

The Canterbury Centre

Eccles New Road, Salford, Greater Manchester, M5 5AG

Inspection dates

23–24 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' achievements over a sustained period of time are not consistently good.
- Teachers do not always take account of students' previous learning and progress. Consequently, lessons are not always planned with the individual needs of students in mind.
- Teaching assistants are sometimes too passive in their work. They are not always deployed as well as they could be by teachers to support students' individual efforts.
- A few students do not attend as regularly as they should because the courses offered do not interest all of them or fully meet their needs.
- Leaders and managers have not yet designed and implemented efficient systems to record information that helps them to understand fully about students' attainment and improvements in their progress.
- Leaders and managers do not have information systems that are sufficiently developed to enable them to understand fully the workings of the unit and plan for its future.

The school has the following strengths

- The unit succeeds in helping most previously disaffected students return to education at the unit and to resume their studies. Many gain useful qualifications.
- Students enjoy coming to the unit, most attend well and participate in lessons. Occasionally, a few make excellent progress.
- Teachers mostly provide interesting lessons. Much of the teaching seen in the inspection was good or better.
- The staff provide very high-quality care and support for the students, usually encouraging even the most reluctant to participate.
- Students' behaviour is good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Some aspects of safeguarding are of a very high quality.
- Following a thorough reorganisation last year, the leaders and managers, including the management committee, are rapidly improving the quality of teaching and students' achievements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons, five parts of lessons and an assembly. Most observations were undertaken jointly with a senior member of staff. The inspector spent more than three hours observing teaching and learning. He listened to students reading as they worked.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, middle managers, teachers, a member of the management committee and a representative of the local authority. He spoke with students informally during break times and lessons.
- Records of teachers' planning were scrutinised, as were other documents concerning safeguarding, the curriculum, records of students' achievements and their progress, and plans for the future development of the unit.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to review these, but he took account of the unit's own parent questionnaires. Two telephone conversations were held with parents and a message was relayed to the inspector from a parent.
- The inspector reviewed 21 inspection questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector reviewed the school's own analysis of recent surveys undertaken with students.

Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This pupil referral unit mainly admits students who have become unable to take part in mainstream school education because of mental health difficulties. Almost all have illnesses that have prevented them from attending school regularly. A very few are supported because of other health issues.
- The unit also supports students who become pregnant and those who require home tuition. Currently, five primary-aged pupils are supported in home tuition together with 11 secondary-age students.
- Tuition at the unit or at home is provided on a full-time or part-time basis according to the assessed needs of the students.
- Students are admitted for in-house or home tuition at any stage of their school career. Currently, most are in Key Stage 4.
- Occasionally, students arrive with a statement of special educational needs. Currently, a very few are in the care of the local authority. The pupil premium funding is not used here, (the pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after), but the local authority provides funding far in excess of the pupil premium for each student.
- No alternative provision is currently used by the unit but arrangements exist with a local college and a pupil referral unit to provide additional courses for some students.
- The unit occasionally supports the reintegration of students into mainstream and special schools in Salford through outreach.
- The structure and role of the unit were fundamentally reorganised just over a year ago when reductions in staffing occurred and a new headteacher was appointed. The management committee was also restructured and given a new role by the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good and better throughout the unit by ensuring that teachers:
 - take note of information about how students have previously learned and made progress, and plan lessons that are designed to address fully the individual needs and abilities of students
 - deploy efficiently the teaching assistants in order that they support more effectively the learning of individual students.
- Improve leadership and management by designing and implementing new systems to manage information in order to:
 - understand better how students attain and make progress
 - ensure that teachers always have access to the best quality information about students' previous learning and progress
 - provide more accurate information on which to base their analysis of how the unit is performing and how it can work more effectively
 - widen the range of courses so that even more students are encouraged to attend more regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of students requires improvement because students do not consistently make good or better progress, either in lessons or over time. This is the case for those who attend the unit and for students who are taught at home.
- From the observations made during the inspection, it is clear that students who attend make at least good progress in some lessons. However, this is not consistent and, in other lessons, students' progress is limited by teaching that is not as effective as it should be. Furthermore, it is difficult to measure how much progress has been made from the time that each enrolls because there is insufficient information available.
- Records of observations undertaken by the headteacher, as well as those of the inspector, show that all groups of students are making similar rates of progress. Students' progress over time is more difficult to check with great accuracy due to the limitations of the current records.
- Students' progress in lessons is sometimes restricted when they have to wait for an opportunity to take a turn in an activity. This prevents them from working through tasks at their own rate and gaining the most from lessons because their individual learning needs are not being fully met.
- Students have gaps in their learning in English and mathematics due to the time they have missed from school. They are gradually filling these gaps as they practice literacy and numeracy skills regularly in lessons.
- All students participate equally in learning; none is excluded. The unit promotes equality of opportunity for all.
- Last year, most of the Year 11 students gained GCSEs in English and mathematics. Most also achieved passes in other subjects. While there is currently no precise way of knowing whether the standards reached at GCSE are evidence of sufficient challenge for each individual student, it is certain that had they not attended the unit, then students would not have gained these valuable qualifications.
- Students make rapid progress in the best quality lessons because teachers make it clear to each student what it is they should learn in a lesson. For example, in an outstanding English lesson, each student was challenged individually by the teacher with their own targets for learning so that they could work at their own speed through the GCSE course. Here, students spent much of their time working independently with the close support of the teacher.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is of inconsistent quality. Not all teaching is good or better. Even when teaching is good, some elements require improvement, particularly in relation to teachers' planning.
- The quality of teaching throughout the unit, and for those involved in home tuition, is limited by teachers not having access to good quality information about how students have previously learned and made progress. This is because managers have not yet designed and implemented the appropriate systems to provide this detail. Consequently, even the best teachers find difficulty in designing lessons with closely matched tasks that meet the individual needs, abilities and interests of students.
- In the weakest lessons, teachers do not deploy the teaching assistants well enough to support students and this slows their learning. Sometimes, teaching assistants are extremely passive with no apparent role in the lesson at all.
- Nevertheless, records held by managers indicate the quality of teaching is improving in all subjects, including English and mathematics, from the time of reorganisation. The headteacher is supporting teachers in adapting their roles but the full impact of this support is still not

evident.

- During the inspection, some outstanding teaching was seen and, in these best lessons, teachers planned in detail to use every moment to best effect. For example, in an outstanding art and design lesson, no time was wasted and students were challenged at every opportunity to get the most from their studies. The teacher constantly reminded the students of what they were aiming for, checked their understanding at an individual level and used very skilful questioning to advance their thinking. As a result, students rapidly gained the skills required for the high-quality felting work that the teacher expected from them.
- All adults are acutely aware of students' needs. Staff constantly encourage them to overcome their difficulties. An example of this was seen during an assembly held to discuss a forthcoming residential event. The teacher made it clear that this was not just a holiday but an opportunity for students to overcome their fears and gain self-confidence through the activities provided.
- Parents praise the staff, including those operating home tuition. One reported: 'All of the staff are fantastic – I hate to think what would have happened to my child without them!'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students in lessons is usually good. They arrive promptly and settle quickly to tasks, usually cooperating with staff and remaining closely focused on work.
- Students, their parents and staff report that students are safe here. Students state that there is very little bullying or harassment and that they are supported by staff who always have a presence around the unit.
- Students learn how to keep themselves safe because there is a central focus on this throughout the curriculum. This is a priority for these students whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Outside of lessons, students behave well, demonstrating their improving social skills. Students report they enjoy coming to the unit, making friends with others and engaging in meaningful relationships with staff. This enables them to take part in lessons when previously they could not. Students gain self-confidence by being successful. This encourages them to go further with their studies and widen their range of activities.
- The gains made in self-confidence and self-esteem help students move on successfully. For example, some undertake additional courses at a local college. Most make good personal developments throughout their stay, gaining qualifications that help them move on to the next stages better prepared than they would otherwise be.
- Some parents of students who receive home tuition report that they, and their families, gain significantly from this form of learning. One stated that the unit has provided a lifeline for her child to remain in education.
- The great majority of students attend regularly and many who have previously attended part time increase their attendance to full time. For some, however, their attendance remains too low because the range of courses offered does not fully meet their needs and interests. A very few are persistent absentees.
- The development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is enhanced through visits to places of interest and by undertaking residential holidays. Students report that they find these experiences extremely useful because of the valuable opportunities for them to recover their self-confidence.

The leadership and management**requires improvement**

- Important changes such as in the development of systems to manage information about how students learn and make progress have not yet been implemented by the leadership.
- At the time they enrol, the leadership knows little about students' previous levels of attendance and educational standards. Furthermore, managers have not yet developed sufficiently robust systems to measure, in any detail, students' academic progress throughout their time at the unit. This is the case for students who attend the unit or for those taught at home. Consequently, it is difficult for managers to check or measure accurately the impact or value of the unit's work.
- A very few students rarely or never attend. Managers do not do enough to encourage persistent absentees to attend regularly by providing a wide enough range of courses or ensuring that students have access to even more individualised pathways of learning.
- With regard to strategic planning for the future, leaders and managers are constrained by the lack of accurate information available to them. Consequently, the unit does not yet know and understand its strengths and weaknesses as well as it should.
- Much has been done by managers since the reorganisation to establish a good service by, for example, improving the quality of teaching. New systems designed to ensure a better consistency of teaching have been introduced. For example, English and mathematics teaching is monitored by two newly appointed coordinators. The use of performance management by the headteacher to improve teaching is good.
- The headteacher has reviewed the behaviour management systems. This has led to a reduction in serious incidents. In the past year, no students have been excluded. Some of the work undertaken by managers to safeguard students is exceptional.
- Staff are supportive of the headteacher's measures to improve the effectiveness of the unit. Morale is high and staff report pride in working at the unit.
- Managers empower the staff to help students overcome their difficulties. For example, resources are provided for students to undertake residential experiences wholly designed to help raise their self-confidence. These experiences add significantly to students' physical and emotional well-being.
- The local authority has maintained close contact with the headteacher throughout the period of change and has provided an effective management committee and good improvement advice. A local authority representative is helping to ensure that the body commissioning the placements of students will, in future, provide managers of the unit with accurate information about students' previous educational standards and their previous rates of attendance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The new management committee is already effective. It is highly supportive of the headteacher and other managers who work at the unit. Committee members are experienced and skilled. They know the unit well. Members share ambition and vision for the future of the unit with the headteacher. Members have already held the headteacher to account regarding the targets for teachers arising from their performance management; this is becoming linked to the development of new management roles within the unit. The headteacher has been subject to rigorous performance management by the committee. Members are fully aware that the unit must develop the systems to understand better its strengths and weaknesses. Members have ensured that all of the requirements for safeguarding are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors. A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.

School details

Unique reference number	135952
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	426204
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Jacqui Hughes
Headteacher	Julie Owen
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2011
Telephone number	0161 9212550
Fax number	0161 9212550
Email address	julie.owen@salford.gov.uk

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