been made and the Centre is now working much more effectively. You are making better progress as a result. This is due to the hard work of the headteacher and staff, together with the help given by people from Surrey local authority.

The staff work very hard to care for you and make coming to the Centre enjoyable. They give you good support in a number of ways, and are helping you to become responsible, healthy citizens of the future. The staff give you a very interesting range of things to do which helps you concentrate and learn. I could see from the photographs how much you enjoyed the Aboriginal poet's visit, and the quality of your art work, also displayed around the Centre, is really good. Teaching is good, and you are catching up well and making good progress in literacy and numeracy. Most of you also behave well, although a few of you should try harder not to show off to visitors or each other as it distracts you from learning. Usually, though, you concentrate well and relationships between you and the staff are very good.

I have asked the school to make two further improvements. Firstly, the targets staff set in your English and mathematics books need to be clearer, so you know exactly what you should do to make your next steps of progress. Secondly, the senior managers should look at some of the Centre's paperwork and make sure that it is completely up to date. By doing these things, the Centre will be able to develop further and provide an even better quality of education and care for you.

With all good wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully,

Judith Charlesworth

Lead inspector