

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@Ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mr J Mannino
Centre Manager
The Oxford Centre
278A Whitegate Drive
Blackpool
FY3 9BS

Dear Mr Mannino

Ofsted survey inspection programme: the extent and quality of provision for pupils from day 6 of exclusion

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Tuesday 07 October 2008 to look at your work in providing for pupils from day 6 of their permanent exclusion.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included interviews with you and members of staff responsible for delivering the day 6 provision, scrutiny of relevant documentation, discussion with two pupils and the observation of a lesson. My judgements are related to the arrangements and outcomes for pupils whose exclusions meant you had to provide education for them from day 6 of their exclusions.

The overall effectiveness of the provision made for permanently excluded pupils from day 6 was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

The achievement of the pupils provided for from day 6 of permanent exclusion is good. The length of time pupils stay in the day 6 provision varies according to the complexity of their needs but all are moved to suitable permanent placements, including mainstream schools, as quickly as possible. The achievement of the two permanently excluded pupils presently on roll, who were observed taking part in an imaginative PE lesson alongside other pupils, is good. In a series of physical challenges they strove hard to better

their previous performances. Tracking records show that they are also making good progress across the curriculum. Basic information arrives with pupils. The centre seeks further information from schools where necessary. However, in order to be sure of accurately matching work and expectations to each pupil the centre makes full initial assessments. These assessments lead to the setting of realistic targets which are frequently reviewed. Pupils meet their targets in most instances.

Quality of teaching and learning of subject/aspect

The quality of teaching observed for the pupils in day 6 provision was good. The pupils suppressed their negative impulses even in a competitive environment. They were fully engaged in what they were doing and co-operated well with one another. This was because they have positive relationships with staff. When, as was the case in the observed lesson, their interest is captured and learning is by "doing" they make notable progress. The teachers and support staff both challenge and encourage their pupils so that they surpass their own expectations.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good for the pupils in day 6 provision. It meets individual needs well. At Key Stage 3 the centre provides the full National Curriculum so that pupils who have been permanently excluded can maintain their education in readiness for re-integration to mainstream school. The curriculum directly addresses the pupils' behavioural difficulties. It is very imaginative in providing them with opportunities to show trust in others and earn respect from them in turn. Pupils learn to think of others besides themselves.

Leadership and management of subject/aspect

The leadership and management of the day 6 provision in the centre is good. A sensible decision has been made to educate the few permanently excluded pupils alongside those who attend the centre as part of the managed transfer process because the needs of these pupils are very similar. The accommodation provided meets the requirements of pupils well. Pupils say that they enjoy attending the centre and that it has helped them both in their academic work and in terms of their personal development. This view is supported by attendance, which, in this context, is good. The head of centre is a confident leader who has a clear understanding of the educational priorities of his pupils. He ensures that pupils do not leave the centre until they are ready and are likely to succeed. Techniques for managing and changing behaviour have been introduced that are clearly successful. Liaison with other agencies is good and ensures that pupils and their families get the support and help that they need. Parents appreciate what the centre has done for their children. The centre is well supported by the LA and well thought of by schools. However, when pupils whose needs are especially

complex are placed on roll it can prove very difficult to move them on to another school. The Educational Diversity PRU provides many alternative pathways for older learners but suitable provision for younger day 6 pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties is hard to find. The local authority does not maintain a special school for such children.

Inclusion

From the outset the pupils in day 6 provision are helped and encouraged to work alongside others and to build up their awareness that they are part of broader society beyond the school. They are helped to contribute and to learn from very special experiences such as the zookeeper's course. This together with the gains they make in their academic work prepares them well for re-integration.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- Working with the local authority to find clear learning pathways, within a school environment, for younger pupils whose needs are such that they are unlikely to be met in mainstream school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the day 6 provision in the centre.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Michael McDowell
Additional Inspector