

The New Broadwalk PRU

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132741
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	328675
Inspection date	29 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael McDowell

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	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr A Humphreys
Headteacher	Mrs D Ramsay
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2007
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Age group	11–14
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

New Broadwalk Pupil Referral Unit provides mainly for girls and boys aged 11 to 14 who have been permanently excluded from their secondary schools. It also makes provision for a small number of students who, with parental agreement, spend up to a term away from their secondary schools to improve their classroom and learning skills. Its remit is to return students to mainstream or specialist education as soon as possible. The average stay at the unit for permanently excluded students is eight months. Students come from the whole of Salford. There are far more boys than girls. There are a few students who are looked after by the local authority and a very small number from minority ethnic groups. In all cases English is the language principally spoken at home. Many of the students have had significant interruption to their education and a high proportion has involvement with the youth offending service. A small number of students have statements of special educational need because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities and others are being assessed for statements. The number of students entitled to free school meals is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This, as its students and their parents believe, is a good unit. It is a measure of its effectiveness that it is extremely rare for students who have attended the unit and moved back to mainstream school to be permanently excluded once more. Parents notice a change for the better in their children's behaviour and schoolwork shortly after they start to attend the unit. Students say that they especially enjoy the many activities that the unit provides.

Achievement is good. Typically, before coming to the unit, students have missed a good deal of schooling and their standards are below those expected. Within their comparatively short stay they make up lost ground. When they move on their standards are broadly average and in a minority of cases good. Progress is best in mathematics in which all do well and a minority do exceptionally well. Progress is good overall in reading. However, while all make gains, progress in writing is not quite as strong. This is because many students have not previously been successfully engaged with writing and lack the motivation to write carefully, accurately and at length. At the unit, lessons are beginning to provide them with the stimulus to improve and extend their written work. Students make at least satisfactory progress in science but a minority make very good progress. There is no significant difference in achievement overall between majority and minority ethnic groups or between girls and boys. Children looked after by the local authority do as well as others. Those students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve well in relation to their capabilities.

Improvements in achievement since the last inspection have been brought about by good teaching and learning. Teachers know their subjects and their students' needs well. Lessons are well planned and interest is sustained by the use of a broad range of learning activities. This was not always the case in science when learning was focused on writing skills. For this reason more practical approaches to learning have recently been adopted and these are paying off in increased student interest and better understanding. Personal development is good. Over their relatively short time at the unit students improve their attitude to learning and come to recognise what they must do to benefit from education. Students are well aware of healthy lifestyles and most thoroughly enjoy physical activities. They feel safe at the unit and they behave safely. They trust their teachers, the teaching assistants and their mentors to help them and to deal with any difficulties. They like their lessons and activities and show this by coming to the unit more frequently than they used to go to school. Attendance is satisfactory overall. The unit takes all possible steps to deal with non-attendance.

The curriculum is good and plays a crucial role in sustaining students' interest in learning. It is enriched by an exceptional number of opportunities for learning outside of the classroom. The curriculum supports the promotion of community cohesion satisfactorily. This aspect of work is not as well organised as it could be and does not contribute fully to students' understanding of the many different communities in this country and across the world. The unit provides good support, care and guidance. It makes the safety and well-being of its students a high priority. Necessary risk assessments are made. Steps are taken to ensure safe use of the internet. There is good liaison with parents and other agencies to promote students' education and welfare. Students are kept well informed about their progress and about their future options.

Leadership and management are good. The head of centre and her staff have improved provision and driven up standards. Targets for improvement are challenging and met regularly. The unit monitors students' performance and keeps progress towards its development priorities under

review. It is accurate in its self-evaluation. The management committee meets regularly. It holds the leadership of the unit to account and offers good support and direction. The unit is well placed to make good improvement. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve students' achievement in writing and science to match the consistently good and occasionally outstanding levels achieved in reading and mathematics
- Plan the unit's work to promote community cohesion more fully so that students learn even more about the many different communities in this country and across the world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Because of previous interruptions to their education students' standards are below those expected for their age when they enter the unit. However, as a result of good teaching and a curriculum that captures their interest students make sustained progress. Their achievement is good. When, after a relatively short period of time, they move on from the unit their standards are in most cases broadly average and in a minority of cases good. The unit's own records and the national assessment results for 2008 show that progress is best in mathematics in which students make good or, occasionally, exceptional gains. Progress in English while less marked is still good. Students do particularly well in improving their reading. However, students start at a much lower point in writing and their progress, although consistent and at least satisfactory, is not quite as strong. Students make measurable gains in science in which they make satisfactory progress, although a minority achieve very well. Their scientific knowledge and understanding develops best when their lessons involve learning by doing. In other areas of the curriculum and especially in information and communication technology (ICT) and practical subjects students also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students benefit from the readily available help and support offered by the unit. They begin to improve their attitudes to work and to comply with the expectations of the classroom. They start to think of others beside themselves, to work collaboratively and to take pride in what they achieve. The school council is active and students know that their ideas to make the unit better are taken into account. They show empathy by, for example, helping children with severe learning difficulties at Salford Sports Day or collecting for charity. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Cultural development is slightly less well developed and, while they have some understanding, students need further opportunities to explore the full diversity of communities in this country and around the world. They report that they feel safe at the unit and that they are unaware of any bullying or racist behaviour. They behave well and there is no significant disruption of learning. Students from all backgrounds get on well with one another. When they join the unit, students whose previous attendance was poor, come to the unit much more frequently. They say that they enjoy their education. This is evident in the interest and commitment they show in lessons. They particularly like the many exciting opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. Through their good progress overall in acquiring literacy, numeracy, ICT and social skills the students are well prepared for their next phase of education and for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

As a result of good teaching and learning overall students achieve well. Teachers know their subjects well. Through careful observation and assessment they rapidly find out what each of their students know, understand and can do. They take account of each student's capabilities in planning lessons and setting work. They have high expectations and set challenging targets. Together with the teaching assistants they give students all the support needed to attain these. Teachers keep lessons lively by using a variety of practical learning activities. Students' interest and participation does however, begin to flag on occasions in lessons when writing activities become the focus. Relationships with students are very good and there is generally a calm and cheerful atmosphere in lessons. Sound use is made of ICT. Generally teachers make clear to each student what they are doing well in their work and what each must do to improve. Students' progress towards their individual targets for behaviour and attitude are also reviewed at the end of each lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of students well. There is a necessarily strong, emphasis on the development of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Units of work are matched well to students' levels of concentration and are linked to an overall theme. This term the theme is, 'The Credit Crunch'. Students are well served by good educational opportunities that promote their health, safety and personal development. The unit is well equipped and offers as much as possible of the National Curriculum in preparing the students well for their return to mainstream school. Personal, social, health and citizenship education, (PSHCE) is well developed. The curriculum is exceptionally enhanced by many opportunities for students to learn beyond the classroom. For example, students attend the 'I can do It' programme which offers them experiences ranging from bicycle riding and maintenance to film making, the 'Gears+' project, that offers students hands-on technological experience, and horse riding. Elements of the curriculum, especially PSHCE, support satisfactorily the promotion of community cohesion but planning for this is not as rigorous as it might be.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The unit gives first priority to making sure that students are safe. It strongly promotes their health and well-being, for example, by providing each student with a healthy breakfast and lunch and through the PSHCE programme that provides education about drug, alcohol and substance abuse. The unit is well on the way to attaining the Healthy School Award. The unit knows what is still to be done to complete the criteria for this award. It has gained the Sportsmark award for the opportunities for physical activity that it offers. Child protection policy and procedures are in place and staff are familiar with these. Relevant and challenging academic and personal targets are set for each student and they are kept informed about their progress. However, occasionally the feedback process at the end of lessons in which it is made clear to students how they have got on is a little too rushed. Through the unit's productive links with parents, external agencies and other schools students are given good opportunities to make progress and swiftly return to mainstream education. Vulnerable students and their

families are well supported. The unit identifies students at risk or in crisis and takes an effective lead in bringing together relevant external agencies to help.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The unit has moved on well since the last inspection in 2007 when it was judged to be satisfactory in most respects. It has successfully addressed the areas for improvement that were raised. The leadership has succeeded in bringing about improvements in students' achievement and in teaching and learning but there remains more to do. The head of centre, assisted by her deputy, has created a sense of purpose among staff. Teachers and teaching assistants are now more confident and competent in their management of students and in handling challenging behaviour. The unit is effective in its commitment to inclusion and to equality of opportunity for all students. It seeks out the views of parents and students and acts on these to improve provision. The management committee carries out its role well and is supportive of staff and students. It plays a full part in setting priorities and overseeing expenditure. It works with the head of centre to ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently. As a result the centre is well equipped and has good resources, for example, for ICT, food technology, art and science. Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements.

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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?	2
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/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?	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	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 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?	2

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?	3
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**

Thank you for being so courteous during the inspection of your pupil referral unit (PRU). Several of you took the trouble to talk to me and you gave me very helpful information. It is clear that you enjoy the exciting things to do that your PRU offers you and that you like and trust your teachers, teaching assistants and mentors. Understandably, some of you are looking forward to going back to school. If you keep working as well as I saw you work you will definitely succeed in this aim. You told me that you feel safe and that there is no bullying or racism at your unit. You were, however, confident that if you needed to, you could turn to your teachers for help and you would receive it. You were well informed about healthy diets and the importance of exercise. Some of you really enjoy the breakfast you are given if you get to school on time. You told me that you thought the work you were given was at the right level for you and that you get the help you need to reach your targets.

I found that you achieve well and make good progress but that you could do a little better in writing and in science. You do well in learning to change those parts of your behaviour that have got you into trouble in the past. You are now more considerate and think of others as well as yourself. You are given lots of exciting and interesting things to do both in the classroom and out of it. You are taught well. The unit takes good care of you, keeps you safe and lets you know how you are getting on. The leadership and management of your unit are good.

To help the unit improve further I have asked the head of centre and her staff to help you progress in writing and science as well as you do in reading and mathematics. I have also asked them to plan ways of enabling you to know more about the many different communities in this country and across the world. You can help by always coming to school and arriving on time.