

Kingston Centre Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104286
Local Authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	324010
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Frank Price

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	39
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Gillian Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Valley Parkcampus Cromer Gardens Whitmore Reans Wolverhampton WV6 0TD
Telephone number	01902 558149
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Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector

Description of the school

The Kingston Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) educates primary-aged pupils whose education has been disrupted and who are in danger of being excluded from mainstream schools, due to their behaviour. At the time of the inspection, just over a quarter of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds but no pupils speak English as an additional language. Two pupils are from settled traveller communities, three pupils are in public care and three pupils are girls. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs and five more are undergoing statutory assessments. There are two pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Kingston Centre is good. It has some outstanding features. It provides a calm, warm, caring and stimulating learning environment to which pupils respond to extremely well. Relationships with pupils are outstanding and this does much to engage them in learning successfully. The headteacher sets high expectations for both behaviour and academic work. There is a clear sense of teamwork and passion to help pupils get back on track. There is now a more clearly defined role for the PRU than at the time of the last inspection and this has resulted in its greater effectiveness. It now does what a good PRU should do. It undertakes sharp, focused intervention to enable pupils to successfully return to school.

Standards of attainment for pupils on entry are exceptionally low for most pupils, with gaps in their learning due to the nature of their needs and disrupted schooling. From the Early Years Foundation Stage upwards, pupils make good progress in improvements in their behaviour, attitudes, social and emotional development and academic work. The majority of parents notice these improvements. One set of parents commented, 'We have noticed an incredible change in his behaviour, reading and writing'. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. Every effort is made to address barriers to pupils' learning, and exceptional links with parents are established to improve pupils' behaviour and learning. Links with schools are excellent and pupils are given good support to enable their transition to other schools to be successful. As a result of this, pupils' personal development is outstanding, given the difficulties they have when they enter the PRU. Pupils behave more maturely, become more articulate and develop their self-confidence very well.

Very effective teaching enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers know pupils well and manage their behaviour in a consistent, calm and effective manner. Teaching engages pupils' attention through lively lessons and excellent relationships, so that learning is enjoyable. The curriculum has been reviewed so that it now better meets the needs of pupils, to provide enjoyment of learning, equip pupils with academic skills and improve their personal development to enable them to reintegrate into schools successfully. The headteacher provides good leadership and management and has introduced some innovative features, such as the use of complementary therapies to address pupils' social, behavioural and emotional needs. The use of comparative data and relevant whole-school targets to help the management committee measure the effectiveness of the PRU are in the very early stages of development.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a good education for children and, as a result, they achieve well. Most pupils enter the PRU with standards that are well below the expected levels. However, they make good and rapid progress as they settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enjoy learning and start to make impressive gains in all areas of learning. Pupils do particularly well in communication, social and physical development. They make outstanding improvements in their behaviour and emotional development in a relatively short space of time, due to the very good liaison with home and the supportive relationships that are quickly established. Teaching is good and high expectations are set for pupils. For example, pupils are encouraged to extend their verbal skills exceptionally well by using whole sentences. Planning is meticulous and there is a good balance between teacher- and child-led approaches. Children are taught strategies such as how to behave appropriately and maintain concentration, which

benefits them when they return to mainstream schools. Activities, including the opportunity for outdoor learning through the forest school activities, motivate children very well and provide enjoyment. The promotion of the children's welfare is outstanding, with close links established with parents, schools and other professionals. Some aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage are still being embedded into the school, such as access to outdoor equipment which is suitable for younger pupils. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and ensure that the provision is bright, stimulating and well organised and that pupils are equipped with the necessary skills to return to school as quickly as possible.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the use of relevant whole-school challenging targets to fully measure all aspects of the work of the PRU.
- Develop the use of comparative data to measure its effectiveness against similar establishments nationally.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress from low starting points, as many have had turbulent experiences. Older pupils achieve well and some achieve close to national expectations by the time they are 11 years old. The majority of pupils make better than predicted progress and nearly all pupils meet their targets in their individual education plans. Pupils make the best progress in mathematics and science, and action has been taken to improve pupils' achievements in reading and writing. Pupils make exceptional progress in becoming calmer, more receptive to learning and more confident. A measure of successful progress is the high number of pupils who successfully return to mainstream or special schools and remain there, because transitions are well planned and managed. The average length of time pupils remain in the PRU has fallen sharply over recent years to approximately six months. This is because the PRU now has a clearly defined role and is able to address the needs of pupils swiftly and effectively. Pupils who are in public care and girls who are in the minority achieve equally well, as individual needs are carefully planned for and addressed effectively.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils make outstanding progress in improving their behaviour, attitudes, and social and emotional development. They benefit from the input of a wide range of therapies that the school has developed, some of which are extended to families. This results in pupils becoming calmer and better able to access learning and improves their social and moral development. Pupils recognise the improvements they make in their behaviour and social development. One pupil commented, 'I've improved loads'. Pupils enjoy learning about different cultures and faiths through trips and visitors. They learn to develop healthier lifestyles through participation in a wide range of sporting and leisure activities and they delight in growing their own food and experiencing a wider range of food.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy the stimulating lessons. Pupils cited mathematics and literacy as some of their favourite activities. Their enjoyment of school is also shown in the vast improvements they make in their attendance. They feel safe and greatly improve their self-esteem through their outstanding relationships with staff. They know what to do if they have a concern and are confident they will be listened to. Pupils respond well to the clear

expectations, which are consistently and sensitively applied in a positive way. As a result, there is a calm atmosphere in lessons and around the buildings. Although there is no formal school council, pupils are regularly encouraged to take on responsibility and express their views in class. They support the local and wider community, for example by taking part in charitable events. Pupils' economic well-being is outstanding as they are prepared exceptionally well for their next phase of education, which enables them to reintegrate successfully.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good teaching that pupils receive enables them to achieve well and make good progress. Lessons are calm, purposeful and stimulating. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and their behaviour improves greatly because they are motivated. Teachers have ensured their classrooms are bright, attractive and stimulating learning environments, where pupils' achievements are celebrated enthusiastically. Excellent relationships are at the heart of managing pupils' behaviour sensitively and with dignity. Pupils understand the systems of rewards and consequences and are keen to succeed. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to bring learning to life, such as the judicious use of video clips using the interactive whiteboard. Teachers use techniques such as aromatherapy, music and assertive discipline very effectively to calm pupils down and to encourage them to take responsibility for their actions. Occasionally, learning objectives are not shared with pupils at the start of lessons to focus pupils' attention on key facts.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provides a rich mix of opportunities and experiences for pupils. The curriculum has been reviewed to ensure that it fully meets the needs of pupils. It is extremely successful in equipping them with the skills and confidence to enable them to return to schools successfully. The curriculum has some innovative features, for example the use of complementary therapies such as play and art therapy to promote pupils' social and emotional development. Collaboration with occupational therapists has led to the introduction of a daily movement programme for younger pupils, called 'Cool kids'. There is a strong focus on promoting sport and outdoor leisure activities, as well as providing social and cultural experiences for pupils. Pupils enjoy the excellent opportunities to learn about different cultures and faiths through visitors and visits to places of worship and trips to London. There are a good range of lunchtime and extended school activities, which provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The welfare of pupils is paramount and the PRU recognises that many underlying issues have to be addressed for a pupil to access learning successfully. Staff work hard to forge close relationships with families so that there is a clear and shared understanding of how to overcome obstacles to learning. There are also close links with other agencies so that pupils' needs can be fully met. The arrangements for children's welfare and protection are robust. Pastoral care of pupils is exceptionally strong. The arrangements to promote pupils' emotional health and

well-being through input from therapists and the home-school support worker are excellent. Pupils know and understand what they need to do to improve their own behaviour and learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, together with the staff has established a calm, uplifting, positive and supportive ethos. For example, when pupils arrive classical music is played and this helps them to be more relaxed, calm and receptive to learning. Very effective teamwork is the hallmark of its work, where pupils are valued and praised constantly to encourage positive behaviour and attitudes. The headteacher sets high expectations and leads by example to establish extremely positive relationships which seek to build pupils' self-esteem. Staff take challenging behaviour calmly in their stride and successfully turn around pupils' behaviour so they make remarkable improvements. The PRU is well led on a day-to-day basis. For example, daily briefings take place, where areas of concern regarding pupils are shared so that there is a common understanding of how to deal with issues. Strategic leadership is equally effective. School improvement planning is shared with staff and is extremely thorough and highlights appropriate priorities to secure further improvements, and the understanding and appreciation of one another is promoted strongly. However, the PRU is too cautious in its judgements of how good its work really is.

The management committee and local authority have worked together to clarify the role and purpose of the PRU, which has resulted in its greater effectiveness. They have ensured that it is very well resourced in terms of good accommodation and equipment. The committee meets regularly and provides effective support and holds it to account effectively. Given this, the PRU has a good capacity to improve further. The headteacher is aware that the use of comparative assessment data, so that the PRU can measure how well it is doing against similar PRUs and the use of relevant whole school challenging targets, so the management committee can fully measure all aspects of its effectiveness, are areas for further improvement.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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

¹Grade 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

How good are 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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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 learners' needs?	2
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

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	2
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 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**

30 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kingston Centre, Wolverhampton WV6 0TD

I enjoyed my visit to your centre and meeting and talking with you. There is a very positive and purposeful atmosphere in your centre and this helps you to be more relaxed, calmer and better prepared for lessons. You make good progress in your lessons and in improving your behaviour. Staff look after you exceptionally well and they often work closely with your families. This helps you to overcome obstacles, so that you make excellent progress in becoming more mature and self-confident.

You are taught very well. Many of you said how much you enjoy lessons, including mathematics! Staff have an informal and relaxed approach and are firm but fair. There are clear rules that you understand, which help to improve your behaviour. The centre provides an exceptional variety of subjects for you to study and interesting experiences such as trips and visits. Your headteacher and those who help to run the centre do a good job in making sure it is well run and a safe and happy place to be.

To make the centre even better, I have asked staff to develop ways of measuring all aspects of the work of the centre. I have also asked senior staff to check the work of the centre against similar centres in other parts of the country to see how good it is and if any further improvements can be made.

You can help to make the centre better by working hard and improving your behaviour, so that you can return to school quickly.

Yours faithfully

Frank Price Lead inspector