

# Medical PRU

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134159
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stoke-On-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	341433
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marian Thomas

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>	4–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	23
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Richard Woollacott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julia McBride
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Penkhull Education Centre Princes Road Penkhull ST4 7JS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team observed eight lessons taught by six teachers. They held meetings with a parent, members of the management committee, school staff and students. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at teachers' planning for lessons, school leaders' development plans and samples of pupils' work. They also took into account the views of parents and carers who returned questionnaires to the inspection team.

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

- pupils' work in mathematics, science and English
- pupils' attendance records
- the ways in which the school prepares its pupils for life in a multi-ethnic society

## Information about the school

The PRU (pupil referral unit) admits pupils who have medical needs that prevent them from attending school. The vast majority of pupils have emotional or psychological difficulties. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs and no pupils are currently in the care of the local authority. The PRU is based in one centre and has a further provision for a class in the local hospital. Five pupils are currently taught at home for five hours a week. The youngest pupil currently on roll is in Year 4 and, with the exception of two, all pupils are of secondary education age. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

### Main findings

The Medical PRU provides a satisfactory level of education and care for its pupils. As a result pupils make satisfactory progress both academically, socially and emotionally. Parents and carers appreciate the work of the PRU staff in supporting their children. One commented: 'For the first time in his life my son is enjoying school.' However, attendance for a small number of pupils remains a problem.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher understand the needs of the pupils well. They have realistic expectations of what they can achieve and ensure the quality of provision necessary for them to do so. Self-evaluation of the PRU's effectiveness is now accurate. Findings are acted upon effectively. A strength of the PRU is its ability to recognise and sympathetically support the diverse needs of its pupils. This ensures barriers to learning are minimised. Since the last inspection the PRU has improved a small number of aspects of its performance including increasing pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and gaining Healthy Schools status. However, as issues around attendance remain this indicates a satisfactory capacity rather than good capacity to improve further.

Pupils grow in confidence as they re-engage with learning. They say they enjoy their time at the PRU because they feel safe and secure and know how to stay healthy. The extent to which they adopt healthy lifestyles is good. Behaviour is satisfactory in most lessons and is often good outside the classroom. Links with outside agencies support pupils' learning and well-being and, for a minority, ensure a successful return to mainstream school. For others an established work experience programme helps to prepare pupils for the next stage in their education or training. Pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of the local community through activities such as collecting litter in order to improve the local environment. However, links to promote their awareness of life in a multi-ethnic society are limited.

Teaching is satisfactory in the majority of lessons and is based on an accurate assessment of pupils' learning needs. Teaching within pupils' homes and in hospital is good. Overall, pupils' progress is satisfactory. However pupils' progress in mathematics is less good than in science and English. This is because there is insufficient planning for the needs of individual learners. As a result, pupils do not all make equal progress in this subject. In some lessons teachers do not make sufficiently good use of learning time and, as a result, progress slows. A satisfactory assessment system is in place. This ensures that monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress towards their targets is effective in most subjects. It is particularly good in English. Teaching assistants' time is effectively used in most lessons, but occasionally lacks direction.

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

- Improve the consistency and rate of pupils' progress by:
  - ensuring that planning reflects the needs of all pupils in mathematics lessons
  - increasing the pace of learning in some lessons to make the best use of learning time
  - refining monitoring and target-setting within mathematics lessons.
- Improve the attendance of a small group of pupils who remain persistently absent, by engaging more closely with parents and carers to ensure their support in promoting their children's attendance.
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of life in a multi-ethnic society.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils joining the PRU settle quickly and most respond positively to their individual learning programmes. These enable pupils to work independently in lessons and achieve satisfactorily in most areas of the curriculum. This was demonstrated particularly well in a Key Stage 4 English lesson where pupils were identifying how the director built suspense in the opening sequence of the film *Jaws*. Pupils responded exceptionally well to the task showing good observational as well as thinking skills as they dissected the sequence. However, this quality of learning is not replicated in all subjects. Learning in lessons slows when planned activities do not reflect pupils' needs closely enough, as was observed in mathematics. As a result pupils make significantly less progress in mathematics than English. Pupils who engage well with learning do so because staff are particularly good at building up their self-esteem and, as a result, their belief in their own ability to succeed. This, coupled with the wide range of academic and vocational courses offered, ensures that pupils leave with an array of qualifications and accreditations. Last year's school leavers successfully passed examinations in art, English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education. Attainment is broadly average. All groups of pupils make equal progress. These successes ensure that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for further study and the world of work.

The PRU accepts that, despite their medical needs, improving the attendance of some pupils remains a key focus. School leaders have made concerted efforts, including working closely with the Education Welfare Service, to address this. However, while some success has been achieved, further work remains to be done to engage parents directly to support the regular attendance of a small number of pupils.

Pupils feel safe because they know staff are supportive and help them at all times. Most clearly enjoy school. As one pupil commented: 'Everyone understands each other here.'

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Pupils recognise the importance of eating well and have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet. This could clearly be seen by their choice of food in lunch boxes.

Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community both inside and outside school by listening to and appreciating the needs of others. Fundraising for local and global charities takes place regularly. Pupils' satisfactory overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in their behaviour, the way in which they react to each other and the manner in which they take care of the environment. However, they do not have a well-developed awareness of communities beyond those represented in the immediate location.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

Most teachers use assessment information effectively to set achievable targets for pupils. Planning of lessons is mostly undertaken satisfactorily and attention is given to ensuring work is modified to meet the different needs of pupils within the class. However, in a minority of classrooms the pace of the lesson is too slow and this is

<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.

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reflected in lesson plans. For example, too much time is allowed for particular activities, which reduces the effectiveness of learning for pupils and slows progress. This occurs most frequently in mathematics lessons and less often in English. In most lessons support staff are well-deployed and work closely and effectively with teachers to meet the needs of all learners. However, in some lessons teaching assistants' time is not used well and this slows progress.

The curriculum is well organised and is imaginatively enhanced by visits and activities away from the classroom. Visits to a variety of locations help develop pupils' independence. For example, a recent visit to an outdoor pursuits centre to study bush craft helped pupils to develop team building skills. This was described by one pupil as, 'One of the best things I've done.' The range of academic accreditation offered to pupils is satisfactory, as is the quality of work experience and college placements. However, curriculum time is a little restricted for pupils in Key Stage 3. While the school's managers are now addressing this issue, it limits the effectiveness of the curriculum for these pupils.

As a result of the satisfactory level of care, guidance and support, pupils feel there is always someone who will listen and help. An assessment is undertaken when pupils arrive at the school, which is then used to target support effectively. Vulnerable pupils are supported and this is helped by the good links with many outside agencies. Attendance is currently rising as a result of strong links with the Education Welfare Service. Transition arrangements are satisfactorily in place and are supported by partnerships with Connexions and pupils' home schools.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is moving the PRU forward and ensuring satisfactory outcomes for pupils. This, coupled with partnerships forged with outside agencies, is driving improvement satisfactorily. The PRU's management committee has implemented satisfactory procedures to ensure the health and well-being of all pupils. The management committee members offer a satisfactory level of support to the PRU and challenge to senior leaders. Policies and procedures ensure all government safeguarding requirements are met and that practice is of a satisfactory standard. The strength and quality of these procedures mean that any safeguarding issues are dealt with effectively by senior leaders. Leaders and managers have ensured

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that the PRU is an inclusive community. Systems to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination within the PRU are satisfactory. The PRU works successfully to eliminate gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils. Leaders have built successful links which benefit pupils and the local community, including a community Christmas party. However, links with the global community are less well established and there are too few links to other communities to improve and develop pupils' understanding of life in a multi-ethnic society. The PRU makes conscientious efforts to engage all parents and carers: the work of PRU staff ensures they are kept well informed about their child's successes. The PRU's leaders recognise that further links need to be formed in order to promote better attendance for a small minority of pupils. The PRU ensures satisfactory outcomes for pupils, many of whom have significant needs. It does this on a controlled budget and provides satisfactory 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>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The inspection team received two completed questionnaires from the parents and carers of pupils attending the PRU. This was a low level of response. The views were wholly positive and the inspection team agreed with the findings.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Medical PRU 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 2 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 23 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	2	100	0	0	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)	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	100	0	0	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.**



21 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Medical PRU, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 7JS

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your PRU. It was lovely to meet you all and to hear how much you enjoy coming to the PRU and how much it has helped you. We send a special 'thank you' to the three of you who gave up your time to talk to us so honestly. These are the things we liked the most:

- the friendly welcome you all give to visitors
- the way in which staff care for you
- the way in which you all work hard and achieve a good range of qualifications
- the way in which you help each other and make healthy lifestyle choices.

In order to make your school even better we have asked your teachers to:

- ensure you all work equally hard and a bit faster in some lessons so you achieve even higher targets, particularly in mathematics
- ensure you all attend as often as you are able to
- give you more opportunities to experience other cultures to help you to get a better understanding of how other people live their lives.

Thank you once again for such a lovely welcome and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Marian Thomas

Lead inspector

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