

McKee Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134367
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	316259
Inspection date	8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	David 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	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kate Condron
Headteacher	Mrs Lynn Culbert
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2005
School address	Poulton Road Fleetwood Lancashire FY7 7LA
Telephone number	01253 770714
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The available accommodation includes the McKee Centre itself and two jointly-used rooms close to the main site. The students at the centre have all been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. There are more boys than girls on roll and a small number of students are in public care. The vast majority of the students are White British. A small proportion of students have a statement of special educational need because they are identified as having moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The centre is led by an acting headteacher and deputy headteacher. Many of the students live a considerable distance from the centre.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory centre. The acting headteacher and deputy headteacher are determined to continue to make improvements and the centre has a satisfactory capacity to improve. The staff team have helped to provide the essential stability which is needed by these vulnerable students. The management committee has an increasing range of expertise that has helped to ensure that satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. All stakeholders are frustrated by the continuing limitations in the accommodation but do not let this become a barrier preventing the achievement of most of the students. The centre provides satisfactory value for money.

Students' achievement is satisfactory. This is because of the satisfactory teaching and learning. The curriculum is also satisfactory but, in addition, a good range of activities and visits are organised to capture the students' interest. They make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 3 with a curriculum that is similar to that provided by mainstream schools. Their progress in mathematics and science is good. However, students' achievement in English is inadequate in Key Stage 3 and 4. This is because they make too little progress in their writing. Also, achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is inadequate as there are too few opportunities for students to apply their skills across the curriculum. In contrast, students are highly motivated and make good progress in subjects such as art and design and drama. The achievement of students in Year 10 is satisfactory in an appropriate range of academic and vocational courses. Most Year 11 students have appropriate individual learning programmes and their achievement is satisfactory. The majority have successful college and work placements. However, there are limitations in some courses for a minority of the students, leading to some inadequate achievement for these students.

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. The majority enjoy being at the centre and their attendance is satisfactory. They respond to the consistent management of their behaviour and their behaviour is satisfactory. Their adoption of healthy lifestyles is good as, for example, they respond well to advice on healthy eating. They also make a good contribution to the community and have helped the centre achieve a wide range of awards. Care, guidance and support are good and procedures to keep students safe are in place. Students are provided with a wealth of individual support and this helps to prepare them well for the next stage of their life. Good links with other agencies, colleges and work placement providers contribute to this good aspect of the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision for Year 11 students so that they all make good progress and their learning needs are met.
- Raise the achievement of students in English with a particular emphasis on improving writing.
- Raise achievement in ICT and ensure that it is used across the curriculum to extend the students' learning.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students' achievement is satisfactory. Due to their disrupted educational histories, the majority of students join the centre with standards of attainment which are below average. They make satisfactory progress but the gap created by the interruptions to their schooling is too wide to close before the end of Year 11 and they are unable to meet national expectations for students in mainstream schools. Most groups of students, such as those in public care and girls, achieve as well as their peers in the centre. The small number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Achievement at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory and most students are adequately prepared for the opportunity to return to mainstream education. They make good progress in mathematics and science as they work towards challenging targets. However, students' achievement in English is inadequate. In particular, they make too little progress in the quality and quantity of their writing. Progress in ICT is inadequate as there are too few opportunities to use computers in other subjects. Year 10 students make satisfactory progress in their GCSE and vocational courses. Most of the Year 11 students make satisfactory progress in a range of individual programmes and are particularly successful at college and in work placements. However, the learning opportunities provided for a few Year 11 students are not sufficiently challenging and, as a result, these students do not make enough progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. The majority of the students enjoy their time at the centre and attendance is satisfactory. They say they feel safe at the centre. A parent commented that, 'my son has settled well at school, is keen to go and has made good progress'. Students' behaviour is satisfactory. They respond well to praise and are aware of the consequences of any negative behaviour. Their adoption of healthy lifestyles is good and this helped the centre to gain the National Healthy Schools' Award. Students have the confidence to express any concerns they have to members of staff. They make a good contribution to the centre community and are keen to express their views about areas for improvement. Due to their care of the environment the centre has achieved the Eco Schools Award. Students are well prepared for moving students on to the next phase of their lives, including the development of workplace skills. This is helped by the good links with other agencies, colleges and workplace providers.

Quality of provision

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Typically, teaching in the centre is enthusiastic and there is satisfactory planning to meet students' needs. Members of staff work well together as a team, providing a careful balance of support and challenge to encourage students' progress. Due to the rigorous use of assessment, the planning in some lessons is particularly thorough and, as a result, students sometimes make better progress. The centre has achieved the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark which reflects their increased focus on assessment. Students respond particularly well to the practical opportunities provided in science

and accept advice on how to stay safe. They also thoroughly enjoy art and design and drama and make good progress in this aspect of their learning. Occasionally, when activities do not engage the students well enough and behaviour management is less consistent, students make insufficient progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The staff team are imaginative in the way that they overcome the limitations in the accommodation. They have developed good links with local mainstream schools and other providers to help meet the students' learning needs. A wide range of enrichment opportunities is provided including residential visits, such as a ski trip to Italy. Visiting artists and musicians make a valuable contribution to these aspects of the curriculum. The displays of students' art work are particularly impressive. An after-school club helps to promote the good quality of art and drama across the centre. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is appropriately linked to mainstream requirements and helps prepare the majority of students for their return to school. The curriculum for Year 10 students includes an appropriate range of courses. Students take great pride in compiling their Prince's Trust portfolio and enjoy their time at a local agricultural college. However, there are weaknesses in the curriculum at Year 11 with some courses and programmes providing too little challenge. Consequently, a small minority of the students make too little progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures for the safeguarding of students are in place and a high priority is placed on keeping them safe. Each student has a key worker to guide their personal development which is satisfactory, despite their past difficulties in education. Student's behaviour is managed consistently for most of the time which helps to foster an inclusive ethos and limits the use of fixed-term exclusions. A pupil commented that, 'staff really help me here, making clear what I can do and don't go on about what I do wrong'. A measure of the success of the relationships is that the students are trusted to take part in a wide range of visits including residential trips. The assessment systems in place to inform the educational process are now good, but have not yet had time to bring about good achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher do not let their acting status get in the way of making progress. They use their wealth of experience and enthusiasm to provide stability and ensure that the centre has a satisfactory capacity to improve. The management committee provides satisfactory support and challenge to senior leaders. Self-review is open and honest but takes too little account of the limitations in the curriculum provided for a small minority of the older students. Consequently, overall effectiveness is satisfactory rather than good, as judged by the centre. Senior leaders are fully aware of the centre's strengths and areas for development and promote a shared sense of purpose. However, development planning is not sufficiently focussed on the impact of actions taken to bring about improvements in students' achievement and personal development. The staff team have worked hard to bring about satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

Students contribute to the setting of appropriate targets and most are focussed on achieving them. Parents have confidence in the leadership of the centre.

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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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	3
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	3
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

9 May 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of McKee Centre, Lancashire, FY7 7LA

Thank you for making my colleague and I feel welcome and taking the time to talk to us when we came to see you at work this week. We were particularly impressed by the very attractive displays of your art work. Also, it is good that you have helped the centre achieve a wide range of awards that celebrate your care for the environment and adoption of healthy lifestyles.

The McKee is a satisfactory centre. You make satisfactory progress in your learning because of the satisfactory teaching and curriculum. I am sure that you enjoy your trips away with the school and working with the visitors that help to make your learning interesting. The senior staff and management committee ensure that the leadership of the centre is satisfactory. They provide you with good care, guidance and support. The behaviour of the majority of you is satisfactory and your attendance is also satisfactory.

We have three suggestions to further improve the centre. As you do not make enough progress in English, we have asked the centre to ensure that you have more chances to improve your writing. We have also asked the centre to provide you with more opportunities to use ICT in other subjects. Finally, we have asked the centre to extend the learning opportunities provided for some Year 11 students. You can help by working hard, behaving well and making sure that you attend the centre as often you can.

All the very best for the future

Yours sincerely

David Smith

Lead inspector