

Calderdale PRU

The Whitley Phoenix Centre, Moorbottam , Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX2 9SR

Inspection dates 17–18 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils frequently arrive at the school with gaps in their learning due to missing time in mainstream school. From their often low starting points, pupils settle into well-organised routines, which help them make good and sometimes better progress. This represents good achievement overall.
- Pupils join the school because they are in danger of being excluded, or have been excluded, from mainstream schools. As a result of the good progress they make both academically and in improving their behaviour many make a successful return to their mainstream schools.
- Teaching is good. The majority of teachers have high expectations for all pupils. Teachers' good subject knowledge and clear explanations result in good learning.
- Pupils feel safe and describe school as a welcoming place to which many enjoy coming. Despite their high level of need, incidents of difficult behaviour rarely interrupt learning. The majority of pupils show courteous and friendly attitudes to staff, visitors and each other.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained and strengthened or successfully built on standards in both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement across the school. This continuous commitment shows leaders' ability to make the school even better in the future.
- The well informed, skilled and effective management committee offers good levels of both support and challenge to senior leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Support staff sometimes spend too little time supporting pupils' learning in lessons.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent in some classes and does not give sufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- The attendance of a small number of pupils in Key Stage 4 is lower than it should be. Leaders have yet to put in place systems which successfully engage with these pupils and their families.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and parts of lessons taught by 13 teachers and support staff. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. The inspection team also listened to pupils from Year 2 read in a lesson and examined the quality of work in the books of pupils from across the school with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspection team held meetings and had discussions with pupils, senior leaders, members of the school staff and three members of the management committee. They also met a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took into account the views of 17 parents who made their views known to the school in a recent survey. No parents made their views known on the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team studied health and safety documentation, teachers' curriculum planning, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff and the school's system for checking pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nell Banfield

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Calderdale Pupil Referral Unit makes provision for the needs of 60 pupils who are in danger of exclusion or are already permanently excluded from their mainstream schools because of their behavioural needs. These pupils live in the Calderdale local authority area.
- Pupils attend for a varying length of time depending on their level of need.
- The pupil referral unit is situated on three sites. The Key Stage 2 site is located next to a primary school and pupils often join others in the school for social occasions. Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 units are situated in separate locations across Halifax with the greatest number of pupils attending the Key Stage 4 site.
- Approximately 50% of pupils are supported by the pupil premium which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those from forces' families.
- The vast majority of pupils who attend come from families of White British heritage. A very small number come from families from other ethnic groups.
- Approximately a third of pupils who attend have identified special educational needs which are supported through school action.
- Few pupils are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational need.
- The school has a range of awards and accreditations and has achieved Healthy Schools status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' achievement through increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring more of teaching assistants' time is spent on supporting pupils' learning, rather than their behaviour, in order to increase progress
 - improving the consistency in the marking of books so that pupils are clear about what to do to improve their work.
- Improve the attendance of a small number of Key Stage 4 pupils who are hard to reach by:
 - reviewing and improving the strategies currently used to engage these pupils and their families
 - taking a more creative approach to reducing the barriers which currently prevent them from attending.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils arrive with low levels of attainment because of gaps in their education, often due to their complex behavioural needs. Staff are highly skilled at meeting the needs of these pupils and once they have learnt the skills required for learning they begin to make good progress. School data shows that in 2013, the majority of pupils across the school made good progress. This represents good achievement overall.
- Key Stage 2 pupils often attend for short periods of time in order to assess their needs and improve their behaviour. Those that stay longer often make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they start to re-engage with learning and enjoy the interesting and exciting curriculum on offer. As one young pupil commented: 'I love coming here and enjoy learning now'.
- Leaders are justifiably proud that almost 40% of pupils in Key Stage 3 successfully return to mainstream school. This is because they make good progress socially, emotionally and academically during their time at the unit and are able to return with levels of achievement which are closer to those expected nationally.
- Overall, many of those who continue to attend through Key Stage 4 make good progress. Last year some reached nationally expected levels and the vast majority made good progress from their individual starting points. While the majority went on to gain a range of GCSE and other accreditations by the end of Year 11 last year, a small number left without gaining qualifications and accreditations because of low levels of attendance.
- The most-able pupils achieve well, particularly in mathematics. This is because teachers provide them with challenging activities which enable them to make good and often better progress.
- Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy reading, often for the first time in their school career. This is because teachers focus on reading and offer a range of exciting opportunities to read both in class and independently. As a result of this intensive approach, in 2013 pupils made an average gain of 18 months on their initial reading scores which represents good, and better, progress from their individual starting points.
- In 2013, the school did not receive pupil premium funding. However, despite this, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals made very similar levels of attainment and progress to their peers in both English and mathematics and their achievement was good overall. Senior leaders plan to use extra funding due to be received this year to support these pupils in a variety of different ways including the provision of more intensive one-to-one support for pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4.
- All pupils who attend the school have identified behavioural needs. Some also have additional learning needs, for example being on the autistic spectrum. These pupils receive extra support through individual learning plans and as a result, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs group make equally good and sometimes better progress than their peers.
- The small number of pupils who are from other ethnic groups also make good progress because staff are committed to supporting all pupils, evidencing the school's clear commitment to equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- Progress in pupils' books and in lessons observed during the inspection confirmed that teaching is good overall. In a small number of classrooms it is outstanding.
- The vast majority of teachers are good at using information about how well pupils are doing to plan future lessons. Their subject knowledge is good and they have high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Teachers provide a good level of challenge, including for the most-able, and pupils clearly enjoy learning. An example of this could be seen in a Key Stage 4 mathematics lesson in which pupils

were learning about trigonometry in preparation for GCSE examinations. The teacher's exceptional levels of knowledge and clear explanations engaged pupils well and frequent reference to GCSE levels enabled pupils to be clear about what they needed to do to reach the next level. As a result, pupils were motivated and worked with enthusiasm, applying good levels of logic in using formulae and solving problems.

- Parents of pupils who responded to a recent school survey felt that school staff were good at helping their children to overcome their problems and make a new start. Many praised the work of teachers and support staff.
- While all teachers diligently mark pupils' books and often give positive oral and written feedback, not all are consistent at ensuring pupils are clear about how to improve their work or progress to the next level.
- Teachers and support staff work closely together and strong partnerships are evident across the school. However, in some classrooms support assistants lack sufficient direction from teachers and spend too much time focusing on pupils' behaviour and too little on supporting learning. When this happens, progress slows.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- 'I enjoy coming to school here because I feel respected', commented an older pupil: 'We feel safe here', commented two younger pupils. This was clear evidence of what a safe and caring place pupils feel school is.
- Despite the very high level of need within the school population, learning is rarely interrupted by incidents of difficult behaviour because staff and pupils deal with it effectively. Behaviour in the corridors is generally calm. Break and lunchtimes particularly in the Key Stage 4 provision are seen as social time which is enjoyed by staff and pupils alike.
- Pupils feel valued as members of the school community and their views are communicated well to senior leaders.
- Pupils are clear about the different forms bullying can take. They feel that incidents are rare because pupils are made aware through, for example, the school's internet safety policy of the effects bullying can have on others. They are helped through the good quality of advice and guidance given by staff.
- Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection for all groups except for a small number of Key Stage 4 pupils who are regarded by school as 'hard to engage'. While staff have worked long and hard and successfully to engage other groups of pupils, this group remains difficult to motivate to attend.
- The school recognises that current strategies aimed at improving the attendance of these pupils are not yet effective and they do not sufficiently engage the families of these pupils. Plans to improve the attendance for this group have yet to be implemented. A more creative approach to overcoming the barriers they face is needed in order to improve and encourage their attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has continued to build on and maintain the school's good performance recognised in the previous inspection report. Their unwavering focus on school improvement has ensured that both the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils has continued to develop. Consequently the school has maintained a good level of overall effectiveness.
- Their clear vision and determined approach has united staff in a quest to improve the school even further.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Teaching is effectively monitored across the school and effective action is taken by the headteacher through the management of staff's performance to

improve areas of weakness. As a result, the quality of teaching has been strengthened since the previous inspection. However, further improvement is needed in a small number of classes if teaching is to become outstanding overall.

- Leaders ensure performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and targets within the school's development plan. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken rigorously and the headteacher uses this information to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- Recently appointed curriculum leaders who have responsibility for leading teaching in mathematics and English have already brought about significant changes, particularly in Key Stage 4. For example, the introduction of a formal examination week has already started to prepare pupils more effectively for their forthcoming examinations by ensuring they have a clear understanding of what is expected.
- The curriculum offers pupils a wide variety of different experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Recent whole-school team building days and visits to a variety of locations, including Yorkshire County Cricket club, have enabled pupils to develop a clearer understanding of life outside their immediate locality. These experiences coupled with inspirational visits from, for example, two members of the British Olympic athletics team increase pupils' self esteem and increase their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. This aspirational visit also served to improve the participation rates in sport and health and welfare of younger pupils.
- Since the school's good grading for overall effectiveness in the previous inspection, the local authority has offered the school a light-touch level of support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the management committee bring a very good range of skills and experience which they regularly update through attending further training. Working with the local authority advisor they set clear performance management targets for the headteacher which are directly linked to pupils' achievement and have brought about improvement. In partnership with senior leaders they have developed an effective system for checking the performance of all staff which rewards good teaching and addresses any underperformance. Their careful and prudent management of the school's finances shows that they are well placed to support the school in decisions on how the pupil premium funding is to be spent. They are very clear that they will need to check the impact this funding on improving the achievement of those pupils for whom it is intended. They have a good understanding of the importance of careful analysis of pupils' achievement data and offer leaders support and challenge in all areas of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching. Safeguarding procedures and policies within school are undertaken to a good standard. The health and safety committee carries out regular inspections and has ensured that safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. Currently the school does not receive sports partnership funding for Key Stage 2 pupils.

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	133693
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	425902

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	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heidi Wilson
Headteacher	Simon Lee
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2011
Telephone number	01422 244181 / 01422 394141
Fax number	01422 364899
Email address	pruadmin@calderdale.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

