

The Cheadle Centre

Cheadle Centre, Cheadle Road, Hylton Castle, Tyne and Wear, SR5 3NN

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students' achievement is good. The majority of students who arrive at the pupil referral unit (PRU) have low levels of attainment in comparison to others nationally.
- Despite the large gaps in students' learning, once they re-engage with learning in the supportive atmosphere of the unit, many make good and better progress and leave with a wide range of qualifications and accreditations.
- Overall, teaching is good. This is because teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve. They work closely with support staff to ensure good outcomes for students.
- Despite their high level of need, students' behaviour is good both inside and outside the classroom. While the attendance of many students is low when they arrive, at the unit it quickly improves as they begin to re-engage and enjoy learning.
- The newly appointed acting headteacher has brought about much change since the last inspection. Her clear focus on improving the students' academic achievement has ensured students now all leave with qualifications and accreditations. Supported by the management committee, she has ensured all areas identified for improvement in the previous inspection report have been successfully addressed. This demonstrates the unit's clear ability to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet always consistently good or better. This is because teachers do not always ensure that work set is at the right level, so is neither too hard nor too easy for students.
- Teachers' marking of students' books does not always give clear guidance on how they can improve their work.
- There remains a very small group of hard-to-reach students who do not achieve as well as they could. This is because they do not regularly engage with the unit and, as a result, do not access a wide enough curriculum.
- Senior leaders' planning for improvement is too short term as it does not extend beyond July 2013.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 13 lessons and parts of lessons taught by five teachers, one higher level teaching assistant and one trainer, on three different sites.
- Two joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher.
- The inspection team held meetings and had discussions with five students, senior leaders, members of the school staff, the Chair of the Management Committee and two representatives from the local authority.
- No parents made their views known to the inspection team through the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), but inspectors took into account the views of parents expressed in a recent survey undertaken by the school and the views of two parents who contacted the inspection team by telephone.
- The inspectors studied health and safety documentation, teachers' curriculum planning, documents relating to the performance management of staff and the school's system for checking students' progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Henry Moreton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The pupil referral unit makes provision for Key Stage 4 students who are in danger of being, or who have been, permanently excluded from their mainstream schools.
- The majority of students attend the Cheadle Centre provision. A small number receive education from different external providers including the YMCA, a farm project and the Stadium of Light.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage a very small number are from other ethnic groups.
- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes to the leadership team. The current acting headteacher has been in post for just over a year.
- While approximately half the students currently on roll at the unit are eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and children of members of the armed forces) the unit does not currently receive this payment directly into its budget.
- The proportion of students identified with special educational needs through school action is lower than in mainstream schools. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.
- The pupil referral unit shares its management committee with two other pupil referral units situated in Sunderland.
- The school has been awarded Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that work set for all students meets their needs and is at the right level so is neither too hard nor too easy
 - ensuring the marking of students' books provides students with sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- Improve the achievement of the hardest-to-reach students by:
 - improving their access to one-to-one tuition
 - increasing the number of curriculum subjects available to them, especially with sufficient access to information and communication technology (ICT).
- Ensure leaders improve the quality of their plans for improving the school so that they extend beyond the current academic year.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students frequently arrive at the unit at times other than the start of term, often because they have been excluded from their mainstream school. Some arrive in Year 11 with less than a year to go before they reach the end of their school career. Many also arrive with low levels of attainment, often due to erratic patterns of attendance.
- Despite the extent of these barriers to learning, the vast majority of students quickly settle into the routine of the unit and make good, and for some, accelerated progress from low starting points.
- As a result of this strong focus on achievement, all students who attended the unit last year, no matter how long their stay, left with at least one qualification or accreditation. The vast majority left with four or more. This represents good achievement overall. Where possible pupils take GCSE's and very occasionally these are taken in Year 10 rather than Year 11.
- The unit has a very strong focus on students' academic achievement and students achieve equally well in English and mathematics.
- When students arrive at the unit they are given a comprehensive and rigorous assessment which takes into account, where possible, their performance in the end of Key Stage 2 statutory tests in English and mathematics. Realistic goals are then set and students' progress is very carefully tracked and checked by staff.
- If students fail to make expected progress, staff ensure extra support is quickly put in place and, as a result, the gaps in the achievement of different groups of students are beginning to close. Last year, students who were known to be eligible for free schools made equal and in some cases better progress than their peers.
- A skilled member of staff checks regularly the achievement of students who attend the various different off-site settings. Currently, all students in alternative provisions are achieving equally well to their peers who attend the Cheadle Centre.
- Disabled students or those who have special educational needs and the few from different ethnic backgrounds achieve in line with their peers. Consequently, their achievement is good.
- The achievement of a very small group of students who are harder to reach than others, often because of their personal circumstances, is less good than their peers. This is because they do not yet have sufficient access to one-to-one support from unit staff and do not have access to a broad enough curriculum, particularly in ICT.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. However, there are still a few weaker aspects in some areas of the unit, often where short-term supply teachers are used to cover classes.
- In the best lessons, teaching is characterised by teachers' high expectations of what students can achieve, no matter how low their starting point. This could clearly be seen in an English lesson where Year 10 students were studying a scene from Act 2 of Romeo and Juliet. Students worked collaboratively, sharing resources they had all prepared on scenes from the play. They worked diligently on reflecting on the relationships between the families, choosing their own objectives which were aligned to the GCSE curriculum. Most chose the highest level and it became clear at the end of the lesson many had achieved this goal. Their level of understanding of the complexity of the relationships between the families in the play was excellent, as was the quality of their written work. Their behaviour and attitudes towards each other were also exceptional.
- Staff work together as a close-knit team. Teaching assistants are skilled and knowledgeable and their time is used effectively. As a result, students whose circumstances make them vulnerable

are well supported and make good progress.

- The curriculum engages most students well and offers them a wide variety of opportunities and activities to develop both their academic and social skills. For example, the unit recently ran a residential trip to an outdoor pursuit centre which was described by one student as 'The best fun I have ever had'.
- Teaching delivered through external providers, commissioned by the unit, is also good. Unit leaders make regular checks on the quality of these alternative provisions and students' progress is carefully tracked alongside others in the unit.
- Most teachers are good at using the information about how well students are doing to plan future lessons. They regularly mark students' books and provide positive encouragement. However, they do not always provide sufficient guidance for students on how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of students clearly enjoy coming to the unit, so much so that some occasionally show reluctance to leave and return to mainstream schools. This is because they feel safe, secure and happy within the unit and feel their opinions are listened to and acted upon by unit leaders.
- The vast majority of students behave well both in the classroom and around the unit. During the inspection students showed polite attitudes towards each other, staff and visitors, for example, they held doors open for the inspectors without being prompted.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection felt that students were well behaved at school and that staff helped them to improve their children's behaviour at home. This view was further supported in a recent questionnaire which the school had given to parents. Behaviour logs also showed an improvement in students' behaviour over time.
- Attendance has improved since the previous inspection. The vast majority of students show a marked increase in their attendance when they join the unit and records show a number increase their attendance to 100%.
- Students spoken to during the inspection were clear that incidents of bullying, including homophobic bullying, are rare. This, they feel, is because of the very positive attitudes of staff and the respect shown by both students and staff to each other. A comment made by one student summed up the feelings of many, 'I feel like staff like and respect me here'.

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher has a very clear vision of how successful the unit can be. Since the last inspection, with the support of the management committee, she has continued to improve the school's performance. Consequently, the unit's performance has moved from being satisfactory to good.
- The rigorous approach taken by senior leaders in making regular checks on the quality of teaching has ensured standards have improved since the previous inspection although a small amount of variation remains.
- Targets set for staff through the management of their performance link directly to students' achievement and the unit's development plan. Checks on the performance of staff are now more rigorous and the headteacher uses this information to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the vast majority of students well. A year-on-year increase in the number and variety of qualifications and accreditations offered ensures students are well prepared for further education or the world of work. Every student who left last year entered further education, employment or training.
- Leaders are clear about how to improve further the performance of the unit and have addressed key issues in their development plan. However, future planning only extends to the end of this

academic year and has yet to be extended further into the future.

- All areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report have been successfully addressed and students' achievement has also improved. These successes clearly demonstrate the ability of the unit leaders to bring about further improvement.
- The successful support provided to meet students' needs and different levels of ability ensures all groups make good progress. This demonstrates the unit's continued commitment to equality of opportunity for all students.
- Through partnership work with students in a local special school and through opportunities gained through art and design, students increase their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The local authority has worked closely to help the school improve by offering school leaders both support and challenge through regular visits.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The provision shares the management committee with two other pupil referral units. Through this shared approach the management committee is clear about the strengths and areas for improvement within the unit. They review performance data to check on students' progress and are well informed about the quality of teaching. The diverse set of skills which members hold ensures that they offer a good level of support and challenge. They set ambitious targets for the assistant headteacher and check on the performance of other staff and the way it is linked to their pay. As a result, the good achievement of students has been maintained since the last inspection. While the management committee oversee spending within the provision, they do not hold the budget nor do they have access to pupil premium funds which currently remain within students' mainstream schools. The management committee ensures all safeguarding provision meets current requirements.

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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	135641
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	402727

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	14–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Graeme Shillinglaw
Headteacher	Vicky Mawson (Acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2010
Telephone number	0191 553 5495
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