

Manchester Key Stage 3 PRU

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 132739 |
| Local Authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 328674 |
| Inspection dates | 12–13 March 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Saleem Hussain |

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

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| Type of school | Pupil referral unit |
| School category | Pupil referral unit |
| Age range of pupils | 11–14 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 40 |
| Appropriate authority | The local authority |
| Headteacher | Ms Helen McAndrew |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 March 2006 |
| School address | Richmond Park Centre Crochrane Avenue Longsight Manchester M12 4FA |
| Telephone number | 0161 273 4894 |
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|--------------------------|------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provides for pupils aged 11 to 14 who have been permanently excluded from their previous school(s). Most of them come high schools in Manchester. All pupils have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a small number have a statement of special educational need. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; none is at an early stage of learning English. The majority of pupils come from areas of high social disadvantage. A few pupils are involved with the Youth Offending Team. The PRU operates on two sites which are approximately seven miles apart. In addition, external agencies based close to the main sites provide for Year 9 pupils. The school has the National Healthy School (Gold) and Artsmark (Gold) Awards. During Manchester's review of its PRU services, the head of PRU and management committee's roles have been extended to include responsibilities for Key Stage 4.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory PRU with some good features. It provides satisfactory value for money. Representative views from parents include: 'Thanks to the PRU my son's behaviour has improved and he is now making real progress in his learning'. Most pupils start at the PRU with below average levels of attainment because of their poor engagement with education in the past. Many lack confidence in a school setting and have missed much time at previous schools. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and generally reach standards that are below average, although a few reach standards that are in line with expectations in English and science. Some of the pupils' art work is stunning. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. The PRU is successful in improving pupils' confidence, self-esteem and enjoyment of learning. Inclusion lies at the heart of the PRU's work. A good number of pupils return to mainstream education fairly quickly. Partnerships with local secondary schools and other agencies are good and help the pupils to get back on track with their learning.

Good care, guidance and support underpin the pupils' achievement and personal development. The PRU has established a strong environment where pupils feel highly valued and respected for their good qualities. Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons because the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers generally present the work in a practical way and this captures pupils' interest and engages them positively. Behaviour management is good. The best lessons observed challenged pupils to make good progress in their academic, as well as their personal development. Another inspection finding is that lesson planning and target setting do not always take full account of pupils' needs, especially at the external provision. The curriculum is good because it meets pupils' interests and needs closely. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is effective. Many educational visits support learning well, for example, trips to art galleries and museums make a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development.

A good number of pupils are successful in gaining external accreditation in several subjects by the time they leave the PRU. Along with good personal development, these factors ensure that pupils are well prepared for the future. Behaviour is good. Attendance is good overall, representing a major improvement since the last inspection where it was judged as unsatisfactory. Most pupils now make very good improvements in their attendance as compared to their former schools. Pupils adopt good attitudes towards leading healthy lifestyles. They know it is important to eat a balanced diet and participation in sports is high. Pupils' awareness of how to stay safe is strong. For example, they know what to do if they feel bullied or are worried about anything. Pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory, but they want to see the establishment of a school council to amplify their voice and to develop their debating and decision-making skills.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The head of PRU works tirelessly and always in the best interest of the pupils. She provides strong leadership and has been instrumental in the many good improvements since the last inspection. Leadership at other levels, including the management committee, is satisfactory. The PRU's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory with a few strong features emerging. Self-evaluation is good and the PRU has a clear and accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The PRU knows it must now shift the emphasis slightly in lessons to challenge pupils more with their academic development whilst maintaining all of the strengths in personal development. The PRU is also aware that although progress made by pupils based at the external provision is

satisfactory, a few elements of provision and outcome are not as good as at the main sites. The PRU's strong track record of making significant improvements demonstrates its good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Challenge all pupils to make more progress in their academic learning in lessons.
- Develop lesson planning and target setting to take full account of pupils' needs, especially at the external provision.
- Provide more chances for pupils to express their views about the PRU.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

All groups of pupils progress satisfactorily including boys, girls, those with a statement of special educational need and minority ethnic groups. Pupils of all ages gain external awards in various subjects including food technology, outdoor activities and citizenship skills. Pupils stay with the PRU for varying periods of time which can be short or long. Although pupils' standards are generally below average by the time they leave, overall, they achieve satisfactorily in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The proportion of pupils reaching standards which are in line with national expectations in English and science has increased slightly since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy English lessons most when there are chances to learn through drama or writing poetry. Such opportunities also help pupils to express their feelings and this supports their personal development well. Pupils say they enjoy practical subjects and this is reflected well in their achievements in science and art. There are many chances across the curriculum to use computers and this has helped pupils to develop satisfactory ICT skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The vast majority of pupils have improved their attitudes to work, attendance and behaviour well since starting at the PRU. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils develop their self-confidence well and show clear values about hard work and respect for people and property. Pupils learn to develop constructive relationships with others and show good levels of cooperation in lessons with their peers and adults. Pupils develop a strong appreciation about diversity and equality through many chances to learn about different cultures. Consequently, they have good moral views about issues such as racism and other forms of discrimination. While the PRU does have a clear plan to develop a school council, currently pupils do not have enough chances to have their voice heard or to influence school developments.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils make the progress expected of them and show positive attitudes to their work, as a result of satisfactory teaching. Teachers manage pupils well and this ensures that discipline is maintained. The consistency of behaviour management has improved well since the last inspection. Teachers know that pupils prefer practical work and there is a growing emphasis on this in their lesson plans. Teachers increasingly build on pupils' interests to engage them in learning. A good science lesson observed was effective because the teacher built positively on pupils' curiosity and interest in sex education. Every opportunity was taken to ensure that pupils developed a good understanding of the functions of different parts of the body and the process of reproduction. Although teachers frequently challenge pupils in their personal development, chances are sometimes lost to do the same regarding academic development. Assessment information is accurate regarding pupils' needs. However, this information is not used consistently to ensure that learning targets are met, especially at the external provision.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their education and achieve satisfactorily because they are served well by the curriculum, which promotes their strong personal development. Chances to gain a broad range of external accreditations and also to develop creative and artistic skills are particular strengths. The PRU has successfully created lots of opportunities across the curriculum to develop ICT skills since the last inspection. The head of PRU acknowledges that the same approach is now needed to enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is carefully monitored and adjustments are made when necessary. For example, the PRU provided an aromatherapy course through an external provider last year, following pupils' wishes. Pupils are strongly prepared for their future economic well-being. For example, the PRU held a 'fair trade' week recently. Many pupils produced large quantities of ice-cream made with fair trade ingredients and sold it to pupils at the adjoining primary school. Education for safety, health and well-being is good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff are highly committed to ensuring the personal development and progress of all pupils. Adults are extremely good role models for pupils and help them to develop positive attitudes towards learning. Good conduct, effort and regular attendance are promoted effectively through praise and lots of certificates, prizes and treats. Learning mentors make a good contribution to the PRU's work by helping pupils to effectively overcome barriers to their learning. Links with welfare, support and other agencies are good. For example, pupils say that they value the support from Connexions and Youth Offending Team, highly. Arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are robust and reviewed regularly. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. Academic guidance and systems to set targets are developing positively. However, a few pupils are unsure about the next steps to take to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The impact of the PRU's leadership and management is seen in the satisfactory progress made by pupils, their sense of security and well-being, and in its deservedly good reputation locally. There is a successful focus on promoting personal development and a good number of improvements have been made since the last inspection. Although academic achievement remains satisfactory, there is a slight increase in the proportion of pupils reaching standards which are in line with national expectations in English and science. The head of PRU is ably supported by two deputy headteachers, one based at each of the two sites. The management committee has recently been re-constituted and is making a satisfactory contribution to the PRU's work. Classroom resources are used satisfactorily to support learning. Some positive actions are taken by the school community to promote community cohesion. For example, the PRU is involved in a local annual anti-racist festival for which pupils make and sell crafts, contributing to the success of the event. Self-evaluation is effective. Leaders are well aware of the actions necessary to improve the PRU further, including raising achievement, improving teaching and embedding more challenging systems to set targets. There are clear plans to improve performance at the external provision which, although satisfactory, is not quite as good as at the main sites.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| 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

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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 3 |

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 3 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| 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**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for all your help during the inspection of your unit. A special thanks to those of you who gave up part of your lunchtime to discuss your work and achievements with me. I enjoyed talking with you and learning about your work. Your unit is satisfactory with some good features and the great majority of you make satisfactory progress.

The curriculum is good because you have many chances for you to get certificates for your work and studies. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. You receive good care, support and guidance and this is a key reason for your satisfactory progress and good personal development. I was impressed to see how well you are learning about healthy and safe lifestyles. I can see that you are well prepared for the future through the accreditations you achieve and the improvements that you make in your personal development. You show good attitudes to learning and behave well. I'm very pleased at how well most of you have improved your attendance.

Leadership and management of your unit are satisfactory. The head of the unit, management committee and staff are working hard to make sure you carry on doing your best.

There are three main things for your unit to improve. Firstly, your unit should challenge all of you to make more progress in your academic learning in lessons. Secondly, lesson plans and target setting should take full account of your needs, especially at the external provision. Thirdly, your unit should provide you with more chances to have a greater say in things and influence the development of the unit. You can help yourselves and the unit by making sure that you carry on doing your best with everything.