

# Francis Barber Pupil Referral Unit

Franciscan Road, Tooting, London, SW17 8HE

**Inspection dates** 4–5 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All students make good progress, and some make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This prepares them well for the next steps in their lives.
- Almost all Year 11 students in 2012 gained GCSE or vocational qualifications and moved on successfully to further education, training or specialist provision.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. In outstanding lessons students benefit from very thought-provoking activities which constantly challenge their thinking and understanding.
- The behaviour and safety of students are outstanding. Many pupils make great strides in improving their behaviour and return successfully to their mainstream schools.
- The unit's outreach service is effective in helping to improve students' behaviour in mainstream schools across the local authority.
- Senior leaders are effective in raising the achievement of students by working very closely with each student's mainstream school, planning a programme of study and activities that matches the needs of the students exceptionally well. Leaders have also worked successfully to improve the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a clear vision and an accurate view of the unit. Leaders place a strong focus on improving the performance of staff through rigorous monitoring and training.
- The management committee is very effective and focuses closely on the needs of the students. Members have asked searching questions and checked the progress of the unit very closely.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to result in excellent achievement.
- Staff do not always give students enough opportunities to learn for themselves and work is occasionally not hard enough.
- Leaders in charge of subjects do not have enough opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of work.
- Information on the unit's performance is not summarised well enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons, over one third of which were observed jointly with unit leaders, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also visited Nightingale Vocational Academy, one of the alternative providers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of staff, a representative from the local authority, the Chair of the management committee and another member of the management committee, and a group of students. The inspectors also talked informally to students and staff around the unit. Discussions were held with individual parents and carers on the telephone and mainstream feeder schools.
- Many documents were reviewed, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour management and students' progress, students' work, the unit's self-evaluation and improvement plans, and documents relating to the performance management arrangements for staff.
- The inspectors took account of the unit's surveys of parents', carers' and students' views and the responses in staff questionnaires. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to enable inspectors to gather evidence from this source.

## Inspection team

Sonja Joseph, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Hugh Betterton

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Francis Barber is a pupil referral unit (PRU) that caters for students who are permanently excluded, pupils dual registered with mainstream secondary schools at risk of permanent exclusion, or those requiring short-term behaviour support.
- The PRU operates on two sites. The Westdean site caters for students with complex special educational needs (Pathways), the Wandsworth Interim School Project (WISP) which provides education for new arrivals to the Borough in Years 7 to 10 while a mainstream place is identified and Key Stage 4 pupils with statements for emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) who would otherwise need to be educated out of the Borough ('Fresh Start').
- The majority of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- There are equal numbers of boys and girls currently in the PRU.
- Year 11 students had left the PRU at the time of the inspection.
- A new headteacher was appointed in January 2013 and a new deputy headteacher in April 2013.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible free school meals, those in local authority care and children from service families.
- The PRU uses a range of alternative providers. They are: Nightingale Vocational Academy; RW Rechere Associates; Sutton and District Training; National Association Crime Reduction Organisations (NACRO); and the Lighthouse Project.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that students are challenged throughout all lessons by setting work that is precisely matched to the right level of difficulty for their abilities
  - reducing the amount of teacher explanations so that students have enough opportunities to learn independently and find things out for themselves.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - summarising more sharply information collected on the effectiveness of the unit's work so that it is easy to identify trends, strengths and where improvements need to be made
  - making sure that middle leaders have more opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas, so that they are fully aware of strengths and weaknesses and use this knowledge to make improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils are good

- From low starting points, often as a result of considerable periods of absence, students achieve well in all subjects. Effective teaching and excellent support for their emotional, social and physical well-being ensure that for all students progress is good and in terms of their personal and social development, it is excellent. As one student commented, 'I had given up on school and now I am going to college and have taken GCSEs.'
- In 2012, almost all students gained qualifications across a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, and some at GCSE A\* to C grades. The increasing proportion of students gaining appropriate qualifications and work-related learning awards indicates a clear trend of improvement. Lesson observations and checks on students' work suggest that this is set to continue.
- Progress in reading is good. Staff place a high focus on improving and developing reading skills across the unit, making sure that students read regularly and develop effective reading for meaning skills.
- Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to provide good quality intervention support for literacy and numeracy. Students eligible for this funding make good progress in both English and mathematics and are closing the gap in attainment between themselves and other students, both while on a short respite placement or when admitted for a longer period. In Year 11 they achieve grades at GCSE in line with their classmates. This reflects the unit's commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
- The use of dual placements and outreach support between the unit and schools is highly successful in helping students to maintain a close link with their original school and settle quickly, as well as supporting mainstream schools in improving students' behaviour.
- Unit leaders regularly check the progress of students who attend the various effective off-site settings. Currently, all students in alternative provisions are achieving equally as well as their classmates.
- There is no significant difference in progress between different groups of students. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language and those who attend the Wandsworth Interim Schools Project, receive high quality support and make the same good progress as their peers.
- Students with additional complex special educational needs in 'Pathways' and those students in 'Fresh Start' with emotional and behavioural difficulties make similar good progress as other students. They are well supported through specialist teaching strategies and individual programmes which reduce their levels of anxiety.
- Just occasionally, a few students do not achieve as well as they could because the tasks set in lessons are not always hard enough. In a few lessons, teachers take too long explaining to students what they need to do and this reduces the time available for students' learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching has been sustained since the previous inspection. This is because of robust checking by senior leaders, accompanied by regular, relevant training for all staff. As a result, teaching is good overall and some is outstanding.
- Where teaching is best, students have the confidence to ask questions of their teachers because relationships are exceptionally positive. Teachers' good questioning actively involves students in group discussion and develops their speaking and listening skills well. For example, in an English lesson observed during the inspection a student made rapid progress in understanding how to use adjectives because questions challenged him very well to use them in his writing.
- In a drama lesson, students developed confidence to engage actively in a discussion and debate about characters' feelings through appropriate praise and encouragement from all staff. As a

result, all students made excellent progress in their understanding of the use of language by considering how the choice of word can depict human emotions and feelings.

- Teaching is equally good in the 'Pathways,' 'Fresh Start' and 'WISP' classes. The high priority given to developing students' basic skills across all subjects through the use of vocabulary linked to particular subjects, and specific guidance on what students need to do to achieve the next level or grade above at GCSE, is accelerating students' learning consistently across both sites.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a key part of all lessons. Students have frequent opportunities to improve their personal skills, particularly those that involve interactions with others and reflect on their learning. This improves students' levels of engagement with learning and is successful in allowing many students to successfully re-integrate back into school.
- Teaching delivered through external providers, commissioned by the unit, is also good.
- The most effective teachers succeed in encouraging students to work on challenging tasks independently. They successfully encourage students to work and think for themselves. On occasions where the quality is not as good, it is because teachers talk too much and there is less time for students to find out things for themselves. When the work set is too easy, students' progress slows.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Students' behaviour is outstanding, including when they are working off site. Records show that learning is very rarely disrupted by the poor behaviour of students and no examples were seen during the inspection. Case studies show that behaviour improves quickly once students start at the unit.
- Students make excellent progress in managing their behaviour and emotions because of the individual programmes that are designed for them. These are successful because staff follow the agreed steps for rewards and sanctions and so students understand what is expected of them.
- Students are polite and welcoming of visitors and most demonstrate a maturity and a keenness to make a success of their lives.
- Specific programmes such as the 'Wandsworth Gang Project' are successful in helping students face up to their past actions, for example in the way they treat other people. In addition to turning their behaviour around, this adds to their understanding of keeping safe.
- Students have an outstanding understanding of cyber-bullying and all forms of prejudice-based bullying. They have an in-depth knowledge of the harmful effects associated with the misuse of drugs and the emotional and health risks associated with unsafe sex.
- Students' attendance typically improves rapidly during their time at Francis Barber. For most students, the different learning environment and the support for them as individuals give them the incentive to improve their attendance and make good progress in their learning.
- Parents, carers and students agree that behaviour improves once they enter the unit. As one student commented, 'I don't get out of control now with my temper.'

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Changes in leadership have not slowed the rate of improvement in the unit. The headteacher's determination and vision for the unit, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has created a welcoming and calm environment. Together with the management team they have addressed the areas for improvement raised at the last inspection and maintained the good quality of education. This shows that there is capacity for further improvement.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of how well students are doing and the impact of teaching. All unit leaders are very successful in ensuring that policies and procedures are applied consistently by all staff across both sites and all provision to ensure all students achieve equally

well. Discrimination is not tolerated.

- Checks on the quality of teaching by senior leaders are extensive and thorough. Targets have been set for staff to improve their practice and these are clearly linked to improvements in students' learning. No members of staff are offered salary increases unless justified by their performance.
  - The unit's improvement plan is well ordered and focused on the main priorities. The plan correctly identifies that middle leaders need to have more opportunities to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in their subject areas to decide what improvements can be made. These leaders are not yet fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning and so their contribution to driving improvements is limited.
  - Occasionally, information on aspects of unit performance is not summarised well enough to provide a clear, sharp overview of trends, strengths and where improvements need to be made, to be sure different groups of students are making as much progress as possible. As a result, teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty.
  - The curriculum has a positive impact on students' emotional and social well-being and contributes exceptionally well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the varied creative and sporting opportunities.
  - Changes to the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4, together with the use of effective alternative provision, have contributed to greater progress and raised attainment. Most students successfully go on to further education, training or employment.
  - There are exceptionally effective partnerships with local schools and external agencies, which make a strong contribution to students' good progress and well-being. This improves the chances of students returning to their mainstream school.
  - Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements and ensure students are kept safe, including when attending off-site activities.
  - The local authority has provided consistent, high quality support for the unit through the allocation of advisers who have expert knowledge and who know the unit well.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The management committee is very effective in its support and challenge to the headteacher. Members know the quality of teaching is good through their involvement in the unit's self-evaluation and through their visits to the unit. They have enough information to enable them to have a clear view of the progress that students make and where improvements can be made. They are currently overseeing re-structuring of staffing and have provided challenge to the headteacher to make sure the leadership responsibilities are more effectively distributed at middle levels. They understand how teachers' performance is checked and have made sure that the link between pay and quality of teaching is secure. Promotion within the unit is carefully considered. The management committee know what the unit is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance. They know that pupil premium funding has been spent appropriately to help increase students' personal and social development, and provide additional staffing to help some students' achievement match their peers. Members receive suitable training and make sure that all safeguarding requirements are met.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100994
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	400447

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	148
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The management committee
<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Sarah Mc Dermott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Hough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 March 2010
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