

# Admaston Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123349
<b>Local Authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	327886
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Melvyn Blackband

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	6–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Wall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patricia Orton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 2006
<b>School address</b>	North Road Wellington Adamston Telford TF1 3ET
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 385601
<b>Fax number</b>	01952 385603

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<b>Age group</b>	6–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The Admaston Centre is a pupil referral unit (PRU) that provides for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The centre admits pupils from their local schools for four half-days each week, over a period of up to 24 weeks. They spend the rest of the time in their usual schools. Pupils are registered at both the centre and the school they come from. A few pupils remain for longer or, occasionally, full time until a permanent alternative placement can be found. There are far more boys than girls. There are currently no pupils from ethnic groups other than White British.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good PRU. The pupils are supported well and they make good gains in their personal development. This is a strength of the unit's provision and plays a crucial role in helping pupils regain their self-confidence as learners and in overcoming their previous unhappy experiences of schools. As a result, their attitudes towards school and learning improve dramatically and this has a positive impact on their progress and achievement.

As a result of their social and behavioural problems, the standards attained by pupils at the time of their entry to the school are below average. Almost all of them, however, achieve well at the centre and start to catch up with other mainstream pupils. They make good progress in reading, spelling and mathematics.

Teaching standards are good throughout the PRU. Teachers know their pupils well and they ensure that their lessons are interesting and well paced. There is a good range of activities in each classroom and these are successfully integrated into the pupils' work in basic skills. The pupils enjoy their work and respond by trying to do their best.

The staff regularly test pupils to assess their gains in progress. Staff analyse and monitor this information well to give them a good overview of provision. Teachers, however, do not effectively record all the small steps in learning which pupils make. As a result, the targets which they set pupils are not always sufficiently challenging or focused clearly enough on each individual's learning needs. Consequently, they do not always help pupils to gain a clear understanding of their own progress or how to improve their work. This slows down the pace of learning.

The curriculum is clearly focused on learning in English and mathematics. There are effective programmes which help the pupils to develop their mathematical, reading, writing and spelling skills. This enables them to keep pace with other children in their mainstream schools and this has a significant impact on their self-image and confidence. The curriculum is enriched by the imaginative use of educational visits to extend the pupils' range of physical activity and their social and cultural understanding. Once they are back full time in their schools, the unit receives clear progress reports and daily information about the pupils' behaviour from the primary schools. The schools and the PRU, however, do not always successfully coordinate information about how well the pupils learn and behave in both situations. As a result, pupils do not always have effective targets for their improvement which would apply in both the schools and therefore reinforce their learning.

The pupils make good progress in their personal development. This underpins their motivation to learn and their good achievement. The pupils thrive within the caring and supportive ethos of the unit. The pupils' behaviour is excellent. As a result of the support and guidance and the good programmes in personal, health and social education, the pupils learn to keep themselves safe and healthy. The pupils value the unit. This is evident through the good relationships they have with staff and their outstanding attendance. The pupils' good progress in gaining basic skills prepares them well for their future learning. Parents are happy for their children to attend, knowing that they enjoy their lessons and that the school has high expectations of their progress. One parent commented, 'They have stabilised his behaviour. He has settled very well and the improvement has been fantastic.'

The headteacher's considerable experience and expertise have enabled her to lead the PRU well since the previous inspection, particularly in ensuring that every pupil's performance is monitored and tracked. This has helped significantly to raise the pupils' achievement. All the

pupils get a good deal at the unit and staff take very seriously the importance of every pupil's equal opportunity to succeed.

Staff work as a close-knit team and share a common vision for the school. The school evaluates its work accurately and as a result, development planning focuses clearly on the PRU's priorities for improvement. The management committee is well informed about the PRU's strengths and areas for development. Members are supportive and keep a close eye on the PRU's performance. Good improvement has occurred since the previous inspection and, as a result of the effective procedures now becoming well established within the school, it has a good capacity to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure teachers consistently record the small steps in pupils' learning.
- Raise achievement further by working with pupils to set suitably challenging learning targets which give clear guidance about how they can improve their work.
- Establish more effective partnerships with mainstream schools to ensure that information on pupils' learning and behaviour is efficiently coordinated, thus leading to more appropriate targets and better achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The rate of pupils' progress has steadily improved since the previous inspection and achievement is good. This is because of improvements in teaching and in the monitoring of the pupils' performance. This enables teachers to target support more effectively. Although standards remain below average, most of the pupils make good progress during their stay at the centre and a few do exceptionally well. All the pupils achieve well in learning the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Most pupils, in a short time, make gains of between one and two years in their reading and number abilities. They quickly narrow the gap between their performance and that expected in mainstream schools. As a result, they thrive better in their schools and their behaviour and attitudes to learning improve.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' good progress in personal development reflects the unit's strong emphasis on moral and social values. Pupils respond to its clear rules and as a result, they develop good attitudes to learning which in turn helps to ensure they make good progress. Pupils feel safe and confident and know what is expected of them within the unit's calm and supportive atmosphere. They respond by behaving extremely well. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, pupils demonstrate caring friendships and show concern for the welfare of other children. The pupils enjoy and help to maintain a happy and close family atmosphere. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements in displays and assemblies. They learn about their own community and those of other countries, for example in their 'Caribbean' project. They contribute productively to the school community by relating well to adults and each other. As a result, the pupils have a good understanding of cultural diversity and the importance of community cohesion. The pupils gradually develop a strong awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles through their regular activities in buying and preparing healthy meals. The pupils make good progress in basic skills and this helps them to thrive when they return fully to their mainstream schools or leave for secondary school. Pupils enjoy their learning and the

company of other pupils. The pupils feel free from bullying or unpleasantness and they look forward to coming to the unit. This is confirmed by their outstanding attendance. The parents who returned questionnaires, and the many who have responded to the PRU's requests for 'feedback' after their child had left the provision, praised Admaston for its positive impact on their children's lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good throughout the unit as a result of the effective monitoring by the head of centre. Teachers know their pupils well and this enables them to plan interesting, well-paced lessons. Pupils gain confidence to learn new things, effectively assisted by the high level of individual tuition they receive from their teachers and well-trained teaching assistants. Teachers and support staff are skilled in supporting pupils in developing their numeracy and literacy skills. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour very well. They create a clear and consistent structure to lessons so that their classrooms are orderly and calm places of learning. This has a significant impact on improving the pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning and thereby in raising their achievement. The teachers use regular reading and mathematical tests effectively to assess and measure progress and inform planning. There are no consistent procedures, however, to record the small steps in pupils' day-to-day learning. As a result, teachers do not always set focused and challenging short-term targets for each pupil, and this slows down pupils' progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good programmes in basic literacy and numeracy skills are effective both in promoting the pupils' confidence and in supporting learning in other subjects. Literacy and numeracy activities are based on national strategies and this adds rigour to the teachers' planning. There are currently, however, few procedures whereby the unit staff, together with teachers in mainstream, can construct programmes for each pupil which would ensure activities were coordinated and tailored to pupils' specific needs, as they move each day from the unit to their mainstream school. The high levels of support for those with learning difficulties ensure that all pupils have equal access to learning opportunities. The good provision for the development of pupils' personal skills has a significant impact on their achievement. For instance, there are colourful displays which demonstrate the pupils' good knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles, keeping themselves safe and the value and enjoyment to be gained from becoming involved in community events. There is a developing range of activities to enrich the pupils' learning experiences and to take them out of the classroom, such as to the local supermarket, enabling them to acquire relevant skills in different situations.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

A high priority for the PRU is to provide the best standards of care and support for all of its pupils. The success of this is clearly demonstrated in the pupils' happy and relaxed behaviour. Safeguarding procedures meet national expectations. The pupils benefit from the way that staff make clear to them how well they are doing in both their work and their personal

development through meetings and in assemblies to celebrate their achievement. As a result, they have more confidence in their efforts and their ability to learn. The pupils' learning targets, however, are not yet focused enough to give them a clear understanding of how to improve their work. There is good communication between unit staff and teachers in mainstream schools to monitor the pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school. This does not yet extend to sharing information about pupils' academic targets which would help to accelerate their progress. The unit has excellent procedures to monitor and support the pupils' attendance. As a result, this is much higher than is usually seen in similar units. There are good links with parents and with outside agencies to support individual pupils with additional needs.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Good leadership and management by the head of centre have enabled the unit to maintain consistent improvement on the provision found at the previous inspection. Procedures to monitor pupils' progress have been strengthened since then, resulting in improved achievement. However, these have not yet incorporated the recording of small steps in learning or consistent target setting, to ensure pupils always learn as fast as they can. There are effective procedures to measure and improve staff performance. Communication within the school is excellent. The staff feel fully consulted, involved and valued. Their professional training has been planned well to focus on the needs of the pupils, especially by its concentration on strategies to manage their behaviour and to support the development of their basic skills. This has led to significant improvements in both these areas of focus. Senior staff effectively manage provision to ensure that students have a good grasp of community cohesion. Leaders evaluate the PRU's work effectively and have accurately identified areas requiring improvement. For instance, they know that procedures to coordinate the pupils' progress at the unit and in mainstream schools could be improved and they are working to correct this. They have also identified the need to further refine and improve procedures for the monitoring of achievement. The management committee provides a high level of expertise to the leadership and management of the unit. The committee members give good support to the school and they effectively monitor the school's strengths and areas for development.

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## Annex A

**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
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 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?	2
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	2
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**

24 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Admaston Centre, Telford, TF1 3ET

Not long ago, I came to the unit to see how you were getting on and whether I could suggest anything to make the unit better. You made me welcome and I enjoyed meeting you in the classrooms and in assembly.

I could see that you all enjoy being there. Admaston is a good school. These are some of the good things I found.

- You work hard and make good progress in your reading and your number work.
- You are doing well in learning to look after yourselves and learning how to get on with different people. Your behaviour is very good and so is your attendance.
- Your teachers and other adults at the unit look after and support you well.
- You look after each other and are kind and helpful to your friends.
- Your headteacher runs the unit well. Everyone else gives her good support.

I think these things could help the unit to improve even further.

- Your teachers should always record the small steps you make in your learning.
- Your teachers should work with you to set you targets which give you clear guidance about how you can improve you work.
- The teachers at the unit and your teachers in your primary schools should work more closely together to make sure they plan out carefully what you need learn in each place, so you can improve even faster.

You can help of course, by continuing to work as hard as you do now!

Best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

Melvyn Blackband

Lead inspector