

Primary Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131555
Local Authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	328612
Inspection date	21 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	10
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Philip Ram
Headteacher	Mrs Anne-Louise De Buriane
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2005
School address	Gibbs Green Mund Street London W14 9LY
Telephone number	020 7385 3908
Fax number	020 7385 3908

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the unit and investigated the following issues.

- How well does the unit succeed in re-integrating pupils successfully into mainstream schools?
- How effectively do lessons meet the full range of pupils' needs?
- How successfully does the unit assess and track the pupils' progress?

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, by observing lessons, scrutinising the unit's records of pupils' standards and achievement and other documentation, and by discussions with pupils and staff. Parents' responses to questionnaires also informed judgements. Other aspects of the unit's work were not investigated in detail.

Description of the school

The Primary Pupil Referral Unit is part of the Gibbs Green complex. It shares its site with a special school providing for the needs of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It provides support for pupils permanently excluded from school or at risk of exclusion. At present, all pupils attend the unit part-time and spend either two or four days in mainstream schools. It aims to return all pupils to a mainstream school within 6 weeks. Pupils are mainly boys of white British and Afro- Caribbean heritages. All pupils have special educational needs and most have difficult histories in mainstream schools. Pupils join the unit throughout the year, often with very significant gaps in their learning. Currently, there are no pupils younger than eight years attending the unit. Following a period of turbulence at senior level, a new headteacher took over in April of this year, partly to clarify the role of the unit and partly to oversee the move to new premises on a mainstream school site next year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The unit's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Some aspects of its work are better. This includes pupils' personal development, the school's partnership with others and the extent to which pupils are re-integrated into mainstream schools. Few parents returned questionnaires, but one noted, 'My child's behaviour has improved and he is making wonderful progress in his mainstream school'.

In the time since the last inspection, the unit has experienced much staff turbulence at senior level. In the transition to new leadership, however, it has refocused its core purpose, recovered well from unforeseen difficulties, and clarified its role within the local authority's provision for behavioural support. At the heart of the unit's new-found purpose is the able guidance of the present headteacher. Staff have been challenged to develop provision so that the unit not only manages the behaviour of the pupils well but also focuses sharply on their progress in learning. As a result, all pupils now spend as much of the week as possible in mainstream schools, well supported by the unit's staff.

The unit is very effective in working with pupils to modify their behaviour. A well-orchestrated system of rewards and clear expectations builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem. They begin to realise that they can achieve. Pupils feel safe in the unit and know that all staff are genuinely concerned for their welfare. In this secure environment, previously disaffected pupils feel part of the school community. As a result, most pupils attend regularly and enjoy school. The unit's information, however, does not show how much the pupils' attendance improves compared with their previous records. Pupils behave well and clearly know what is expected of them, even if occasionally, they find it difficult to conform. In an assembly, pupils were proud to present their best work, ask sensible questions of each other, and celebrate others' achievements. Pupils also enjoy the healthy breakfasts and interesting lunches, sometimes linked to themes in the curriculum. When pupils study Black history, for example, the catering staff serve a typical Caribbean dish. All pupils have a good idea of what constitutes a healthy diet and most enjoy the good scope for physical activities within the ample school grounds. Through their school council, pupils raise money for an African charity as well as contributing well to the life of the school in helping with day-to-day organisation. Pupils' personal development is good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good overall. Excellent links with a broad range of specialist agencies, including mental health care and the social services, help the unit to support pupils, and where needed, their families. The unit tracks the pupils' progress in their personal development very well. However, robust information on pupils' academic starting points to provide a useful base line from which to measure their progress in the unit is not readily available. Also the staff have only limited systems to assess and follow pupils' learning both in the unit and in the mainstream school sessions. Consequently, lessons make little use of information on the pupils' earlier learning to consistently meet their individual needs and provide further challenge.

There are some real strengths in classroom practice but overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour is very well managed and this supports their learning effectively. Working relationships are warm, and pupils enjoy the many positive opportunities for speaking and listening and for drama. Classrooms are bright and cheerful and include a range of stimulating resources. However, all pupils from Year 4 to Year 6, have the same literacy targets

so that work does not necessarily match their needs. Marking is also unrelated to the pupils' targets. Similarly, in mathematics, some able pupils lack opportunities to extend their learning as their errors in notation are not always picked up.

Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future education because they begin to make up lost ground in their learning, develop positive attitudes to school work, and learn how to relate to adults and their peers. Standards are below average, particularly in writing but average in speaking and listening. So far, the unit has not co-ordinated its curriculum with the pupils' work in their mainstream placements. Given the current balance of the time pupils spend in both settings, this is a matter of priority as it can lead to repetition of work and lack of challenge.

Because of the new leadership of the unit and the local authority's plans for its future, there is now a very clear vision for development. The leadership of the current headteacher is good and the overall leadership and management of the unit is satisfactory. Established senior and middle leaders have not yet fully established systems and procedures that are separate from that of the special school. As a result, the unit finds difficulty in evaluating its work as a separate entity. Monitoring of the quality of the pupils' classroom experiences has concentrated on their engagement and enjoyment in the session rather than on learning. Self-evaluation remains informal although broadly accurate in identifying areas for improvement. However, the lack of formal self-evaluation processes has meant that staff have not had a realistic view of the overall quality of the unit's provision. The recently established management committee is now taking its responsibilities seriously and is putting in place systems to enable it to play a full part in the unit's development. This is an improvement on the limited challenge previously offered the unit by governors and ensures close scrutiny of its work. The skill and determination of the current headteacher has already had an impact on the rate at which pupils are re-integrated successfully into mainstream education. Despite recent difficulties, staff have continued to ensure the welfare of the pupils come first, the unit has demonstrated a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Secure detailed information on pupils' academic performance on joining the unit and establish ways to check their progress both in the unit and in their mainstream placements.
- Ensure that the curriculum within the unit dovetails with the pupils' work in mainstream classes.
- Make sure that all lessons are planned to meet each pupil's needs.

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.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

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

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?	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	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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	2
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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

07 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Primary Pupil Referral Unit, London, W14 9LY

Thank you for welcoming me to your happy school and for sharing not only your ideas and opinions but also your lessons. I was pleased to see how politely you speak to each other and to your teachers. You all think your unit is a 'nice place to be' and I agree with you. It is giving you a really helpful second chance and providing you with a satisfactory education. Your teachers have excellent partnerships with others so that they can help you and your families. Your headteacher is working really hard to make sure the unit is as good as it can be.

It is particularly good that you are able to spend part of your time in the unit and part in your main school. Because you attend regularly and enjoy your work, you are making steady progress in literacy and numeracy. This happens also because lessons are planned successfully to give you a wide range of activities. Most of all, however, you are making really good progress in improving your behaviour.

Your teachers and support staff know you all individually and look after you well. You know that there is always someone to help you if you are distressed. You try to eat healthily and certainly get plenty of exercise in your excellent playground. You confidently express your views but are also learning to listen to others. You understand the importance of helping those outside your community and support a very good cause in Africa.

When thinking about how your unit could be even better, I asked your teachers to gather better information on your learning and to match closely your work in schools and in the unit. I also asked that lessons should take better account of your particular learning needs.

I wish you a very happy future and hope you use your time in the unit well to help you settle successfully in your main schools.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Nolan

Lead Inspector