

St Peter's Teaching Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134109
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328832
Inspection date	24 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	9
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Lynn
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2006
School address	Ash Ward St Peter's Hospital Chertsey KT16 0PZ
Telephone number	01932 874761
Fax number	01932 874761

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- achievement
- teaching and learning
- personal development and well-being
- care, guidance and support
- aspects of leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from performance data, observations of teaching and work produced by pupils. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, parents, members of the management committee and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

St Peter's Teaching Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) situated adjacent to the children's ward in St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey. It educates boys and girls with medical needs and emotional needs. The great majority of learners are from White British backgrounds. The maximum length of stay is about two terms and is often much shorter. The centre's main aim is to enable pupils to continue with their studies at an appropriate level in order that they may return to mainstream education. Very recently, the centre has been involved in a local authority initiative to provide early intervention programmes to pupils deemed to be at risk of absence in local mainstream schools. The headteacher has been in post for nearly two terms. The centre has gained the Healthy School award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Peter's Teaching Centre provides good quality education where the pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development, which equips them very well for their return to mainstream education.

On arrival at the centre, all pupils' standards of attainment have been adversely affected by illness, which may have led to significant time out of school. By the time they leave, they have made good progress. For example, last year two students achieved good passes in their GCSE studies and there are similar expectations this year. Younger pupils are able to resume their education in mainstream schools at levels in keeping with their achievement prior to becoming unwell. In lessons, the pupils make good progress in their learning. For example, in English they showed a good understanding of a poet's use of language. In mathematics they clearly understood terms such as 'median', 'mode' and 'range', and in history they were able to discuss relevant events that contributed to the decline of the Soviet Union. Achievements are regularly celebrated and the classroom is adorned with pupils' work. Their art work is displayed in the paediatric ward and is highly appreciated.

The pupils' behaviour is outstanding, as are their attitudes to study, and relationships are warm. This represents considerable improvement for some, particularly those who have previously been reluctant to attend full-time education. The pupils eat healthily and sociably at lunchtimes. They readily respond to opportunities to help with meal preparation. They make good use of the limited space for physical activity and occasionally use facilities in the local community for sports such as horse-riding. From discussions with pupils, it is clear they recognise the impact that the centre has had on their personal development and studies. They show due concern for classmates who may have medical needs that require additional equipment. Fund-raising for others less fortunate than themselves is a regular event. Parents indicate they too are very happy with the centre's effect upon their children. Comments included: 'Being at the centre has proved to be one of the most important events in my child's recovery...my child has caught up with study and now looks forward to college...an amazing place...the staff go out of their way...thanks from the bottom of my heart!' The centre has also recently started to measure how much pupils' attitudes towards themselves and their study have improved. This work involves the pupils reflecting upon how they feel. The evaluation of this new initiative is at an early stage and has not yet been shared with the management committee.

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is typified by good relationships and close attention to individual needs. Specialist teachers are available as required, for example when pupils are studying science at GCSE level. Occasionally, when pupils are taught in groups, some starter activities lack challenge for the most able, but the individualised programmes soon resume and their content is tailored to each pupil. Good use is made of assessment, including the involvement of learners in assessing how they have done. Teachers' assessment of course work is duly moderated by the pupils' host school and this feedback also helps the pupils make good progress. Teachers work collaboratively with the teaching assistant, who works closely with individuals under teachers' guidance. All staff make increasingly good use of information and communication technology.

The curriculum is good and relevant to the needs of individuals. There is a strong emphasis on the maintenance of programmes that were being followed prior to entry. Alongside academic studies, there is also extensive input into pupils' social and emotional development where

appropriate. This feature is embedded within the personal, social, health and citizenship programme. In this respect, the centre successfully lives up to its motto of providing 'nurture and challenge'. Older pupils have regular access to careers, education and guidance as well as work experience where appropriate. Current pupils have already secured places at a local college of further education. Good use is made of visitors to enrich the curriculum. For example, a drama group worked with pupils to produce a short film.

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. The staff work very closely with families, host schools and all relevant agencies to provide well-integrated provision. The centre enjoys excellent working relationships with the majority of schools it works with. For example, comprehensive information relating to pupils' achievements and areas of concern is provided by the schools to the centre. This enables the centre to focus on the precise learning needs of the pupils with minimum delay. A few schools do not respond in the same timely manner, which inevitably means that some pupils get off to a slower start. However, the centre has a wide range of tools to make accurate assessments that inform individual learning programmes. As a result of this effective partnership, the centre provides tailored programmes to facilitate a successful return to mainstream education. The small group and individual attention provided also has a positive impact upon pupils' well-being. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are informed by the most recent guidance.

Driving the centre forward is the highly committed, newly appointed headteacher. Using her significant teaching experience at the centre, she has very quickly demonstrated good capacity to take the centre, its staff and its work further. They have developed good systems to see how well the centre is doing and what needs to improve. For example, the curriculum is subject to regular review through attendance at subject leader meetings in the local authority. Additional training needs have also been identified in relation to meeting the needs of pupils with additional complex needs. The local authority's expectations of the centre have recently been extended to support pupils in secondary schools who are at risk of becoming non-attenders, although this has not yet been formalised within the centre's stated purpose. Despite being a very recent initiative, there is telling evidence that this early intervention role is effective. Schools report that the vast majority of pupils referred now attend much more regularly than previously. The management committee provides good support for the work of the centre. Their highly relevant expertise is used effectively, although their monitoring role in development plans is under-emphasised. The centre has made good improvement since the previous inspection and, in a short time, leaders and managers have demonstrated a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- In liaison with the local authority, ensure that all schools provide timely information about pupils referred prior to admission.
- Fully evaluate the information it has recently gained on pupils' improved attitudes towards themselves, their peers and their study.
- Ensure the monitoring role of the management committee is clearly identified in the centre's development planning.

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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/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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	2
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**

20 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Teaching Centre, Chertsey, KT16 0PZ

Thank you for your warm welcome recently.

I found that the centre gives you a good education while you are there and does an outstanding job in enabling you to get back to full-time education. One of the main strengths of the centre is the outstanding care, guidance and support it gives you. Your parents agree and, like everyone else, they see its impact on your personal development, confidence and well-being. The other really important thing is the way you carry on with school work and catch up if you need to. I know you recognise that the staff have helped you to get qualifications that will help you when you leave school.

The teaching you receive from the staff is good. The lessons are planned well so that you do not miss out on what is going on back at school. I was pleased to hear how much you enjoyed being at the centre and you play your part by behaving so well and looking after each other. You also know that the staff are there to help if you have problems. You get on well with the staff and do your best to see that everyone can get on and learn in class. The centre works hard to keep you fit and healthy and you know what it takes to have a healthy lifestyle.

In order to improve the centre further, I am asking the headteacher to ensure that your schools send really useful information about you before you even get to the centre. I am also asking staff to have a good look at what they know about your improved attitudes and, finally, to ensure that the management committee has a clear role in making sure the centre is developing well.

I wish you every success for the future. Good luck!

Yours faithfully

Greg Sorrell

Lead Inspector