

Harrow Tuition Service

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102180
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	376678
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Liz Bull

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Joy Shakespeare
Headteacher	Claire Nicholls
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed, in part or in full, 12 lessons and nine teachers and looked at other evidence relating to the quality of learning. They held meetings with a representative of the local authority who is also a member of the management committee and staff and pupils from both sites. Inspectors observed the service's work and looked at its policy documents, minutes of meetings held by the management committee and the data the service had gathered on pupils' progress. They analysed questionnaires returned by staff, pupils and three from parents and carers. In addition they considered the views of six parents who offered verbal responses to the questionnaire over the phone.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the service's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of self-evaluation and the rigour with which leaders analyse and use data to inform future planning and to set targets.
- How well teaching, the curriculum and care, guidance and support promote positive outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils and prepare them for successful reintegration to school or further education.
- Whether there is consistency of provision and outcomes across the service.
- The actions taken to support and challenge pupils who do not attend regularly.

Information about the school

Harrow Tuition Service provides for pupils who have been permanently excluded from school or who are at risk of permanent exclusion. It provides early intervention programmes to prevent exclusion and supports a small group of vulnerable pupils who refuse to attend school. It also supports pupils who have a range of physical and/or mental health problems. The service previously operated on four separate sites but in September 2011 it relocated to Harrow Teachers' Centre. The service also provides an education service at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital School offering teaching for children and young people admitted as patients on a short-term, medium-term or recurring basis, and home tuition for sick children who are still on roll but unable to attend their own school.

In the last academic year, the service provided education and home tuition for 151 pupils and for 181 at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital. Of the 57 pupils on roll at present, 13 of these are in college placements, six receive home tuition, three are in alternative provision, two are receiving virtual learning through an online learning provider, four are in hospital and 29 are attending the Harrow Teachers' Centre, 28 of whom are in secondary education. Boys greatly outnumber girls and a very high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very small number of pupils on roll are in the care of the local authority.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Harrow Tuition Service provides a good quality of education and, as a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. It is effective in helping pupils to close gaps in their education caused by previous weak attendance and behavioural difficulties that have resulted in exclusion. It is equally effective in preventing exclusions. The fact that many pupils in the past two years have returned to school or moved on to further education, training or to take up employment, is a notable achievement.

When pupils arrive, they have often experienced a disrupted education and considerable failure. Once at the service, they develop confidence and positive attitudes to learning and to other people, and start to attain academic success. One pupil commented to inspectors that he had learned far more at the service than in his previous setting. Plentiful opportunities are provided for pupils to collaborate with each other in lessons and pupils learn to cooperate well with one another in a range of different situations offered by the good curriculum. Their behaviour improves vastly and is good overall. Most pupils say they feel very safe and that there is little bullying or racism, and records confirm this.

There are strong pastoral systems for pupils' welfare which ensure that they settle quickly and gain confidence. The positive and supportive relationships promote pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils are very well equipped with skills and support which enable them to successfully move on to their next phase of education. Teaching is good overall. Because of this, pupils, despite often entering the service with low attainment, make good and sometimes outstanding progress. The best lessons are where pupils are engaged and challenged and where learning is highly personalised. Where teaching is less effective, pupils are not always set precise and challenging learning targets in lessons. Assessment on entry is good and the school closely monitors pupils' progress to ensure each is making good progress. Its systems though are not sufficiently refined to enable senior leaders to compare pupils' progress against national expectations and so gain a clearer understanding of the value the service adds to pupils' achievements.

As a result of the service's effective efforts, attendance is now broadly average although there remains a small minority of pupils who are not attending regularly. Through home visits and targeted intervention, the service encourages pupils to improve their attendance and the vast majority make substantial improvements which enables them to make good progress in their learning. The service has developed some successful strategies to improve parents' and carers' engagement.

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One parent wrote, 'I am very pleased with the effort his key worker and teachers make to encourage him to learn and attend school. I am very thankful for the great effort to keep him in school.' The leadership team recognises the need to continue to develop these positive links even further in order to support the small minority of pupils who do not attend regularly enough.

Leadership and management are good. The integration of three sites into one in September 2011 has been successful in supporting the leadership team's drive and ambition for improvement. There is a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development based on effective monitoring of pupils' individual progress and other aspects of the service's provision. The management committee is providing a good level of support and challenge. Given all these factors, Harrow Tuition Service has a good capacity to make further improvements to the quality of education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment by refining assessment procedures to ensure that all pupils are set challenging and precise targets in all lessons.
- Raise attendance levels further by providing specific support for those pupils with persistent absence and further improving partnerships with their families.
- Strengthen leadership and management by refining systems for evaluating pupils' progress so that the service has a clearer understanding of the value it adds to pupils' learning compared to national expectations.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The attainment of pupils varies from year to year but overall is low. Almost all pupils have a history of disrupted education and demonstrate high levels of emotional and/or social needs, which have often resulted in lengthy periods of absence from mainstream schooling. Pupils respond well to the service's work to re-engage them in education. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress from low starting points as a result of the service's determined efforts and well-informed support; consequently, achievement is good. Those who undertake work experience in Year 11 also develop excellent practical and vocational skills and a very positive disposition towards further learning and the world of work. As a result of the service's good support and guidance, most pupils achieve at least average attendance and a large majority successfully re-integrate into mainstream schools or go on to complete college courses.

During lessons, pupils are almost always attentive and work hard. For example, a Year 8 pupil was able, by the end of a mathematics lesson, to split complex calculations into simpler steps to solve an algebraic problem. A Year 10 pupil convincingly explained the meaning and use of similes and metaphors during an English lesson on creative writing. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to discussions,

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respond well to questions and make good progress in their learning. The service has well-embedded systems that consistently support the learning and well-being of vulnerable pupils and because individual needs are identified from the start, there are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by boys and girls, those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those in the care of the local authority.

Pupils say they feel safe and gain confidence in an environment that has firm boundaries and clear expectations that are consistently applied. Pupils see their time in the service as an opportunity to turn their lives around and behaviour is good. Pupils' positive attitudes towards activities, including cooking and sports activities such as boxing, have led to them taking a greater pride in their work and adopting healthier lifestyles. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They work harmoniously together, finding similarities in their backgrounds rather than differences. This leads to a real sense of community in which pupils have a clear say in what goes on. Through the service's focus on social and emotional aspects of learning, pupils' personal skills develop well and they increasingly take on roles of responsibility including fund raising for charity such as 'Jeans for Genes Day'.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good overall. In lessons such as English and mathematics, pupils have very clear targets and expectations and tasks are well matched to their abilities. This enables pupils to get on with their work and behave well. Here, teachers have a clear

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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understanding of pupils' prior attainments and use this information well to plan the next steps in learning. This good use of assessment is not consistent across the service. Senior leaders recognise the need to refine assessment procedures so that information gathered can be used to optimum effect and enable staff to set challenging and precise targets for pupils in all lessons.

The good curriculum has some exciting aspects. For example, practical activities such as sport, beauty and arts and craft enable pupils to gain confidence in their own ability and to improve their self-esteem. Throughout, there is a focus on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and personal skills and, for older pupils, the number of externally accredited courses available has been extended. Thus, pupils make good gains in developing key skills in preparation for returning to mainstream education.

The good care, guidance and support are a strength of the provision. Staff know the pupils very well indeed and all pupils are allocated a key worker who engages with them as individuals to ensure that the curriculum is well matched and that they are making the most of the opportunities provided. Furthermore, staff provide training and advice concerning the behaviour management of some particularly challenging pupils to staff in the home schools. The service works hard and in cooperation with the education welfare service to liaise with families and to encourage pupils to attend regularly. However, a few pupils remain persistent absentees.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads the service well and has successfully encouraged a good sense of shared purpose. As a result, staff are keen to do well and provide the best opportunities for pupils. The service is successful in improving pupils' personal qualities so that they can remain in their mainstream school or be successfully reintegrated into other education. Leaders scrutinise the outcomes of rigorous self-evaluation procedures and priorities are incorporated into a good development plan. Senior leaders have brought about a cohesive staff team which works well together. Systems for monitoring all aspects of provision are of a good quality. The variable quality of teaching is being addressed successfully through rigorous and regular monitoring. As a result, the quality of teaching and of learning are now good. A detailed knowledge of individual pupils and their performance ensures that no-one is overlooked and that equality of opportunity is assured. The service is aware that its systems for evaluating data on pupils' progress need to be refined further. At

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present, it does not have a sufficiently clear overview of the value it adds over time in terms of the progress of individuals against national expectations. This is particularly so for those pupils who are only at the service for short periods of time.

The management committee has a good understanding of the service’s strengths and what needs to be done to secure further improvement. It provides good levels of both support and challenge to staff. Safeguarding arrangements are thorough. Requirements for checking, vetting and training staff are met and child protection procedures are secure. The Harrow Tuition Service has established very positive relationships with local mainstream schools which rightly recognise and applaud the determination and resolve of the service’s leaders to re-engage pupils in learning. Good partnerships with a range of agencies support pupils’ social and emotional development. Particular attention is given to those who are in crisis and good links are well established with relevant professionals, so that information about pupils’ welfare is shared and acted upon. The service has established positive relationships with many parents and carers. It recognises though that there is more to do to engage a small number of parents and carers.

The service has a good understanding of the social, ethnic and religious diversity of the pupils it educates and promotes equality and seeks to eliminate discrimination effectively. As a result, there are few racist incidents. Pupils’ knowledge of cultural diversity is promoted effectively so that they are tolerant and respectful of differences. Consequently, the service’s contribution to the promotion of community cohesion is good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

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Only a very small proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Those who did were positive about the quality of care and education provided, the way that the school prepares their children for the future and the way the service deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors agree with these positive views about the service and judge that the service satisfactorily engages with parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harrow Tuition Service to complete a questionnaire about their views of the service.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the service.

The inspection team received three completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 57 pupils registered at the service.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	33	1	33	1	33	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	2	67	1	33	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	0	0	3	100	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	33	1	33	1	33	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	0	0	3	100	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	0	0	3	100	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	0	0	2	67	1	33	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harrow Tuition Service, Harrow HA3 5PQ

Recently we visited the tuition service to see how you are getting on. We enjoyed our time both at the Harrow Teachers' Centre and at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital where we were able to observe lessons and see how well you are doing. We want to thank all of you for letting us see your work and for talking to us. Your views were very helpful.

We judge the service to be good overall and we were pleased to see that you are well cared for and that you have gained in confidence and self-esteem. You told us that you feel safe and respected by the adults you work with. We were pleased that most of you have improved your attendance and are suitably prepared for the next steps in your education.

Harrow Tuition Service needs to do these things to become even better:

- To work with you and your parents and carers to further improve your attendance.
- To set more precise targets in lessons so that you all learn more.
- Senior leaders to better evaluate your progress so that the service has a clearer understanding of the value it adds to your learning.

The service is giving you all a really good chance to get back on track. You can make the most of it by attending every day, cooperating and working hard so you can all succeed. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly. We wish you every continued success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Liz Bull
Lead inspector

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