

# The Young Mums Unit

Harvey Early Years Centre, Shaw Street, Bolton, Lancashire, BL3 6HU

## Inspection dates

25–26 February 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Leaders, managers and governors always ensure that the school maintains high standards through relentless and rigorous tracking of students' progress.
- All those involved have very high expectations and are truly committed to ensuring every student achieves the very best that they possibly can. High expectations are found in all aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders focus on the quality of the teaching and are relentless in driving improvement in all areas. Students' individual progress is monitored constantly. Governors review this progress every half term and 'chase' those individuals who are perceived as not making rapid progress.
- However, leaders do not always use the learning mentor effectively to impact on removing barriers to learning such as attendance.
- Students' personal, social and emotional development is supported exceptionally well by all members of staff and students flourish as a result.
- Staff teamwork is very strong and this makes a significant difference to the young mums and their children. The adults often transform students' lives by their relentless drive to ensure that they do everything that they possibly can to help and support them.
- The highly focused curriculum offers a broad range of rich experiences, work and activities with exemplary opportunities to gain qualifications which are seen as relevant and worthwhile by the students.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding; their attitudes to their learning in class are exemplary. The care and support for students have a significant impact on their attitudes to their learning.
- Attendance and behaviour improves dramatically during students' time at the school. The views of parents and carers interviewed during the inspection confirm the transformation in their children's response to the school's support and help in making progress with their learning.
- All students say they feel exceptionally safe at the school. Safeguarding is managed extremely well. Staff are well trained and are very knowledgeable about keeping students safe. Students are taught about unsafe situations for themselves and their children and how to guard against this.
- Students are extremely well prepared for their next stage of education when they leave the school. The continuing support when they leave is exemplary and they often come back to share their success with staff and other girls.
- The teaching is often exemplary and results in students' outstanding achievement despite barriers to their learning.
- Relationships between students and the adults working with them are outstandingly strong. Students are fully engaged in and sharply focused on their academic achievement and therefore make significant and rapid progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in lessons, taught by four of the five teachers. There was a joint observation carried out with the headteacher. Walks around the school were conducted and learning was observed in different areas. The inspector observed students reading in lessons from Years 10 and 11. The inspector observed support for students in whole-class sessions and with individual students. A parenting session was also observed in the nursery at lunchtime.
- The inspector looked in detail at the work in students' books, files and online from across the school. Three meetings were held with groups of students where they talked about their work and their perceptions of the school. The students and babies were observed in the nursery setting with the nursery staff.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, teachers and support staff, and different groups of students and individuals. Five different meetings were held with former students and carers, parents or grandparents of the students. Meetings took place with administration staff and the learning mentor. A meeting took place with the school liaison officer from Bolton College. The inspector interviewed the Chair of the Governing Body and the head of the Bolton Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) service who is the local authority representative.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including: the school's summary of its view of its own performance; the school development plan; policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding; information about students' attendance and behaviour; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning; information about students' achievement; and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and therefore the inspector looked at summaries of school questionnaires sent out to parents and students recently. The inspector also took account of the 6 responses to the staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Jean Tarry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school provides education for girls of school age who live in Bolton and who are either pregnant or young mothers.
- There is an on-site nursery for students' babies offering full and part-time provision which is only open to mothers who attend The Young Mums Unit. The nursery provision is inspected separately.
- The unit is located within the Harvey Children's Centre which is close to the centre of Bolton.
- The school has places for 10 students and the nursery is registered for 10 children.
- There are no students who have a disability or a special educational need and no student has a statement of special educational need.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported through the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Some students remain on the roll of their secondary schools while attending The Young Mums Unit. The school uses no alternative provision for students.
- The school does not make use of early entry for GCSE.
- In April 2013, the governance arrangements changed for the unit. There is now a management committee in place which covers all the PRU services in Bolton and the Young Mums Unit is included in this provision.

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

- Make sure that the learning mentor is used to best effect in supporting students outside the classroom and in tackling some minor issues with the attendance of a small minority of students.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides calm, purposeful leadership. Her continuous drive and ambition to provide a high quality of education for all students are impressive. The deputy headteachers support the vision very well. The senior leadership team continually share ideas and look for ways to improve the school's work. The school is very well placed to maintain and improve on the higher standards reached at the end of Year 11 in 2014. Leaders can demonstrate clearly that students' progress has improved since the last inspection. Mathematics and English provision and outcomes are real strengths of the school.
- Leaders' checks of the school's performance ensure that they have a good understanding of what is working well and what requires further attention. Plans to make improvements are discussed regularly at leadership meetings. The checks that leaders make on students' progress are effective and are helping to raise attainment and ensure equal opportunities for all students.
- Teaching has improved significantly across the school because leaders make regular and meticulous checks on its quality. Senior leaders look carefully at the plans for lessons, the lessons taught and the students' progress in their work. Any weaker aspects of teaching are tackled very quickly and effectively through targeted support. The management of teachers' performance through setting targets linked to students' performance is good and has a positive impact on students' learning.
- The work of middle leaders is highly effective. They ensure that there is much that enriches the curriculum and strive to make it as exciting as possible. Students experience drama, poetry, theatre, visits to the park, photography and floristry to name but a few. They have regular access to midwife provision which contributes to the health and well-being of all the students and their babies. Through their sociology course, students are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The school recognises that the role of the learning mentor in supporting students' needs further development outside the classroom and in tackling the attendance issues of a few students.
- The school develops students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness outstandingly well. Students are taught to be reflective and to use resilience with their writing, reading tasks and reasoning in their mathematical development, especially when they have to solve challenging problems. The school's individual learning plans help students to target improvement in their work on a regular basis.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted outstandingly well and leaders and managers are committed to tackling discrimination of any kind. Leaders ensure that very positive relationships are established, particularly with parents and outside agencies.
- The extremely good advice and guidance students receive enables them to make informed choices about their next steps.
- Procedures and policies for safeguarding students are fully in place.
- The headteacher is also the deputy of the PRU Bolton service. She works closely with the local authority and the head of the PRU Bolton service. The local authority considers this to be a light touch school. The new arrangements with governance offer staff and governors access to relevant training, advice, and guidance and help with links to other schools in the PRU service and beyond. The new arrangements also help secure excellent relationships with other providers and outside agencies.
- Governors ensure that the pupil premium is used appropriately. The governing body checks on the impact that funding has on students' progress in all subjects and has made an impact on the improvements made in many areas.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Since April 2013, a new management committee has been established. These new arrangements are providing far more support and challenge to the Head of the Unit and the staff. The management committee meets termly and there are meetings more often for curriculum, student performance and resources. Governors bring a whole range of experience and expertise that enables them to fulfil their roles and responsibility very effectively. They are well able to challenge and question leaders' performance and their impact on students' progress.
  - The governing body knows the school and uses information about students' progress effectively to compare the school's performance with that of other schools locally and nationally. Governors provide good support and challenge in a quest for improvement.
  - They know how good the quality of teaching is and what needs to be done to improve it further. Governors know the importance of performance management and its link to pay progression. They are well able to tackle any underperformance in teaching while challenging and supporting senior leaders.

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

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Conversations with students demonstrate the contrast between their previous school experiences and that of their extremely positive experiences at The Young Mums Unit. A typical remark during the inspection was 'I am more focused now as I know how important my lessons are for me to achieve as much as possible. I want to do the very best I can so that I can choose a college course that I am really interested in.'
- Often in the past students refused to go to school and were reluctant learners. Now students enjoy and achieve outstandingly well in many different areas and talk enthusiastically about their experiences at the unit. Typical comments are: 'The child development course is so relevant now that I have my baby'; 'I understand why my English and mathematics is so important'; 'My confidence and self-esteem is so much higher now'; and 'I feel well able to tackle exam courses because of the focused level of support that I get'.
- For most students there is quite a remarkable improvement in their level of attendance compared to their previous school. There is authorised absence due to maternity leave and medical appointments but this is kept to a minimum and checked on by the school systems to ensure nobody misses out on their lessons. The learning mentor role is not yet fully developed to address some attendance issues by a very small minority of students who have significant barriers to their learning.
- Students' relationships with staff and other students are outstandingly strong and this underpins the excellent progress that nearly all students make. The staff relate to each other in a very positive, respectful manner and this acts as an exceptionally strong role model for the students, enabling them to understand the importance of building relationships and respect for others.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. The students feel very safe and say that they are taught exceptionally well about how to keep themselves and their children safe.
- The school has rigorous safety procedures to keep the babies safe in the Nursery. When the girls enter at break time or lunchtime they are not allowed mobile phones and they speak very quietly to ensure that they do not disturb the babies who are involved in feeding, sleeping or playtime.
- Students learn about different forms of bullying and how to guard against this. They are very well equipped to differentiate between the different types of bullying especially on social network sites. They say that they have not experienced any forms of bullying at The Young Mums Unit since they have been here.
- Students enjoy the fact that they develop relationships with other girls and adults that are extremely supportive. They have so much in common with aspects of motherhood, and this very often contributes to some long lasting relationships for some of the girls when they leave the unit. This emotional support for each other is very reassuring for many of the students. One student commented, 'If I have any problems or an issue there is always one of the girls to talk to or an adult. This helps me get things sorted really quickly. I have never had that support before.'
- In the students' studies, they learn about different forms of discrimination such as sexual exploitation, racism, homophobia, equal opportunities and risks with using social media inappropriately. Students are quickly learning about more responsible attitudes towards avoiding situations which could potentially have risk for them or their children.

**The quality of teaching****is outstanding**

- The quality of teaching, judged good at the previous inspection, has improved and is now outstanding in its impact on students' learning and achievement in literacy, including reading, and mathematics. This ensures excellent attitudes to learning and academic progress for the vast majority of the students. All students who attend lessons make sustained and rapid progress during their time in the school. This is because teachers are highly motivated and have very high expectations for all the girls.
- Teachers know their students exceptionally well. The students value highly their teachers' care for them and how much staff urge them on to do well. The teachers' close attention to detail and support for individuals who sometimes find their work difficult is also highly valued by the students and enables them to make rapid progress. Students' self confidence and optimism about the future grow rapidly as a result.
- All the information gathered from referring schools, together with rigorous base-line assessments in mathematics and English, enable teachers to make accurate assessments of the learning needs of each student. Teachers and students are very clear about what GCSE grades students are expected to attain

and push each student to aim for even higher grades wherever possible. Some former students, for example, are delighted that they attained higher grades than they thought possible in English, mathematics and science, and how this has enabled them to take full advantage of further education after leaving the unit.

- All students have work that is precisely tailored to their individual needs. The school's use of students' mastery sheets and students' flight paths from start to finish ensure progress is never left unchallenged. The most able are given work that is planned precisely and that challenges them to achieve higher than their predicted grades.
- Students are always encouraged to read, especially in their research work projects. They are challenged to gain a deeper understanding of a text and to express their opinions in their writing.
- Teacher's use of assessment is exemplary. Excellent assessment in mathematics, for example, identifies gaps in students' knowledge and understanding and leads to targeted support to ensure that students make as much progress as possible. Assessment in English is just as rigorous and enables students to make rapid and secure progress in their learning. The new marking scheme has really helped to identify and address the next steps in the students' learning, and this is bringing about a marked improvement in all the students' work.

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Nearly all students leave The Young Mums Unit with a range of qualifications that prepare them well for future success. Most leave having passed GCSE in English, mathematics, child care development and science. Sociology GCSE has been introduced this year and all the girls are achieving well in their course work and assessments. They also gain qualifications in functional skills in English, mathematics, preparation for working life and information technology. Most students begin their time at the unit with low levels of attainment because of previous difficulties with attendance at their previous schools. All students at the unit make up for lost time with a sense of urgency. They gain the motivation, self-confidence and ability to succeed very quickly.
- Students make rapid and sustained progress from their generally low starting points on entry to the unit, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers work hard to stretch the most able and they succeed in gaining qualifications in a wide range of subjects. For example, in 2013 and 2014 some students performed extremely well in their GCSE examinations, having continued with their education in the unit after significant disruption in their secondary school education. The most able students attained the higher grades in English and mathematics and also passed in other subjects.
- In English students achieve very well. They learn to tackle some very complex texts with skill and high levels of understanding. This can also be seen in their sociology course work and child development studies, especially when the students are asked to conduct their own research work for these subjects. Here their reading and writing skills are rigorously tested and many succeed.
- The disadvantaged students supported through the pupil premium are given extra help, but this is seen as integral to the unit's already high quality provision. Inspection evidence from observing learning, scrutiny of written work and analysis of school data show that many disadvantaged students make outstanding progress and achieve outstandingly well. Their numbers are too few, however, to make meaningful comparison with other students in the school or nationally.
- All students read regularly and they choose a wide range of material to read from. They particularly enjoy novels by certain authors or favourite magazines. Students very quickly develop the reading and writing skills that they need for further education. They are particularly interested in reading for their course work or research reading on the internet about child development.
- Any gaps in students' mathematical abilities are tackled effectively and very quickly. Students enjoy their problem solving work and develop their knowledge and understanding very quickly so that they are well able to use their calculation skills to really good effect in their mathematical problem solving work.

## 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>	105147
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	448135

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>	13–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	8
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Sidebottom
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Birchby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 334026
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