

# Whiteheath Education Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103887
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	336184
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Frank Price

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Rowena Challoner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Throne Road Rowley Regis B65 9JP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection looked at classroom teaching and other learning activities in the centre. Approximately 40 per cent of the time was spent looking directly at learning; five lessons and five teachers were observed. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and a representative of the management committee and a variety of people who work in partnership with the centre. Various documents including the centre's development plan and its extensive safeguarding policies were scrutinised. Fourteen parental and carer questionnaires were received.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how successfully pupils move back to school or access education or training through other providers or colleges
- how well the senior leadership team and management committee use quantifiable data to judge the overall effectiveness of the centre
- how perceptively self-evaluation has been used to bring about improvements
- to what extent the curriculum provides vocational courses for pupils
- how well pupils gain an understanding of other cultures and awareness of global issues.

## Information about the school

Whiteheath Education Centre is the home and hospital tuition service for Sandwell borough. Pupils are taught in a variety of settings including the Whiteheath centre, pupils' homes and the hospital classroom at Sandwell General Hospital. Pupils referred to the service have medical or psychological/psychiatric difficulties which make it difficult for them to attend their mainstream schools. Often pupils have missed a significant amount of schooling prior to attending Whiteheath. Pupils have varied backgrounds but a significant percentage are from lower social and economic backgrounds and have experienced a period of underachievement at school. There are very few minority ethnic pupils. The nature of the service means that the pupil population is transitory and year groups are constantly changing as new pupils join

- and other pupils are reintegrated into mainstream education, particularly in the hospital and home tuition service. There are plans in place for the centre to be co-located to a new shared campus with other schools in 2011.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

'Every school should be like this one,' commented one pupil, accurately summing up the outstanding effectiveness of the centre. It is successful in turning around the lives of pupils, who have often had negative experiences of schooling due to the nature of their medical difficulties. Parents and pupils are adamant that the centre transforms them into more confident and aspirational young people. The key to the success of the work of the centre is the diligent leadership and management of the headteacher and determined teamwork by staff at all levels, which focus on meeting the needs of individual pupils as flexibly and sensitively as possible. The headteacher has created a warm, supportive and positive learning environment where pupils enjoy attending and start to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Senior leaders, including the management committee, have a good understanding of the strengths of the centre and its areas for continued improvement, particularly the need to analyse and use assessment data more effectively so that pupils' good progress can be measured more clearly. The centre's self-evaluation is broadly accurate, although occasionally too cautious. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the centre has improved its effectiveness in a number of key aspects of its work, for example the quality of the curriculum and the care, support and guidance offered to pupils. Given the track record of continued improvement and the evident levels of commitment and dedication of staff at all levels, the centre has good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' broadly average levels of attainment reflect good progress across a range of academic and vocational subjects. Key to this good progress is highly effective teaching and an outstanding curriculum, which offers a wide range of subjects that is carefully tailored to the pupils' needs and interests. Pupils benefit from teachers' good subject expertise and stimulating lessons which foster excellent attitudes to learning and behaviour. The positive and supportive relationships enable pupils to feel exceptionally safe and comfortable, promoting their self-confidence and self-esteem very effectively. The care, support and guidance pupils receive are outstanding. Pastoral systems are superb, so that any issues hindering pupils' progress are quickly addressed. A counsellor works regularly with pupils, so that their emotional health and well-being are promoted strongly. There are numerous examples of pupils suffering from traumas, where they were reluctant to attend the centre. Often they received home tuition initially and then gradually accessed learning at the centre. Consequently, attendance for the majority of pupils improves dramatically. They are exceptionally well prepared to either return to school or to pursue their next stage of education. Nearly all pupils go on to successful training or education and some progress on to study at university.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress by sharpening the use and analysis of assessment information.

### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

In lessons, pupils are involved in their learning and respond with interest and enthusiasm to the tasks set. They enjoy learning. Progress in lessons is consistently good, with pupils extending their subject knowledge and confidence. The progress of a few pupils is affected by chronic ill-health or poor attendance. Many pupils achieve higher than expected grades due to effective teaching and careful tracking of progress which quickly identifies when targets need modifying, so that pupils do not tread water. Some pupils commented that their grades were better than they had initially expected. Pupils achieve creditable passes in five A\*-C GCSEs, particularly in science, art, English, modern foreign languages and humanities. Pupils' achievement whilst receiving home tuition is often lower, as it is a reflection of their more complex medical needs. The centre is successful in enabling pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to return to school to continue their education. In the hospital, the length of stay is usually very short, but pupils are given access to learning in the classroom or at the bedside.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Relationships in classes and around the centre are excellent. Pupils feel safe and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are first rate. Responsibility is developed through a regular rota of tasks to be carried out by pupils. They take pride in their centre, and this is evidenced by the high quality artwork and displays on the walls. The opportunity for pupils to gain academic and vocational qualifications and to participate in a wide variety of experiences such as being involved in projects to help with the local community equips them well for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b>	
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>2</b>
	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

In lessons, pupils make good progress because teachers have a combination of good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how medical conditions impact upon pupils' learning. Teaching is lively and engages pupils' attention and motivation very well. For example, in a science lesson, pupils were keen to carry out an experiment on energy efficiency by testing out the properties of double glazing. The assessment of pupils' progress is simple but effective. Baseline assessments are carried out on pupils in all subjects when they start at the centre and this information is used well to set challenging targets, which are kept under close review. The curriculum includes a wide range of interesting activities and experiences, and this is also a factor aiding pupils' good progress. A wide variety of academic subjects, including modern foreign languages, are offered and there is a particularly strong focus on promoting pupils' personal, social and emotional development. The centre has introduced vocational courses such as child development and health and social care, and these have been popular with pupils and have enabled them to achieve externally recognised qualifications.

Very strong links with parents and a range of partners such as health and education professionals help pupils to overcome barriers to learning. Pupils' access to a counsellor helps them to become more emotionally resilient. The centre works hard to create a supportive and caring environment to provide stability and confidence to pupils. Pastoral systems are exceptionally strong with daily tutor groups used very effectively to discuss issues of concern with pupils and provide guidance on the next steps of their education. Pupils receive excellent support from the Connexions personal adviser, which helps to raise their expectations and develop their confidence for the future.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>
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## How effective are leadership and management?

The good leadership of the headteacher, together with committed staff, has resulted in a clear focus on securing improvement. The headteacher enjoys the confidence of parents, staff and pupils. A supportive ethos, where everyone is valued, underpins an uplifting environment and pupils respond well to this. The management of the centre is outstanding, particularly as teaching takes place in a number of different settings and it provides a seamless service for pupils. Staff morale is high and they set high expectations for pupils. The management committee are supportive and increasingly are providing challenge and are beginning to measure the work of the centre more effectively.

The centre involves parents and carers very closely in its work and keeps them well informed. Many parents describe the centre as a lifeline and rightly hold its work in high regard. Target setting for pupils is rigorous and is very effective in helping to raise pupils' attainment, so that they can achieve good examination results. This close attention to monitoring pupils' progress ensures that all pupils, whatever their difficulties, achieve equally well. However, the analysis and use of assessment data to measure pupils' progress, when compared to other pupils, so it knows how well pupils are achieving, is underdeveloped. Improvement planning, although satisfactory, is not linked closely enough to issues identified in the centre's self-evaluation. The school has outstanding links with a range of other people, which are used to benefit pupils by increasing the range of their experiences and raising their aspirations. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and the school balances the need for pupils to be safe against giving them opportunities to develop their independence very well.

An emphasis on promoting tolerance and respect and encouraging responsibility underpins much of the centre's work. This makes a good contribution to the promotion of equality and tackling discrimination. The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to be involved in projects in the local community such as volunteering at a local care home, trips to art galleries and visits to the House of Parliament. Assemblies and tutor groups provide valuable opportunities to discuss and raise money for global issues such as the environment and natural disasters.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>

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<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents have very positive views of the centre and value highly the work that it is doing. One parent felt the levels of communication could be improved and another felt that the behaviour of one child could have been managed better. However, nearly all parents and carers feel that staff at the centre are helpful and listen to the needs of their children. They recognise that pupils' confidence is rebuilt and this results in improvements in academic grades. One parent commented, 'This school is a blessing, without it I don't know what my son would have done.' The overwhelmingly positive views of parents and carers reflect the inspector's judgement of the quality of the centre.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whiteheath Pupil Referral Unit to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspector received 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 36 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	50	7	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	86	2	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	86	1	7	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	64	4	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	86	1	7	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	71	2	14	1	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	36	8	57	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	8	57	5	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	93	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	71	2	14	0	0	1	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	71	2	14	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	79	2	14	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	79	3	21	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



1 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whiteheath Education Centre, Rowley Regis B65 9JP

I enjoyed my visit to your centre and meeting and talking with you. Many of you told me how well you do at the centre and the findings of my visit confirm your positive views about the education you receive. The centre provides you with an outstanding education and this helps you to get back on track in either returning to school or progressing on to your next phase of education. Your centre performs particularly well in a number of areas. The way staff look after you and give you outstanding support, guidance and encouragement is first rate. The areas of study that you can follow are also outstanding and this is important in providing you with the continuity of a high quality education.

You make good progress in your academic education. Your personal development is outstanding and your behaviour, attitudes to learning and understanding of issues in the wider world are excellent. The headteacher, the people who have responsibility for overseeing the centre and all the staff do a good job in ensuring that your centre continues to improve. Your teachers are good at knowing how to get the best out of you. In order to make the centre even better, I have asked senior staff to refine the way it measures your progress, so that it has a clearer idea of how well you are doing when compared to other pupils nationally.

You can help to improve your centre by ensuring you attend lessons and continue to work hard. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Price

Lead inspector

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