

Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Pupil Referral Services

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135329
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	381873
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	David 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	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Richard Gilpin
Headteacher	Michael Buist
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. In total, eight lessons were observed and eight teachers were seen. Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, representatives from local schools and members of the management committee. The inspector observed the centre's work, and looked at the safeguarding documents, a range of other documentation, pupils' work and teachers' records. He scrutinised questionnaire returns from pupils, staff and eight parents and carers.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the centre's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Leadership and management at all levels across the centre including the contribution of middle leaders to continual improvement.
- The use of assessment to plan learning and direct intervention to help raise attainment.
- The pace of learning and level of challenge presented to pupils in the available external accreditation.
- The promotion of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.

Information about the school

The provision has moved to a single site since the previous inspection. Key Stage 1 and the majority of Key Stage 2 pupils at risk of exclusion are supported in mainstream schools. The St George's site provides short-term education for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 pupils as well as longer-term placements for older pupils. A third of the pupils on roll are girls, which reflects the increasing number of girls placed at the centre. The pupils are all from White British backgrounds and the majority of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very small minority of the pupils are looked after children. The centre has Healthy School Status.

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 overall effectiveness of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Pupil Referral Services is good. It is a cohesive and harmonious community guided by outstanding care, guidance and support; this underpins the good outcomes for pupils.

The rigorous self-evaluation processes provide senior leaders with a clear understanding of the centre's strengths and areas for development and these help to drive forward continual and ambitious improvement. The management committee provides an effective balance of support and challenge to centre leaders. All staff make a positive contribution to centre improvement and take a pride in their work. Senior leaders are receptive to the views of pupils, carers and parents and, as a result, they are appropriately involved in developments in the centre. All of this contributes to the centre's good capacity to improve because leaders have embedded and improved previous performance.

The pupils enjoy their activities and they make good progress in their learning because of effective teaching. There has been good progress since the previous inspection in the use of assessment and the progress of groups of pupils is now tracked rigorously to direct intervention and raise attainment. The staff use a wide range of strategies to ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning. In a few lessons expectations are adequate rather than good and this slows progress to satisfactory. The pupils are provided with a good curriculum which is effectively enriched and extended by, for example, vocational courses linked to the pupils' personal interests. The range of accreditation effectively challenges the pupils, which helps prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science. However, an over-reliance on worksheets in a few lessons limits the opportunities for pupils to extend the quality and quantity of their written work. ICT is used effectively in English for drafting and re-drafting written work, but this is not consistent across other subjects.

A very high priority is placed on the pupils' safety and well-being and, as a result, pupils feel extremely safe in the centre. Relationships are excellent and pupils work well together. Their behaviour is good and they attend well. Links with a wide range of agencies are outstanding and the centre's work with parents and carers is good. Almost all of the younger pupils are effectively returned to a mainstream school which reflects the success of the centre's intervention. The support provided for younger pupils in mainstream schools is particularly effective in reducing the risk of exclusion.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quantity and quality of the pupils' written work by:
 - reducing the reliance on worksheets in some lessons
 - extending the use of ICT by pupils to draft and re-draft their written work.
- Ensure that pupils make at least good progress in all lessons by:
 - maintaining high expectations and brisk learning in every session.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The pupils' attainment on entry to the centre is low and those that stay long term make good progress moving their attainment to broadly average. The pupils on short-term placements make good progress and are well prepared for their return to a mainstream school. The pupils enjoy their time in the centre and become more focused and confident learners. All groups of pupils make similarly good progress. There is no variation in progress linked to gender or for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The pupils who are looked after children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve in line with their peers. Year 11 pupils attain particularly well in their GCSE science examinations.

In a lesson observed during the inspection, older pupils made good progress in their understanding of car steering systems. They responded maturely and with a high regard to health and safety during their practical session. They listened intently to the instructors and asked sensible questions. In another lesson, older pupils displayed their creative and imaginative skills as they worked towards higher-level passes in their GCSE art and design course. Year 9 pupils on short-term placement at the centre had positive attitudes to their work and responded well to the supportive ethos generated by the staff team. Younger pupils practised their drumming and guitar playing and had the confidence and skills to perform together at the end of the lesson.

The pupils' very positive attitudes are reflected in their responses to the survey of their views. These attitudes are also demonstrated by their good behaviour and very strong feelings of being safe in the centre. Attendance is above average and pupils' good gains in skills prepare them well for the future. The majority of pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and this helped the centre to achieve their national award. The pupils cooperate well during the breaks and enjoy recreational activities including playing pool. The pupils readily express their views and their suggestions make a valuable contribution to life in the centre.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils take a full and active part in the whole-centre assemblies and join in a celebration of each other's achievements. They appreciate the after-school activities which provide good opportunities for them to spend their time with the staff and friends. A wide range of visits and visitors is used to extend the pupils' understanding of life in a culturally

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diverse society.

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. Staff are enthusiastic and have good subject expertise which provides the pupils with learning opportunities similar to mainstream education. This effectively prepares the pupils for the next stage of their education. Teachers use assessment effectively to monitor individual progress. This enables teachers to personalise learning and provide individual targets to ensure that there is a good level of challenge in most lessons. However, in a very small minority of lessons, challenge is no better than adequate and this slows the pace of learning and limits progress to satisfactory.

The curriculum is tailored to meet the learning needs of each pupil. The younger pupils are provided with activities that prepare them effectively for their return to mainstream classes. Pupils at Key Stage 3 have a curriculum which provides a good focus on the competencies that will be required for future learning. The fact that externally accredited courses start at Year 9 gives pupils increased opportunities to raise their attainment. There is a good focus on the core subjects for the older pupils and they have the opportunity to make personal choices in the other courses that they study. Their options help to engage and motivate them to work hard. Numeracy is generally promoted well across the curriculum. However, too little use is made of ICT to extend the pupils' writing skills and the occasional over-use of worksheets also restricts progress in literacy.

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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Outstanding care, guidance and support are central to the centre’s work. This success is made possible by the excellent working relationships that the centre has with local schools and a wide range of other agencies. During the inspection many of the pupils stated that their time with their individual mentors is particularly valuable. The staff team works very closely with the pupils to help give them the skills and confidence to achieve well and prepare them for the next stage of their education. The vast majority of the Year 11 pupils access a combination of education, employment and training when they leave the centre. The staff team manages challenging behaviour well and pupils are helped to take increased responsibility for their own actions. Positive behaviour is rewarded and pupils are fully aware of the consequences of any negative behaviour.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 provides very clear leadership and is provided with good support from the other senior leaders. The integration of the staff and pupils on one site has been managed particularly well. Staff morale is positive and staff share high expectations and a clear vision for continual improvement. Middle leaders are increasingly involved in the good monitoring and evaluation procedures. Clear planning is focused, for example, on securing high-quality teaching in the drive to move this aspect of the provision to outstanding. The management committee has a wide range of skills and makes a major contribution to continual improvement. It takes its responsibilities, such as those for safeguarding, very seriously. Great care is taken to ensure that the excellent safeguarding arrangements are embedded in all aspects of school life. The centre’s high-quality collaborative work with other key agencies is an example of best practice. The centre has developed outstanding partnerships which help to promote the pupils’ good achievement. It makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion in local schools and the wider community. The impact of its work is felt strongly in local schools and there are effective plans to engage with community groups beyond the immediate locality. The centre is consistent and effective in pursuing ambitious strategies for groups of pupils which are potentially vulnerable to ensure that they have equality of opportunity and make good progress, and that there is no discrimination. The centre works well with parents and carers and this is reflected in their responses to the questionnaires. The centre provides good value for money because it has a clear and focused vision, uses its resources effectively to maximise its effectiveness and engages with as wide a

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circle of people as possible to enhance outcomes for pupils.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

An average percentage of the parents and carers returned the questionnaires. The very large majority of parents and carers gave positive responses to almost all of the sections of the questionnaires. Typical comments from parents and carers include, ‘I have nothing but praise for the support I get’ and ‘I feel that my child has come on loads since attending the centre’. A very small minority feel that their children are not making good progress or enjoying school. During the inspection, the inspector found that all groups of learners make good progress and enjoy their learning, and that the centre meets pupils’ needs very well because of the outstanding quality of care, guidance and support.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Pupil Referral Services 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 inspector received 8 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	3	37	4	50	0	0	1	12
The school keeps my child safe	3	37	5	62	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	5	62	3	37	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	5	62	2	25	0	0	1	12
The teaching is good at this school	5	62	3	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	4	50	3	37	1	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	2	25	4	50	1	12	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)	3	37	4	50	1	12	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	4	50	4	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	75	2	25	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	62	3	37	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	75	2	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	5	62	2	25	1	12	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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Pupil Referral Services,
Cheltenham, GL51 8HH**

I enjoyed my visit to your centre and spending time looking at your work. Thank you for spending time with me and discussing your activities and views. You told me that you find the meetings with your mentors particularly useful and that you get on well with each other. I would like you to know that the overall effectiveness of your centre is good.

I was particularly impressed with the quality of your artwork displayed around the centre. Also, it was good to see some of the older pupils so absorbed in their motor vehicle studies. It is clear that you enjoy attending the centre and I was pleased with your positive behaviour. All of the staff work hard to ensure that you are looked after exceptionally well. You are taught well and take part in a wide range of activities, including after-school clubs, which help you to make good progress. The centre's excellent links with other people help you to make good progress in your learning.

Everyone is working hard to do their best for you. We have asked the headteacher, senior management team, staff and management committee to provide more opportunities to extend the quality and quantity of your writing. I also want them to ensure that expectations for the progress in your learning are high in every lesson.

All of you can help by ensuring that you attend whenever possible, work hard and maintain your positive attitudes. I have asked the headteacher to read this letter out to you at one of your assemblies.

Yours sincerely

David Smith
Lead inspector

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