

# The Newstead Centre - A Short Stay School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104418
<b>Local Authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	336305
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Clare

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	CLlr Norman Keats
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mike Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Bracknell Avenue Southdene Kirkby L32 9PW
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 477 8382
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 477 8383
<b>Email address</b>	newstead@knowsley.gov.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–16
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	336305

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 11 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the management committee, local authority, staff and students. The inspectors observed the centre's work, and looked at a wide range of documents including data on students' progress, teachers' planning, curricular documents, students' files and the centre's self-evaluation. Questionnaires were received from seven parents and carers. The inspectors also read questionnaires from students and staff.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the centre's work and looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of girls at both key stages
- whether teaching is sufficiently challenging to raise standards from a low level
- students' attendance and behaviour given the school's efforts to improve them
- how well the curriculum meets students' complex needs
- how effectively the new distributive leadership provides clear vision and direction for the centre.

## Information about the school

Newstead is a short-stay centre, which provides for students who either have been, or are at risk of being, excluded from their mainstream schools. All students have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties and many have additional learning needs. The centre serves Knowsley and the surrounding area. Students remain at the school for about three terms. Fifteen students are dual registered with mainstream schools. Seven students have a statement of special educational needs. Of the 68 students on roll, the majority are boys. All students are of White British origin. There is a very small number of looked after students. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average.

Since the last inspection, the role of the centre has changed. The head of centre is also the head of Knowsley's Service for Inclusion with responsibility for behaviour improvement. The centre's outreach programme, entitled the Student Turnaround Programme (STAR), was introduced this year to support students in Key Stage 3 at risk of exclusion from secondary schools. The student population at Key Stage 3 is much more transient than at Key Stage 4. Since September 2009, 67 students have attended the STAR centre on short-term placements.

The centre has achieved Sportsmark.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

### Main findings

The Newstead Centre – A Short Stay School provides good-quality education and outstanding care, guidance and support for its students. All staff know students exceptionally well and are keenly aware of their individual needs and circumstances. Students appreciate the high level of personal support they receive and enjoy attending the centre; one commented, 'You couldn't ask for a better school'.

The centre is a calm and supportive environment which helps students to rebuild their confidence and self-esteem. An ethos which promotes self-responsibility and positive choice permeates the centre and is the key to the rapid progress that students make in their personal development. They learn to overcome social, emotional and other difficulties as a result of the trust and quality relationships they develop. This helps them to make good progress in their learning.

On entry a large majority have low attainment in English and mathematics. As a result of high expectations, consistently good teaching and rigorous tracking of students' progress attainment rises rapidly in the short time students are at the centre but overall remains low. Careful matching of students' skills and abilities has resulted in a good improvement, year on year, in the number of students completing and gaining national awards at GCSE or entry level. These and a range of vocational qualifications prepare students satisfactorily for the future and represent good and often better progress for individuals.

Students say they feel safe, secure and valued. They have total confidence that staff will resolve any problems. The school's determined efforts to improve very low entry-level attendance has secured significant advances at Key Stage 3 where overall attendance is better than average for a pupil referral unit. At Key Stage 4 the centre also makes good progress in raising levels of engagement for previously non-attending students but attendance remains low.

Good teaching, positive reinforcement and well-structured lessons capture students' interest. The curriculum is well managed and responsive to individuals' needs; however, use of information communication technology (ICT) is underdeveloped and limits opportunities for students' independent learning.

Central to the school's good improvement is the drive, vision and enthusiasm of the head of centre, who is ably supported by the leadership team. The centre is generally accurate in its self-evaluation and good systems are in place to monitor performance. The STAR unit is a valuable and proven resource which effectively supports students in danger of exclusion. Procedures to secure good teaching and learning are effective and rigorous analysis of assessment data points to areas for future improvement. As a result,

**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

the centre has a good capacity to improve further. Community cohesion is successfully promoted at a local level, but there is less focus on extending this beyond the school's immediate community.

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

- Raise attainment further by:
  - – improving access to ICT across the curriculum
  - – enabling greater independence in learning
  - – extending work in partnership with other agencies, parents and carers and with students to improve attendance further.
- Strengthen the school's contribution to community cohesion by ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the different cultural, social and religious traditions in modern Britain and globally.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
---

Many students arrive at Newstead having had unhappy or difficult times at other placements, which have left them angry, challenging or with negative attitudes to learning.

Most take good advantage of the opportunities offered to them to make a fresh start. They learn to 'make the right choice' and to think about their actions. The excellent support students receive promotes a willingness to contribute to activities and students do so with increasing confidence. This is particularly seen in practical sessions, for example when one group cooked spaghetti bolognaise their enthusiasm to participate in the process of creating the dish, excellent cooperation with partner 'tasters' and willingness to complete written evaluations highlighted their progress very effectively. As a result, their interest in learning improves and they enjoy their lessons. Students are punctual to their classes, settle well and take pride in their work. Their progress would be enhanced by more frequent opportunities for independent learning. Behaviour is generally good. Good relationships ensure that students respond well and disruptions are kept to a minimum.

Students across both key stages achieve well academically from their individual starting points and make good progress in the various aspects of their personal development. Those students who stay at the centre the longest make the most progress and consequently the most significant gains in their attainment. Students with additional needs make good progress because staff know them well and work is planned effectively to meet their needs. The very small group of girls at the centre attain higher levels than boys, which reflects their higher ability on entry. The small number of students looked after by the local authority achieve as well, some better, than others in their groups.

There is an increasing focus on academic success, achieved alongside the more traditional vocational routes. In 2009 all students entered achieved GCSE or entry level

**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

English and mathematics, and all attending collegiate courses gained skills- based qualifications. Tracking indicates further extension through flexible BTEC subjects, undertaken when appropriate. For example, several Year 9 students have already achieved BTEC passes, one achieving two A\* grades earlier this year. These successes encourage a high proportion of students to move on to further education, training and employment.

Students feel safe in school. Almost all students choose outdoor and sporting activities at lunchtime to improve their health and they enjoy being able to book relaxation therapy sessions. They make a good contribution to the development of the centre and recently, through the school council, were able to achieve the introduction of residential visits. Community links with the elderly are developing and the school organises a range of visits to broaden pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. Their understanding of the wider cultural and religious traditions in modern Britain and beyond is less well developed. Students show positive attitudes and are generally respectful of each other's needs, difficulties and opinions. They are well prepared for their return to mainstream schools.

*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>	4
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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</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.

**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

## How effective is the provision?

The good progress that students make is a reflection of good teaching. Planning is good and builds systematically from what students have learned. Teachers and support staff work together very well using targeted questioning with much praise to boost students' confidence as learners. Students enjoy creative arts and practical tasks, and teachers use these well to reinforce their learning, for example creating 2D representations of the relationship between atoms and protons in a science lesson to illustrate their movement. Learning objectives are emphasised and checked at the end of most lessons. Marking is timely, assessment data used well and students' progress is recorded regularly. There is a shared view of what constitutes good progress. Behaviour is managed calmly and efficiently. Students are clear about their learning targets and what they should do next to improve their work. Lesson grades and a points system reinforce appropriate effort, attitude and progress in learning. Through this system, students learn how consequences apply to their actions.

The curriculum is well managed, flexible, and carefully planned to meet the varied needs of different groups. It is underpinned by an appropriate ladder of accreditation.

Vocational and work-based learning are particular strengths. Students acquire good work-related skills, learn how to follow instructions and work cooperatively with others. Courses are appropriately selected from academic, vocational and mixed 'pathways' combined with sporting opportunities and personal skills development. Although ICT is taught as a discrete lesson, its application across the curriculum is limited.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding in all aspects and drive the good progress of the centre. A team of mentors provide individual counselling and confidential advice. They manage transition expertly to and from the centre, home tuition and the STAR programme. Reintegration is a major focus and the centre's reintegration rates have improved significantly this year. Attendance is closely monitored by a dedicated officer, and the centre provides its own transport to back up provision for students who meet at agreed pick-up and drop-off points. Although attendance has much improved this academic year it requires constant monitoring and review. All adults associated with the centre contribute to the very high standard of care and guidance provided.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

**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

The head of centre's energy in driving the centre forward promotes equally positive responses from staff. Morale is high across the centre. Close teamwork has ensured good progress since the last inspection. Senior managers have clearly defined roles and provide good direction. Teachers feel encouraged to extend their professional knowledge and teamwork is especially strong.

The centre knows itself well. Development planning focuses on improving key aspects and extending the very successful STAR provision. The management committee provides the centre with complementary skills, experience and good levels of support and challenge. Good relationships with parents and carers and effective links with external agencies are firmly established.

The centre tackles equality of opportunity well and is proactive in ensuring that there is no discrimination or harassment. As a result, it is now turning its attention to the needs of the more-able students and developing higher-level qualification courses.

Safeguarding procedures, including risk assessments, are good and there is a high level of trust in the centre and its staff. Detailed checks are in place to ensure the suitability of all staff and child protection procedures are thorough.

The development of the leadership team has been crucial in extending the partnership work with secondary mainstream schools. The impact of this very successful initiative has been to reduce secondary exclusions significantly and to ensure that a very high proportion of STAR students returned to and remained in mainstream education. The links established provide improved reintegration routes for Newstead students.

Partnerships with other schools and the local community are good and help to promote cohesion in the school and its immediate vicinity. This work does not as yet extend sufficiently to wider community links to prepare students better for life in a diverse society. The centre provides good value for money.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>



**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

**The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money**

**2**

## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are very positive about The Newstead Centre. Many value the personal contact that is a feature of the school and the relationships they have with school staff. A small number of questionnaires contained appreciative comments, which recognise and value the high level of care, support and encouragement provided by the centre. The inspection evidence also supports this view as most of the outcomes for students were found to be good, the centre's partnership work with parents and carers is good and pastoral support systems are outstanding.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Newstead Centre – A Short Stay School 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 inspection team received 7 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 68 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	6	46	3	23	4	31	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	7	54	6	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	46	6	46	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	77	1	8	2	15	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	46	6	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	46	6	46	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)	6	46	5	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	62	3	23	1	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	46	5	38	2	15	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	77	1	8	2	15	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	77	3	23	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



30 June 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of The Newstead Centre, Liverpool, L32 9PW

Thank you for talking to us and for your help during our visit to your centre. We found what you had to say and your questionnaires very helpful in informing our judgements. Newstead is a good centre and we could see why so many of your parents and carers are pleased with how well it helps you. The excellent levels of care and guidance provided by all of the adults at the centre help keep you safe, and support you very well. Your behaviour is generally good and you are making good progress in your work. You told us that you found your teachers to be helpful and supportive, and most make your lessons interesting by involving you actively in learning. We agreed and found the quality of teaching to be good. The curriculum helps you to develop your vocational skills and provides the chance for you to work towards a good range of qualifications for the future.

The head of centre and the other managers are good leaders and they are always trying to improve the school for you. I worked very closely with your head of centre and agreed on what Newstead should do to make it even better. I have asked the leaders to help you achieve better results by:

- developing your ICT skills
- providing you with more opportunities to learn independently
- making sure that you all attend the centre regularly.

I have also asked them to make sure that you develop an understanding of the different cultural, social and religious groups of people in Britain and globally.

You can help everyone by attending regularly, enjoying your time at the centre and continuing to work hard.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda Clare

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**