

Barking and Dagenham Tuition Service

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132816
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	316024
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Smith

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	188
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Ms Sarah Davies
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Arden Crescent Dagenham RM9 6TJ
Telephone number	020 8270 6000
Fax number	020 8517 4949

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Tuition Service is the only Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) providing for students aged 11–16 in the borough. Nine secondary schools are served and the large majority of students have invariably been excluded, or are at risk of being excluded, for their persistent disruptive behaviour. The PRU also provides for a small number of vulnerable students with mental health needs. A small number of students have statements of special educational needs for their difficulties. On entry the large majority of students are significantly under achieving because of the previous gaps in their education. Students come from a variety of social and economical backgrounds. The large majority are from white British families with a very small number coming from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest being from Black African and Caribbean families. There are around twice as many boys as girls and currently there are five students looked after by the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Tuition Service is a good and constantly improving provision. A number of outstanding features help to ensure that most students achieve as well as they can. The head of the centre works very effectively with the head of the service and provides inspirational leadership and a clear focus for improvement. Together, with a committed leadership team and hard working staff, they ensure there is a clear direction leading to improvement and the promotion of high quality care and education for all students. Student achievement and well-being are at the heart of all decision making and monitoring and evaluation of outcomes drives the centre's improvement planning. Parents and carers appreciate the progress their children make and the care and support they and their children receive. One parent said, 'My son has made good progress in his work and is much more confident and self assured'. Outstanding partnerships with schools and support agencies ensure students receive effective support and care for their needs. Schools are confident that the centre provides effective support for students and prepares them well for reintegration.

Overall, standards are average or just below. Given their starting points on entry the achievement and progress of most students is good. This results in a boost of confidence and self-worth and an increasingly positive attitude towards learning and making forward plans. Many students successfully reintegrate back into school and others who stay on, achieve GCSE qualifications often in line with their peers. A small number of students, whose attendance is erratic or poor do not achieve as well as their better attending peers. However, some students make good, sometimes excellent improvements with their attendance when considering their previous record. Academic and personal development targets are set and regularly reviewed with the students, and most are met successfully. This is because strategies for success are discussed and consistently supported. Students' good achievement is the result of excellent relationships, the relevant curriculum, good teaching and the outstanding care, guidance and support they receive for their individual needs.

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Attitudes are consistently good. They improve as students begin to realise that the staff have their best interests at heart. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent as a result of the relevant curriculum, mentor support and the everyday social interactions between students and adults. Learning mentors make a significant contribution towards students' emotional and social development, which is excellent. Students are polite and friendly and generally get on well with each other. Behaviour is good because of consistent management and clear expectations. Students clearly understand the importance of leading a safe and healthy lifestyle. The tracking of students' progress is developing well and students confirm they are clear about what they have to do to improve their work and personal development. The centre is aware of the need to analyse more carefully the data they record on students' progress. At present it is not being consistently and effectively used in planning and student target setting. There is a very positive and rewarding climate for learning where students can thrive and make good progress. There has been good progress since the last inspection and self-evaluation processes are effective in identifying areas for improvement and developments are clearly linked to student achievement. The management committee consists of relevant professional representatives and is enthusiastically led by a well-informed chair. They effectively fulfil their support and monitoring role and take a full part in the strategic management of the centre. Overall, leadership and management are having a positive impact on learning, enabling students

to make good progress and a successful transition back into mainstream education or into the next stage of their learning. The capacity to improve further is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve students' attendance.
- Ensure information on students' progress is effectively analysed and used to promote progression in their learning and to raise standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students make good progress from their starting points when they join the centre. Often their time in the centre is short or part of a respite arrangement. On arrival, a rigorous baseline assessment is made which is the basis for teacher planning and target setting in order to meet students' individual needs. Overall standards have been affected by the amount of disruption in students' learning prior to joining the centre. A recently developed central tracking system is beginning to track individual student progress enabling suitable interventions to be put in place. In some cases teachers have developed their own 'student friendly' system to enable students to check their progress independently as seen in art and design and technology 'traffic lights' system. Reintegration rates are good and carefully planned and coordinated support and encouragement enables many students to positively re-engage with learning and achieve success.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students say they feel safe and secure and enjoy their learning. As one student put it, 'Small groups make it easier to get on and concentrate on your work. Teachers listen to you and they know how I work'. Students appreciate the encouragement and support they receive that helps them to improve their attitudes and reach their challenging personal targets. Students are confident they can talk to an adult if they have any concerns and are treated with respect. The centre targets attendance and punctuality as important personal qualities for the future. As a result, attendance is improving and is broadly average. However, there are still a small number of students who have poor attendance, which affects their overall progress. Students are reflective about their social development and understand right from wrong. Breakfast and lunch are social learning opportunities with excellent opportunities for discussion. Many students reflect on their past and decide to make personal changes. The cultural harmony in the school is excellent. Students enjoy visiting many places of interest to explore British and International culture. The impressive joint projects involving sculptures and wall hangings are a testament to students' ability to appreciate each others' skills and talents. Behaviour is generally good and students learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and begin to appreciate the high standards expected of them. Students take part in work related activities where they gain confidence and acquire essential skills that support their return to school, further study, and future employment. This is as a result of very carefully and effectively planned provision.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall enabling students to make good progress. Student behaviour is managed well with clear expectations, enabling positive learning to take place. Teaching groups are small and the excellent relationships and support for individual needs ensures students get the best out of their learning and make good progress towards their individual targets. Regular monitoring has clearly identified where the very best practice is to be found, although it is not yet being shared most effectively to ensure a more helpful consistency in approach. Ongoing feedback, encouragement and support ensure students are clear about how they might improve their work in lessons, although National Curriculum levels are not always consistently referred to. Teachers know they need to use the information on students' progress more effectively to help plan relevant and interesting activities and ensure there is progression in their learning. Effort and achievement are rewarded at every opportunity giving confidence to students to try their very best.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is constantly under review. The centre works closely within the National Curriculum and examination board specifications so when students reintegrate into mainstream schooling they are not disadvantaged. Effective support from the link secondary school extends the curriculum by offering specialist subjects such as music and art to enrich students' experience. The focus on personal and emotional development prepares students well for their futures. Provision for basic skills has strengthened since the previous inspection, although there is inconsistency in the use of basic skills across all subjects. Improvement in information and communication technology (ICT) resources is improving students' use of computers. Planning effectively draws together the skills of the centre's staff together with the expertise of the many agencies that support the school, some offering counselling support for specific students. Positive use of local colleges and incisive monitoring ensures students are happy, confident and progressing in their studies. Extra curricular activities stretch students' imagination and self-belief for example, ice skating and outdoor pursuits, further developing personal qualities and team building.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Students at the centre receive outstanding care, guidance and support. Staff clearly demonstrate that they have the best interests of the students at heart and provide a safe and secure place for students to flourish. A parent wrote, 'My son really enjoys attending the centre and says he respects the staff and enjoys his lessons'. Effective procedures for safeguarding students are clearly understood by all staff. Vulnerable students are monitored very closely. Health and safety procedures are monitored and reviewed and supported by appropriate staff training. The centre works extremely effectively with support agencies to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to supporting students' needs. Effective support and guidance on the world of work is valued by the students and encourages them to explore wider job and training opportunities. Communication between the centre and parents is effective and parents appreciate the advice and support they receive. The strong emphasis placed on the personal development

and well-being is preparing students effectively for their future, building their confidence and self esteem.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The knowledgeable and forward looking head of centre and senior staff ensure the day-to-day organisation very effectively supports high quality care and education for all students. The head of service provides an additional and effective level of monitoring and strategic management. Staff roles and responsibilities are clear, their work is valued and consequently morale is high. There is clear communication and a consistent understanding of what needs to be done. The impact of everyone's work is clearly seen in the excellent care, guidance and support for students which enhances their confidence and re-engagement with learning. However, recorded data and student progress information is not analysed rigorously enough to ensure it influences planning, student target setting and progression in their learning. The management of the centre ensures there is an effectively coordinated multi-agency approach to supporting students' needs. The partnership with secondary schools is excellent, and headteachers and staff appreciate the support and preparation, which accompany the point of referral and reintegration.

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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 ¹ 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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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?	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?	2
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	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

19 May 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Barking and Dagenham Tuition Service, Dagenham, RM9 6TJ

Thank you for making us feel welcome during our visit to your centre. A special thank you to the group of students who met with my colleague and told her how they felt about their time at the centre. We agree with you and your parents that the centre is good and it does all it can to support your academic needs and personal development. The centre knows how it can improve further and you can help by keeping a close eye on your personal targets and most importantly, attending regularly. The following are some of the strengths we observed.

- All staff ensure the smooth running of the centre and your care and support is central to all their planning and actions.
- You are treated with respect and you show respect back in return.
- You get on really well with each other and all adults.
- You understand what is expected of you, which help to keep you safe and secure.
- You have very positive attitudes and learn to manage and improve your behaviour.
- You enjoy your lessons and make good progress in your learning.
- The curriculum effectively meets your needs and helps to prepare you for returning to mainstream school, attending college or when you leave school.
- The centre works extremely well with other people to help support your needs.
- The centre is always thinking how to improve provision and help you make even better progress.
- The head of centre has a clear view of how to improve your chances of personal success.

We have asked the centre to consider the following areas for improvement:

- help you to achieve improved attendance and punctuality
- analyse the information on your progress more carefully to ensure it is effectively used in helping you to make even better progress.

We had an enjoyable two days and we wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Mike Smith

Lead Inspector