

Educational Diversity

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131772
Local Authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	341217
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Pauline Hilling-Smith

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	6–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Ron Bell
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Casson
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent 50% of inspection time in lessons, visiting 26 lessons given by 23 teachers, and held meetings with members of the management committee, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books, the headteacher's reports to the management committee, school development plans, policies and evaluation documents as well as 13 parental questionnaires.

- how well work is matched to pupils' needs
- the effectiveness of teaching to promote pupil progress
- the effectiveness and efficiency of leadership and management in making improvements.

Information about the school

Educational Diversity is a complex pupil referral unit (PRU). It is much larger than average and numbers are constantly changing; at the moment numbers are increasing. It operates on seven sites with a Nursery attached to one of the sites for the babies of the very small number of young mothers attending the PRU. All pupils have experienced considerable difficulties attending their mainstream or special school, due to behavioural, medical, social or emotional issues. A small proportion of pupils are dual registered. The majority of pupils are in Years 10 and 11 and almost all pupils are of White British origin. A large majority of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

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

Educational Diversity is a good PRU with some significant strengths. Once at Educational Diversity pupils and groups learn well. Pupils aim for challenging targets and leave with a range of results that are broadly average. From their low level of attainment on entry, this represents good progress. Those with a statement of special educational needs progress well because of the effective individualised teaching and support they receive. Pupils say they feel safe at the PRU and are confident about the way staff deal with any issues they may have. As a consequence, pupils' attendance improves dramatically, though overall it is low. Recently a team of pupils were nominated for a business enterprise award for all pupils in Blackpool, which they speak about with great pride. In the majority of lessons behaviour is managed well and relationships are strong, which contribute to good learning and progress. However, on occasions, the focus on what pupils should learn by the end of the lesson is not as clear as it should be. This means it is more difficult to assess whether learning has been successful and plan the next learning steps

The curriculum is effective and includes information and communication technology based modules for full time study at home, vocational learning experiences and traditional GCSE courses in Key Stage 4. New courses have been introduced this year to match the curriculum even more closely to pupils' needs. Care guidance and support for the pupils are outstanding, which enables them to make the most of the opportunities available. For example, partnership with parents on an individual basis is very effective and the work carried out with other agencies involved with the pupils is exemplary. This means that individual pupils' learning and well-being are very well catered for. The on-site Nursery provision is first class and young mothers continue their education confident that their babies are safe and happy.

The headteacher and senior staff monitor the work of the PRU well and put in place plans with clear targets for improvement. Self-evaluation is strong overall. The management committee are fully involved in identifying targets and approving timescales and, as a result, improvement is driven forward well. Whilst promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory, it is stronger in relation to the PRU and the local community than in pupils' understanding of the national and global context; the impact of this work has not been evaluated fully. Safeguarding is taken very seriously and complies fully with requirements. Good progress has been made towards the areas for improvement set at the last inspection. This track record of continuing improvement and accurate self-evaluation indicates that there is good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve pupils' attendance by evaluating more rigorously the success of current strategies for improving attendance.
- Improve pupil's progress and the quality of teaching in lessons by ensuring learning targets are always explicit and precise so that assessment informs subsequent work more sharply.
- Improve the provision's contribution to community cohesion by evaluating the effectiveness of current practice and by focusing more clearly on national and global issues.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' achievement and enjoyment are good. In most lessons pupils work diligently to produce their best work, they take part enthusiastically in responding to questions and show pride when they know they have done well. In a mathematics lesson pupils were acquiring new knowledge in finding the area of a circle, and each pupil displayed their understanding within a short period. Pupils progress particularly well in English because they receive very clear and full information about what they need to do to improve. Outstanding achievement in drama brings English alive and contributes powerfully to pupils' confidence. In art, some pupils produce excellent work and attain high grades in GCSE examinations. Results in mathematics are not quite as high as English due to the lack of specialist teaching in the recent past. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding well in history, geography and religious education alongside gaining information and communication technology qualifications. In Key Stage 2 pupils gain close to the national average in end of key stage tests in mathematics, science and English. At Key Stage 3 a large majority gain the national average in a range of subjects. At Key Stage 4 an increasing number of students at 'the Grange' and a large majority of students at the 'Speedwell centre' gain good grades in a number of subjects in either subject examinations or vocational courses.

Behaviour is good and managed well. Pupils take increasing responsibility over time for their behaviour. Pupils respond well to expectations and additional guidance given by the staff and this contributes well to their learning. Pupils are usually polite and considerate towards adults. Over the last three years there has been a rising trend of pupils returning to mainstream education. Outdoor pursuits and physical education are given a high profile and pupils are eagerly involved; activities are much enjoyed. Pupils understand the main issues with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle and try to take action in accordance with these. Pupils contribute well to the school community through participation in discussion and being involved in making any agreed changes such as decorating to chosen colour schemes. They participate in raising money for an international children's charity and they successfully work alongside adults with physical difficulties in their drama productions. Young mothers learn well about budgeting while pupils from the 'complementary provision', whose attendance has been previously low, understand why they must arrive at placements on time and attend consistently. Attendance at Key Stage 2 and at the home and hospital service is much better than at Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils' enthusiastic participation in a recent visit to a Sikh temple

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and their reasoned judgement about how this had developed their understanding of different cultural backgrounds is clear.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching overall is good with instances of satisfactory and outstanding teaching seen during the inspection. In the best lessons what is to be learned is clear, the pace is brisk and support assistants expertly prompt improvements in learning or behaviour. In these lessons questioning is used well to assess how learning is progressing and to challenge thinking. In some satisfactory lessons, although activities are clearly described, what is expected of pupils in their learning is not as explicit as it should be. Also, assessment does not point as precisely as it could to the next steps in learning. This constrains pupils' progress from being even better. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally as good progress as other pupils because of the individualised support they receive for their learning.

The curriculum is good because it is well organised and effective. It is wide ranging and contributes well to the pupils' development and well-being as it is closely matched to

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

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pupils' needs. Care is taken to match the curriculum as far as possible to that found in mainstream schools. A common thread running through is an emphasis on English and mathematics to give pupils the maximum opportunity for successful reintegration to mainstream. At all key stages the curriculum includes social and emotional development and targets based on this are set in lessons. As yet there are few opportunities for pupils to join extra-curricular clubs or activities.

Arrangements for care, guidance and support are exemplary. Arrangements for pupils to transfer in and out of local schools or between centres are very well supported so pupils make the moves successfully. The staff are highly committed to knowing all the pupils as individuals and there are striking examples of individual pupils overcoming significant barriers, such as by joining a theatre company. Work placements and college courses are checked rigorously to ensure that pupils are safe and receive a high quality learning experience. Parents of pupils on work placement feel able to telephone education staff if they have a concern because strong relationships are in place. The commitment to rapid response from staff, including through the summer break, enables the pupils to complete successful placements.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is extremely effective. Her clarity of vision, ambition and drive is clearly communicated to the assistant headteachers, which enables them to be effective as leaders on their own sites. The impact on leadership of the newly appointed deputy headteacher has been considerable in a very short space of time. He has put structures in place welcomed by the staff because they are based on acknowledged expertise. Staff are clear about what is expected of them. Although leadership of teaching is good overall, the quality of assessment does not impact fully on all pupils' learning as yet because it is not as precise as it could be in a small number of lessons. The management committee are very clear about their role in both supporting and challenging the PRU and the local authority to develop provision further. All statutory duties are met and this harmonious partnership works well. Safeguarding procedures are fully in place and very robust. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination tackled so pupils are very accepting of others. However the impact of work on pupils' understanding of Britain as a diverse community and promoting national and international community cohesion is not as strong as it could be.

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Self-evaluation is good. It gives a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses and plans for improvement are focused. Target setting is increasingly being based on robust evaluation of data, and tracking and monitoring are becoming embedded.

Accommodation is constantly reviewed and modifications are made which improve effectiveness. Resources are well used and staff are deployed effectively. As such, the PRU gives good value for money

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

A very small proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. They were overwhelmingly positive. A typical comment was, 'Educational Diversity is a wonderful school. My son enjoys school very much and it has made a massive difference to his educational and personal life.' Five parents said they thought their child did not like school but inspectors' evidence pointed to this view not being widely held.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Educational Diversity 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 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	6	46	4	31	2	15	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	77	2	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	69	3	23	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	8	62	5	38	0	0	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	5	38	7	54	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	6	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	46	6	46	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	85	2	15	0	0	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 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



22 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Educational Diversity, Blackpool, FY3 9JW

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited the centres and for completing the questionnaires, which many of you did. I was pleased to hear that you felt you were kept safe and how confident you were in the staff to help you. I could see how proud everyone was of the drama productions and what fun you had doing them. I almost felt I was in the 'West End' when I watched a few pupils rehearsing Blood Brothers.

Educational Diversity provides you with a good education and does a fantastic job in caring and supporting you so that you can be successful when you leave. Those of you who do not attend as well as you could, can help yourselves even more by not being absent or by encouraging your friends to come every day. I have asked the staff to do the following three things to make the PRU even better.

- Improve the attendance of those with poor attendance.
- Make sure that you have your own learning targets in each lesson.
- Look at more ways of understanding other communities in the UK and globally.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Pauline Hilling-Smith

Lead inspector

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