



The Braybrook Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134257
LEA Wolverhampton
Inspection number 282512
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Alan Dobbins AI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Bellamy Lane
School category	Pupil referral unit		Wednesfield
Age range of pupils	11 to 14		Wolverhampton WV11 1NN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558144
Number on roll	8	Fax number	01902 558144
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr Anthony Ray

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 14	17 May 2006 - 17 May 2006	282512

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This pupil referral unit (PRU) caters for pupils in Years 7 to 9 with significant conduct disorders. Although it can cater for girls, currently all pupils are boys and most are White British. Eight pupils have statements of special educational needs, who were admitted to the centre to 'wait' for a more appropriate placement. These pupils will be placed in their new schools by the end of this term. The centre opened in September 2003 and sees its primary role as preparing pupils for return to mainstream settings. Last year, most pupils spent about 12 weeks at the centre before returning to mainstream schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Braybrook Centre is a good and improving PRU that provides good value for money. This judgement reflects the centre's own view of itself, although it has made little use of the evidence it collects to judge how effective it is against any external criteria. Strong features include the outstanding relationships between staff and pupils and the excellent procedures for improving behaviour. The good advice and guidance given to pupils helps them make good progress in their personal development and in dealing with the issues that made it difficult for them to succeed in their other schools. The good curriculum is taught well in excellent accommodation. Most pupils achieve well and, as a result, are prepared well for their return to mainstream settings. Pupils with statements of special educational need achieve less well and make satisfactory progress. The imminent transfer of these pupils to more appropriate placements means that the centre will be able to focus squarely on meeting its primary role of returning pupils to mainstream schools. Good leadership and outstanding management have helped steadily improve the work of the centre since its opening and, as a result, the capacity for the centre to improve further is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop the procedures for recognising pupils' progress in order to improve, and better judge the effectiveness of the centre.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The standards pupils attain are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Pupils achieve well against their targets, especially those for improving their literacy and numeracy skills and their behaviour. Typically, in the nationally recognised tests that give age scores for basic skills, they gain two reading months and three mathematics months for every month they spend at the centre. Some pupils make exceptional progress, for example, last year one pupil gained 31 reading months in six months at the centre and another gained 21 mathematics months in the three months he spent there. Pupils make good progress in science, information and communication technology (ICT), and in the resistant materials and food studies elements of design and technology. They make satisfactory progress in other subjects. In all the subjects, they make better progress than was the case in their other schools. Last year, 17 out of 18 pupils were returned successfully to mainstream education. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make outstanding progress in their moral and social development and good progress in their spiritual and cultural development. The excellent relationships they

have with staff help them speak with staff on any matter, even on those that are difficult for them. They listen well and gain a clear picture of what is right and wrong and how they should behave. They are improving their behaviour and, as they become increasingly self-confident and self-assured, develop better attitudes to their learning. At the centre, most pupils become confident that they will do well when they return to their other schools. Parents, and staff at the other schools, agree that pupils make good progress toward becoming better balanced young people. One parent said that the centre was 'brilliant' because her son is enjoying his learning again and is now behaving 'brilliantly well'.

Pupils gain an excellent understanding of the benefits of healthy lifestyles. Smoking is not tolerated on the site and water and fruit are available in each of the communal rooms. Lunches include only 'healthy' food and there are regular opportunities for pupils to be physically active. The half termly 'big walk', always more than 10 kilometres, is enjoyed by both staff and pupils. Essential skills for living, especially those associated with work and economic well-being, are developed well through the curriculum. Almost every pupil attends more often than they did at their other schools, and most attend regularly. However, despite the best efforts of the centre, and the educational welfare service, a small number of Year 9 pupils are absent too frequently. The poor attendance of these pupils means that, overall, attendance is no better than satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are taught by teachers with specialist knowledge and benefit from high quality planning that effectively meets pupils' learning and their other needs. Class sizes are smaller than in pupils' other schools and as a result, teachers and their assistants know the pupils very well. Pupils like this, and appreciate the friendly relationships they have with staff, who are always on hand to help and encourage them. As a consequence, they become increasingly confident as learners. Many begin to enjoy their learning and are quick to celebrate their successes and those of others in the class. In most lessons they try hard to do their best, because they realise that learning can be fun and rewarding.

The generous size of the classrooms enables teachers to use many strategies to support learning. For example, in many lessons pupils move from one learning base to another and regularly have the chance to make effective use of computers. Pupils with statements of special needs are not always taught as well. This is because teachers are not practised in using the most appropriate specialist approaches for teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Through carefully planned activities it achieves its primary aim of developing pupils' personal and social skills, especially their behaviour, and improving their literacy and numeracy skills. It also reflects the National Curriculum well as taught in their other schools, which helps pupils when they return to mainstream settings. The curriculum is made relevant because specialists, such as the educational psychologist and officers from a number of services, such as the Youth Offending Team, deal with the specific issues of pupils. However, pupils with a statement of special educational needs are not able to access the full National Curriculum, as is their entitlement. The curriculum is extended in a number of ways, more so than is the case for many equivalent PRUs. For example, pupils enjoy the planned activities at lunchtime, including badminton, short tennis and the ICT and art clubs. They take part in regular visits to local places, such as the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, to support learning in the lessons; an annual residential visit to an outdoor activity centre; and to the local Royal Air Force station where some pupils fly with the cadets.

The excellent accommodation helps in presenting the curriculum. It includes specialist rooms for ICT, design and technology and art and design, as well as comfortable rooms to which pupils can go when they are troubled and need individual support.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for, guided and supported well. Good procedures exist to ensure they are safe. Child protection arrangements are well established and staff and pupils know the procedures to follow when there is need. A good emphasis is put on assessing risks, when pupils are at the centre and when they are off site.

The procedures for improving behaviour are excellent. The points based system and the rewards for those who have made exceptional progress in their behaviour are understood and fully accepted by pupils and consistently applied by all staff. The powerful impact of this aspect of the centre's work is reflected in the change in one pupil. He reported that he is no longer 'angry' because 'since being at the centre I know that I can behave properly and I also know that it is important for me to try hard at my learning'. His mother says she is 'pleased as punch' with the change she has seen in her son since he started at the centre.

Good guidance is provided for academic achievement and for attendance. Targets for improving literacy and numeracy work well and those in the other subjects are also effective. The 86% overall attendance target was met for the last term, although a few pupils will not meet their own personal targets. The centre has gained local accreditation as a 'healthy school' and staff are able to provide specialist advice on sex and relationship education and drugs awareness. The links with many client schools are close and staff in these schools appreciate the precise planning and the strong support provided by centre staff when pupils are returning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership is good and management is outstanding. The headteacher is supported very well by all the staff. Collectively, they form a very strong team. Leaders, though, have been unable to focus fully on developing the centre to meet the local authority's primary aim of preparing pupils for return to mainstream settings because the stated pupils 'waiting' at the centre have delayed progress. In the very near future the field will be clear to focus development squarely on meeting the primary aim. Also, even though the centre collects good information on the progress made by pupils, it is not using this information well enough to judge how effective it is in its work. For example, no procedures operate to recognise: the value added to pupils' learning from being at the centre; the progress they make after they have left the centre; or the effectiveness of the centre against similar units.

Day-to-day the centre is managed exceedingly well and the recent award of Investors in People reflects this. Management ensures it is a calm, welcoming and well organised place where pupils are able to routinely attend to their learning in excellent accommodation. Staff strive to ensure that all opportunities provided at the centre are equally available to all pupils.

The management committee is appropriately formed and is led very well. It meets its remit to the centre, but needs to ensure that in future only those pupils who will gain full benefit are admitted. The capacity for continued improvement is good.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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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	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	1	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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I enjoyed my time with you and would like to thank you for talking with me and for helping me find out about The Braybrook Centre. This is what I think:

You do well at the centre because:

- What you learn is right for you and prepares you well for your return to your other schools.
- You like the staff very much and respect them for the quality of the advice and support they give you. You realise that they are making an important contribution to your learning and to your futures.
- You behave well, are polite to each other and to visitors and know that you are able to control your behaviour better since you started at the centre.
- Day-to-day the centre is managed exceedingly well. The headteacher and all the staff work hard to ensure that it is a comfortable and safe place where you can fully attend to your learning and manage your difficulties.

There is one thing that I would like to see improved:

- The way the centre recognises and analyses how well you are doing, as part of the process of judging how effective it is.