



# Southampton PRU

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 133675  
**LEA** Southampton LEA  
**Inspection number** 282330  
**Inspection dates** 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Jacque Cook AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit	<b>School address</b>	18 Melbourne Street
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit		Chapel
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Southampton SO14 5FB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02380215320
<b>Number on roll</b>	94	<b>Fax number</b>	02380215329
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms Ann Dyton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Alan Sumner

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11 to 16	17 January 2006 - 18 January 2006	282330

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The pupil referral unit (PRU) opened a year and a term ago on two sites with different functions. The Compass Centre is for pupils in Years 7 to 9 which aims to reintegrate them back into their schools. The Melbourne Centre is for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and provides a broader and alternative curriculum. There is also an outreach team that works in the 14 secondary schools in the authority and with pupils in other settings. The PRU caters for pupils who have been excluded from school, are difficult to place in school or are pending statements of special educational need or placement at a special school. They often have a history of poor school attendance. There are very few pupils from ethnic minorities, two that are looked after and four have statements of special educational needs. There are approximately twice as many boys as girls.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The inspectors agree with the PRU's view that the overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory and that the value for money provided is also satisfactory. Although most pupils make satisfactory progress they often have low levels of attainment. Many improve their behaviour so that it is satisfactory and older pupils often behave well. However, too many pupils are excluded even though good strategies to improve their behaviour have been introduced. There are good facilities at both centres that help pupils to settle to their learning. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is appropriate for those in Years 7 to 9 who are able to return to school but does not suit the small number of those who need to stay longer at the centre. As a result, their progress often slows. There are strengths in the range of interesting and innovative courses available for pupils to study in Years 10 and 11. There is also well organised work experience and vocational courses and good arrangements to help pupils gain places on college or training courses. The range of activities available means that timetables can be tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils well. This contributes to the improvement in attendance made by many older pupils. However, attendance overall is not good enough. There are some effective strategies to ensure the poorest attenders are supported to gain qualifications. A significant number of Years 10 and 11 pupils do not have full time provision. The senior managers are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the PRU and have done a great deal since the centre opened. They are well supported by the local education authority and have a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

\* Continue to improve the attendance of the pupils.\* Reduce the number of exclusions.\* Improve the curriculum for pupils in Year 9 that do not have a school place.\* Ensure all pupils have the recommended full time provision.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Many pupils join the centres with low levels of attainment because their progress has been impeded by their unsatisfactory behaviour and their poor attendance. A significant number also have difficulties with reading and writing which have slowed their learning further. Although they make satisfactory and at times good progress towards meeting their targets, their attainment overall remains below what would be expected for their age. In Years 7 to 9, many pupils make good gains in improving their reading through the use of effective teaching strategies. The number reintegrating is satisfactory. About half the pupils returned to school successfully last year. This included six who went to new schools because they had been permanently excluded. Additionally, appropriate arrangements have been made for a further group of pupils with statements of special educational need to attend elsewhere. However, there remain a significant number of pupils without a school place most of whom are not making the progress

they should because they do not have the goal of returning to school. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make satisfactory progress overall and many do well in subjects that they particularly enjoy such as 'DJ technology' and physical education. Those that attend regularly often make good progress in English and mathematics. Most achieve awards in these subjects. A few leave with a broader range of subjects. Several pupils in Years 10 and 11 have gained certificates from their vocational courses. There is no difference between the progress made by boys and girls. On the whole, pupils from ethnic minorities and those that are in the care of the local authority do as well as their peers because staff are aware of the individual needs of the pupils. However, too many pupils do not make the progress they should because their attendance, which has often been poor in their previous schools, continues to be unsatisfactory.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well being are satisfactory and contributes well to their overall progress. Pupils' personal development is better in Years 10 and 11 because they are more interested in the courses they are studying. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. A good range of activities such as visits, outdoor activities fundraising for charities and work on multi-cultural themes helps to develop their social skills well and contributes to their positive contribution to the community. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and many pupils, particularly in Year 11 have improved their behaviour well. However, last year there were too many exclusions and even though strategies have been reviewed, so far this year, there has only been a small drop in numbers. The senior managers rightly identify attendance as being inadequate, however, there is some improvement for pupils in Years 10 and 11. In Years 7 to 9, attendance varies from group to group and there is a notable drop for a number who are without a school place. On the whole, pupils enjoy their education particularly the interesting courses at the Melbourne Centre. One pupil commented that catering was his best lesson because he enjoyed the practical activities and wanted to do it when he left. Pupils' behaviour shows that most are very aware of safe practices and what contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Economic awareness develops very well. Basic skills are improved and pupils participate in work experience and vocational courses.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and through a good programme of monitoring and training has improved considerably since last year. It is recognised that there is still more to do to gain a consistently high quality. In the good quality of the best teaching and learning, work is interesting and suitably challenging. As a result, the attention of all pupils is maintained and they are able to gain success in what they do. Additionally, staff have very good relationships with the pupils. They

are firm but insist on good standards of work and behaviour and pupils respond well by concentrating and working hard. In the now few instances where teaching is unsatisfactory it is often because staff do not use effective strategies to help all pupils learn. Behaviour difficulties are not dealt with effectively and at times, work is too easy. At both centres, support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are developing well and are most effective when they are closely linked to the objectives of lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving considerably for Years 10 and 11 because the varied 'menu' meets the needs of the pupils effectively. Good use of facilities in the community and involvement with organisations such as the Creative Partnership and Employability Plus lead to innovative courses such as graffiti art and DJ technology which enthuses pupils. These courses also encourage many pupils to rekindle their interest in learning. The facilities for construction and catering on site are extremely beneficial, particularly for those who find college attendance difficult. There are, however, a significant number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 who do not yet have the recommended time allocation. This is unsatisfactory and requires urgent attention. The nine week programme provided for Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory and works well for those pupils who are able to return to their schools at the end of the course. However it does not meet satisfactorily the needs of those pupils that need to repeat the course. There are good arrangements to help pupils prepare for their future economic well being. Well organised work experience and relevant college courses form part of the work for Years 10 and 11. The support offered to pupils who will not attend the Melbourne Centre is developing well. Work on improving literacy skills or working for examinations in the pupils' home or venues in the community gives these pupils opportunities to gain success. In a few cases they have started attending the centre. More importantly, they are supported to go to college or training when they are eligible to leave school. The personal, social and health education programme is effective and encourages pupils to develop their health, safety and general well-being effectively.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There are well-established procedures for safeguarding pupils although training needs to be updated. There is very clear guidance and support to ensure pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe and also how to deal with other aspects of personal relationships and health matters. Specialist agencies are used very effectively to support these aspects well. The impact of bullying, for example was made very clear in a powerful session by members of the charity 'Learning Through Action'. The support team that works in schools is well regarded by headteachers and staff. They have good procedures to ensure there is a smooth transfer and successful outcome for pupils that are re-integrating. Staff are vigilant and pupils state that they feel safe at the centres.

Although pupils' views are sought in questionnaires, there are no formal arrangements for a representative group to air views and concerns. There are appropriate arrangements to ensure that pupils with statements of special educational need are well looked after. However, pupils at The Compass Centre who stay for more than one course do not have individual education plans. Arrangements to track pupils' progress are developing well. To improve strategies to monitor and improve pupils' behaviour a new system of coloured slips is being used successfully. Further training is planned to refine the process further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership and management of the PRU are satisfactory. Senior managers, through a satisfactory self evaluation process, are very clear about the areas that need to be improved and a range of strategies are already being implemented. Much has been achieved since the centres opened. For example, the focus on the quality of teaching and learning has improved pupils' progress and there are proposals to meet the needs of the permanently excluded pupils in Year 9 more effectively. However, steps taken to improve attendance and decrease the level of exclusions are not yet adequate and need more work. There are good arrangements to monitor and evaluate the work of the PRU but no formal reporting of findings. At present there is no management committee to receive such a report. However, the new responsible officer is well informed and has plans for a new group with a clearer role and responsibilities. The local education authority gives good support to the PRU contributing to the self evaluation and providing training and advice that has helped to improve teaching and raise standards. There is a satisfactory development plan which gives a clear basis for improvement. Facilities at both centres are good which gives pupils the right environment for their learning. The skills of the leadership in ensuring the staff manage changes effectively and the programme of training and introduction of innovative courses contributes to the PRU's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

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

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

When we visited your two centres recently we did not have the opportunity to meet all of you but thank you to all those who spoke to us and helped us get the information we needed. We enjoyed looking at your work and seeing what went on in lessons. This letter is to let you know what your centres do well and what they need to do next.

The main strengths of the centres are: \* There are interesting and different courses for pupils at The Melbourne Centre so you are able to study things you have not done before. The activities on your timetable are chosen so that they are appropriate for you. \* There are good arrangements to ensure you have work experience in Year 10 and at times in Year 11. \* Many of you go on to college or further training when you leave. \* The facilities at both centres are good.

This is what I have asked your staff to do now: \* Continue to work at improving the attendance levels. \* Reduce the number of times pupils are excluded. \* Improve the courses for pupils in Year 9 that do not have a school place when they have completed their first nine week programme. \* Ensure all pupils have full time provision.