



Home and Hospital Tuition Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103769
Local Authority Dudley
Inspection number 286749
Inspection date 21 February 2007
Reporting inspector Susan Morris-King HMI

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	Saltwells EDC
School category	Non-maintained special		Bowling Green Road, Netherton
Age range of pupils	5-16		Dudley DY2 9LY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01384 813740
Number on roll (school)	105	Fax number	01384 813808
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Vacant Position
		Headteacher	Jane Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Home and Hospital Tuition Centre consists of three parts. The main centre is attended by around half of the pupils. The vast majority of these pupils have emotional difficulties connected to their mental health. A small number have medical difficulties. Pupils attend the centre for differing numbers of hours; however, most Year 11 pupils are provided with 22 hours teaching each week. Year 9 pupils attend for half days. The centre is intended to be a short-term placement and pupils are helped to reintegrate into their mainstream or special schools as soon as possible. All pupils are dual registered. A few pupils at any one time have a statement of special educational need. The home tuition service caters for pupils who are too unwell to attend school or the centre. These pupils receive five hours teaching each week if their health allows. School-age mothers also receive home tuition for a short period of time before returning to school. The hospital class is attended by children who are in hospital for varying periods of time, but the children's ward tends to cater for children whose illness requires only a short-term stay. The ethnic mix of the centre varies according to who is on roll at any one time, but almost all pupils are White British.

Since the previous inspection, a new teacher in charge has been appointed, as has a pupil referral unit (PRU) service manager who has line management responsibility for all PRUs in the local authority (LA).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Home and Hospital Tuition Centre provides a good quality of education for vulnerable pupils within an exceptionally caring environment. All staff – those who work in the main centre, the home tuition service and the hospital – are highly committed to nurturing and supporting pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. As a result, pupils with severe and complex health difficulties are enabled to grow in confidence. The very wide range of partnerships which the centre has built up with other agencies gives pupils the specialist attention they need. Parents are also well supported: the centre holds regular meetings with them and they are invited to workshop sessions run by health professionals. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the centre.

Because pupils have often been ill over a long period of time and have missed some of their education, their attainment is generally below average, although a few Year 11 pupils each year reach standards which are in line with national averages. However, pupils' overall achievement during their time at the centre or with the home tuition service is good, and a few pupils make outstanding academic progress from their starting points. This is due to good teaching which is carefully structured, excellent guidance and support, and the pupils' own motivation to succeed. The centre's leaders and staff provide a good, flexible curriculum and adapt the organisation of lessons very well to meet pupils' needs. Two groups which have been set up to provide a very sheltered environment for the most vulnerable pupils meet their emotional needs particularly well, which in turn allows them to learn successfully. The emphasis on reintegration has recently been heightened and, as a result, more pupils are successfully rejoining their schools on a full- or part-time basis.

Pupils' personal development is good. The social and emotional difficulties that pupils arrive with diminish as their security, confidence, self-esteem and academic achievement grow. Pupils enjoy the trusting and supportive relationships they have with staff and they feel secure and valued. Pupils are effectively helped to improve their mental health. However, the opportunities which pupils have to take physical exercise are limited by the accommodation. While the centre takes many pupils off site to use local facilities, this is not always possible, particularly for more vulnerable pupils. The lack of outdoor space makes daily exercise and recreation impractical.

The teacher in charge has a clear vision for the centre and provides good leadership. She has been appointed since the previous inspection and has made good improvements to the centre from an already strong starting point. She is well supported by the newly formed leadership team, who have well-defined responsibilities and lead their allocated areas ably. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the centre's work are regular and increasingly rigorous. A series of lesson observations has given the senior leaders an accurate picture of the quality of teaching, although targets are not set for teachers and this limits the extent to which the team can track improvements. Analyses of pupils' work have begun and these have been well used to promote improvement. The leadership team is aware that refinements to the way in which they record lesson observations and monitor pupils' learning would enable them to track improvements

more fully. The PRU service manager provides very effective support for the teacher in charge. The centre's capacity to improve further is good.

All key issues from the previous inspection were the responsibility of the LA and the main issue has not been addressed satisfactorily. The management committee is led by a dedicated chair. It is developing well and it is beginning to be more strategic, assisted recently by the PRU service manager. Curriculum and other necessary policies are in place. However, the centre is still located in the same accommodation which was identified as inadequate in the previous two inspections. The environment is cramped and is not conducive to educating vulnerable pupils. A number of pupils are not able to attend the centre for as many hours as they should because there is insufficient space. Moreover, while the centre leaders and staff have worked extremely hard to provide pupils with a good curriculum, pupils have inadequate information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, no playground, and no physical education (PE) facilities to help them to stay healthy. However, the LA has recently located a more suitable building into which it intends to move the centre within the next two terms.

The hospital classroom, which was not a key issue at the previous inspection, is overcrowded with furniture and equipment and has no Internet access. The teacher in charge and the PRU service manager have recently begun to negotiate with the hospital to make the necessary improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- The LA, on behalf of the centre, should improve the accommodation so that pupils can receive the maximum amount of teaching that their health allows; be taught the full ICT curriculum and an appropriate PE curriculum, and be educated in an environment which has sufficient space and is conducive to learning.
- The LA and the centre's leaders and should make appropriate improvements to the hospital class accommodation and resources.
- The centre's leaders should refine the processes for monitoring the quality of teaching and the pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although the standards pupils attain are below average, pupils in all year groups nonetheless achieve well during their time at the main centre or with the home tuition service. A few pupils with particularly complex mental health difficulties make outstanding academic progress with the help of well-planned multi-agency support. Hospital pupils are helped not to fall behind with their schoolwork. All pupils who stay at the main centre until the end of Year 11 gain at least one nationally recognised qualification. Almost all pupils attain at least one GCSE at grades A* to G. In 2006 just under half the pupils gained at least five A* to G grades, and a fifth gained five or more A* to C grades. These results represented good achievement for the pupils. A

good rate of reintegration of pupils back into school is another indicator of the progress which pupils make while at the centre.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have a trusting and supportive relationships with staff, and as a result they feel secure and valued. This supports their personal development and good progress. They find learning enjoyable and this is reflected in their improved attendance, good behaviour, and attitudes which become more positive as they realise they can be successful. Pupils' personal development, including their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is well supported by assemblies, their personal, social, and health education (PSHE) lessons, religious education (RE) and special events such as the recent theatre trip to see 'Blood Brothers'. These events in particular help pupils to become more confident in social situations.

The centre works very effectively with a range of other agencies to ensure the well-being of pupils. Carefully planned programmes ensure a good number of pupils, for whom it is appropriate, successfully reintegrate back into their mainstream school or move from home tuition to the centre. Pupils have good opportunities to contribute in a variety of purposeful ways: by helping new pupils to settle, raising money for charity, working on the school council or taking assemblies. For example, during the inspection, pupils from Year 11 proficiently took an assembly about the Chinese New Year. Preparation for adult life is good, especially as a result of the academic courses available to pupils, the opportunities to take part in work experience and the good working relationship the centre has with the local Connexions service. The development of pupils' mental health is particularly good, but although pupils learn about how to stay fit and healthy in PSHE lessons and have some opportunities to take part in fitness activities, the opportunities they have for physical exercise are limited by the centre's accommodation.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. When pupils join the centre or begin home tuition, they are often severely lacking in confidence. The positive approach and reassuring manner which teachers consistently adopt help them gradually to take a full part in lessons, and they begin to learn and succeed. Teaching assistants are very sensitive to pupils' needs and quickly notice where support or encouragement is needed. The best teaching combines a high level of support with appropriate challenge: lessons are structured to give pupils every opportunity to speak, to answer questions, and to interact with each other. In these lessons even the most reticent pupils take a full part and make good progress. New line management processes are starting to raise the standard of teaching even further. Staff make best use of the cramped conditions in

which they work, and have made every effort to make the inside of the building look bright, attractive and welcoming. Good quality displays of pupils' work help to celebrate their success and build self-esteem.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. This is due to the hard work of the teacher in charge and the centre staff to overcome the limitations of the accommodation. They have given careful thought to what is offered to pupils and continually adapt and improve what is taught. Pupils study English, mathematics, science, RE, art and PSHE. While it is not possible to teach ICT as a separate subject because of the limitations of the accommodation, ICT is well planned across the curriculum and pupils' work is of good quality. Some pupils also study child development, and work-related learning is available to Key Stage 4 pupils. The 'transition group' approach, in which pupils are taught by one teacher for the majority of the time, has been extended from Key Stage 2 and 3 into Key Stage 4 and is allowing more vulnerable pupils to make good progress. A Friday afternoon options session called 'Out and About' gives many pupils the chance to take part in fitness, technology and other enrichment opportunities off site, and visitors to the centre, such as a theatre company, also extend their experiences. The curriculum priorities for pupils receiving home tuition and for long-stay hospital patients are appropriately negotiated with the pupil's school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

An outstanding feature of the centre is the exceptional care, guidance and support given to its pupils. Staff work tirelessly to forge excellent relationships with pupils and consequently all pupils, including those tutored at home, feel at ease and quickly grow in self-esteem and confidence. Academic guidance is very strong. Individual education plans reflect pupils' personal needs effectively, and the targets set for individuals are specific, relevant and well understood by the pupils. The centre monitors pupils' personal and academic progress extremely effectively through very regular review meetings between tutors and pupils, where progress is thoroughly discussed and actions for improvement are decided upon. Excellent personal support is given to the pupils through activities which are specifically designed to develop their emotional and social skills, such as circle time. Together, these processes enable tutors to create a nurturing environment where progress is closely monitored and where pupils' emotional needs are sensitively addressed. Parents receive regular feedback on pupils' progress and are very pleased with the provision the centre offers. One parent commented that 'the pastoral and educational support at the school is faultless'. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. Risk assessments are well attended to and procedures to ensure child protection and the health and safety of pupils are thorough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The teacher in charge has introduced a rigorous system of line management, which enables the work of teachers in all three parts of the service to be well monitored and provides them with a good level of support. Suitably, she shares this role with the deputy teachers in charge, who have a thorough knowledge of their areas of responsibility. The team understands that some refinements to these processes would maximise their impact on teachers' practice and pupils' learning. The PRU service manager knows the needs of the centre very well and his support has enabled the teacher in charge to begin to negotiate some much-needed changes, for example, to improve ICT facilities at the hospital. The leadership team and the PRU manager all have a very clear vision for how they want the centre to develop further. Curriculum leaders support colleagues well.

Training for staff is good. Staff have regular opportunities to attend relevant courses and seminars, led by centre staff but also by other professionals such as the mental health service. Workshops for parents provide them with the opportunity to support each other and to talk with nurses, counsellors and mental health professionals about how to help their children.

In the past two terms the management committee has developed well. The chair has been a highly committed advocate for the centre over a long period of time, and continues to champion the needs of the pupils. She is well supported by the vice-chair and the committee is benefiting from his professional experience. Appropriate terms of reference have begun to help the committee to have a clearer role and to begin to be more strategic.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 the learners' needs?	2
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?	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.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us feel welcome on our recent inspection of your centre, for letting us see your work and for talking to us. Your views were very helpful and showed how much you value the centre. Please thank your parents for the helpful comments they made on the questionnaires.

You receive a good education at the centre. You are well taught. As a result, you learn well and it is good to see that an increasing number of you return to school when you are ready. Those of you who are tutored at home also receive good teaching. The support you receive from the staff and from other professionals, such as CAMHS, to help you to overcome some of the difficulties you experience is excellent. This helps you to gain in confidence and self-esteem. It was good to learn from talking to you that you feel safe and valued when you are in the centre.

Although the staff do everything they can to make sure that your classrooms look bright and welcoming, I know that you agree that the building you are currently taught in is just not good enough. We agree that you need more space inside, and that you need an outdoor space where you can socialise and play sport if you are able to. More space would also allow more of you to attend full-time. The local authority has been looking for a more suitable building for you and has found one. We have asked them to make sure that the centre does move into it as soon as possible. The hospital classroom also needs some improvements as at the moment it is too cluttered and has no Internet access. We have asked Mrs Cooper and the senior staff to develop the work they have already begun to monitor how well you are being taught and how well you are learning; and to keep up their good work.

Thank you again for your help with our inspection. I wish you every success in the future.