

Primary Pupil Referral Unit at Kennington Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131143
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	315732
Inspection dates	14 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Mr Bill Stoneham

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

Type of School	Primary
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	27
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Mr Barry Gilhooly
Headteacher	Ms Anne Sturman
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2003
School address	Kennington Children's Centre 20 Kennington Park Gardens London SE11 4AX
Telephone number	020 7926 8420
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Age group	5-11
Inspection Date(s)	14 January 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This pupil referral unit serves the whole of Lambeth, which is an ethnically, culturally, socially and economically diverse borough. Many of the pupils have received one or two permanent exclusions from mainstream or special schools. Occasionally, pupils without a school are referred to the service and some are referred by their schools as they are at risk of permanent exclusion. The emphasis is on reintegration, but also improving behaviour and boosting competency in skills such as literacy and numeracy. Three pupils have a first language other than English, one of whom is at an early stage of English acquisition. Most pupils are vulnerable and the majority have special educational needs; with about a quarter having statements for their additional needs. At the time of the inspection all the pupils were boys.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The pupil referral unit offers a good education with many outstanding features. It meets fully its aim of reintegrating as many pupils as possible into mainstream education, improving behaviour and raising standards of academic work, especially in terms of English and mathematics. The unit has many significant strengths. Personal development and well-being, and care, guidance and support, are outstanding. The unit is effective in supporting each learner in very specific ways, meeting well their behavioural and other needs. Over half the parents and carers completed the inspection questionnaire and their responses were overwhelmingly favourable. As one parent commented: 'The PRU has changed my child's life; he is more focussed, his behaviour has come on in leaps and bounds and he is now trying to take responsibility for his own actions. His education at the PRU is great.' Many other parents and carers expressed similar views. Other people who have contact with the unit also comment positively. For example, primary headteachers appreciate the quality of support offered by the unit; good links are maintained with primary schools, plus a host of agencies who offer specialist support.

The pupils thrive at the unit. The good quality and well-resourced accommodation provides the pupils with a safe and peaceful haven where they respond very well. This is reflected in their outstanding behaviour, their above average attendance and the good progress they make in their work. Standards on entry are well below average. Many pupils are significantly underachieving in their mainstream schools and have a negative experience of learning. The staff work hard to change attitudes and most students now thoroughly enjoy their education and respond with considerable enthusiasm to the challenges set. The rewards and sanctions system is applied firmly, but fairly, and the pupils know what is expected of them. Many seize the opportunities offered to take responsibility and are only too willing to contribute to their school community by showing leadership and helping one another. This is another outstanding aspect of the unit's work. The twice-daily assemblies successfully reinforce models of excellent behaviour and the unit's ethos. It was impressive to see the young pupils praising each other's efforts and identifying improvements in conduct and social skills. Such work makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural development and raises their understanding of good citizenship. However, in assemblies, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to reflect upon issues that concern them.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and classroom support staff are sensitive to the needs of the pupils, and lessons are planned well to ensure that good progress is made. Planning is enhanced by effective baseline assessments that establish the pupils' capabilities. Thus, teachers are able to plan their work to ensure it matches individual needs. Good teaching is improving the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy, but more consistency is needed from teachers in the emphasis placed on key vocabulary. A good curriculum, which reflects that offered in mainstream schools, contributes well to the overall progress made. The length of the working day, where pupils are expected to attend from 9 am to 3.30 pm, is another factor that prepares them well for reintegration to mainstream education.

The whole staff ethos of ensuring the unit's core aims are fully met stems from the excellent leadership of the head teacher. All staff are very dedicated and committed to working with their learners. Self-evaluation is good. It is broadly accurate and areas identified for improvement are appropriate. There is a good development plan, but this document needs to ensure that outcomes directly relate to improving learning and are quantifiable. Progress since the last inspection has been good. The unit offers good value for money and there is a good capacity for improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the development plan focuses on outcomes that can be quantified and which relate directly to improving learning.
- Ensure that opportunities to develop the pupils' vocabulary are fully exploited in every lesson.
- Ensure in assemblies that the pupils are always given appropriate opportunities for reflection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Nearly all pupils arrive at the unit with standards that are well below those expected for their age. Most have underachieved in their mainstream schools, often because their education has been severely disrupted in some way. While at the unit, the quality of the pupils' work improves considerably. Though standards, overall, remain well below average, the progress they make, especially in their English and mathematics is good. For many, progress in their academic work and in their general behaviour is such that they are successfully able to return to mainstream schools.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The difficulties faced by many pupils when they first arrive at the unit diminish as their confidence and self-esteem improve and their interest in learning is re-ignited. Staff work hard and offer much care and support. There are very clear expectations about behaviour and conduct and these are applied with consistency and considerable sensitivity. The pupils thrive on the praise and positive feedback they receive and they respond very well to the many opportunities offered to exercise responsibility. The unit's reward system is comprehensive and is most successful in encouraging excellent behaviour and enabling the pupils to distinguish right from wrong. The twice-daily assemblies help to establish a clear ethos in which each individual pupil is valued, as well as providing time to celebrate success and nurture the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

They are aware of the need to eat healthily and are encouraged to follow safe lifestyles; these aspects are promoted very well. Attendance is good and is above the national average and many pupils now have far better attendance records than was previously the case. When their behaviour is deemed inappropriate, they are encouraged to reflect on the reasons for this and how they can improve. The pupils are prepared well for their future economic well-being because of the focus on improving their key skills and personal development. Though there needs to be more consistency in developing the pupils' vocabulary, most significantly improve their literacy and numeracy skills while at the unit. Their confidence and social skills also show a vast improvement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers know the pupils well and effective assessment procedures inform them of individual's learning needs. The use of individual targets is well organised and the pupils enjoy their lessons because of variety in the work set. All teachers

are confident classroom practitioners and the quality of their work is enhanced by the good work undertaken by the classroom support assistants. These staff are well briefed and work well in harmony with the teachers. The progress the pupils make is helped by the good quality teaching provided and good provision is made for developing the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. On some occasions, however, the opportunities to develop these skills more fully are missed because key words are not always displayed in the classroom, or referred to by the teacher.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good curriculum is offered which contributes well to the pupils' academic progress and personal development. There is a very good focus on developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy. The pupils are also given good opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT), which is well resourced. The pupils' personal development is very well enhanced by their work in citizenship and by a strong focus on personal, social and health education. Very good quality displays in the unit, celebrate the whole range of pupils' work really well. The effectiveness of the curriculum is strengthened by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Sporting provision is good with the students being able to take part in activities as diverse as karate kata and tennis. The curriculum successfully prepares students for the next stage of their education, with all students in Year 6, for example, being entered for the relevant national examinations for their age group.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The unit provides an excellent, caring and supporting environment where learners feel safe, develop their personal qualities and make good progress towards the targets set for them. Well-rehearsed procedures for ensuring high standards of behaviour are implemented consistently by all staff and the morning assembly is an excellent forum for ensuring that each day starts calmly. This settles the pupils very well before they move into their class sessions. Provision for ensuring health and safety is very strong. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are securely in place and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The pupils are confident that there is an adult to speak with should they need to. The unit's multi-agency approach and use of outside professional agencies greatly enhances the quality of support learners receive. Effective baseline testing results in well-focused individual learning programmes and challenging targets, which improves the progress learners make. Pupils clearly know what they have to do to improve their work. Continuous assessment against the targets ensures the unit is clearly aware of how much progress each pupil is making and what they need to do to improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher established an excellent ethos for the unit and she works with passion to ensure that the pupils are given a good education. She is very well supported in this desire by keen and dedicated staff, all of whom are highly committed to ensuring that every learner really matters, improving their motivation for learning and ultimately enabling them to make good progress and achieve well. Excellent teamwork ensures that staff at all levels are consistent in setting and applying very challenging targets for the pupils to reach. Development planning is good and concentrates on key areas. However, some of the outcomes are not easily measured and do not always refer specifically to improving the quality of learning. Leadership has ensured that the unit provides a good quality education in a pleasant and welcoming environment. The work of the staff is supported well by the PRU's management committee, which operates well as a critical and supportive friend.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

24 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Primary Pupil Referral Unit at Kennington Children's Centre, London, SE11 4AX

Thank you for welcoming me on my recent visit. I greatly enjoyed my time with you and was impressed by many of the things you told me. Overall, I have concluded that your school offers a good education with many outstanding features. Your centre has an excellent headteacher and good staff, who are working hard to secure improvements for you. Standards overall are below average, but you are making good progress in your work. You are offered a good curriculum and your staff are very caring and supportive and are keen for you to do well. The teaching you receive is good and the centre provides a safe environment for your studies. I was also pleased to see such excellent behaviour during my visit.

I have suggested three areas for improvement.

- The school's development plan needs to concentrate more on how your learning might be improved further.
- Even more emphasis should be given in lessons to developing your literacy skills.
- You should be given more time for reflection in your assemblies.

Thank you again for your valuable contribution to this inspection. I would like to wish you every success in your future work.

Bill Stoneham
Lead inspector

