

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Local authority monitoring recognises it is a strength of the unit. GCSE courses in nine different subjects are taught. The number that can be followed depends on the timing of admission. There is a strong focus on numeracy, literacy and ICT. The exceptional personal, social and health education programme ensures that students learn how to stay healthy and safe. All work leads to accreditation; this motivates students and greatly improves their prospects of employment. Many purposeful visits, and a wide range of visitors, greatly enhance the curriculum. Activities include events to promote student's understanding of other cultures, to explore opportunities for study when they leave and to add interest to their studies. All girls are offered work experience and receive independent advice about careers. Six are currently working with training providers to help advance their prospective careers in hairdressing or catering.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

These are exceptional, acknowledging and responding to the complexity of the students' lives. Safety and protection measures are robust and immaculately observed; they cover the welfare of babies as well as students. Girls know that the attached nursery is particularly well organised and this gives them the opportunity to work free of worry in the unit. There is extensive involvement of other professionals, including health and welfare workers. Responsibility for the assessment of potential risk in situations is shared with students, rather than being done for them. This is particularly good practice as it raises student awareness. Girls have a powerful voice. A weekly council meeting involves them all in a forum which includes celebration, housekeeping and business. It contributes enormously to the promotion of mature behaviour and attitudes. Students' and parents' views are always sought when important decisions have to be made. Progress is very closely monitored and work is carefully marked to make sure that students know exactly what they need to do to improve. Enormous care is taken to check the backgrounds of all adults who come into contact with students.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. Expectations are extremely high, but realistic given the enormous expertise, dedication and effectiveness of the headteacher and permanent staff. Everyone with an interest, including students' mainstream schools, social services and support workers is consulted on important decisions and contributes to evaluation. Coupled with the involvement of students and their parents this helps to build up a very understanding and comprehensive support system which greatly helps to raise standards. There is absolutely no complacency in the drive for improvement. The local authority, in its role as the appropriate authority, is fully involved in monitoring the unit's work and supporting improvement. It quickly

responded to inspectors' criticism of accommodation in 2000 and provided an exceptionally suitable alternative. The biggest barrier to further improvement is funding. The unit operates exceptionally efficiently but the budget is insufficient to support students repeating their final year. For several years this has been facilitated by outside funding on a year-to-year basis with no guarantee of continuation. The unit desperately needs the security of a budget which covers its full costs. This would facilitate full-time education for all Year 12 students, giving them the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The difficulty is that there is no statutory entitlement to this extra year so it is not a priority funding area.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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The Schoolgirl Mums' Unit

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16 February 2006

Dear Students

I called in the other day to have a good look round your unit. I had a great day because you made me so welcome and the unit was a delight. What really impressed me was how sensibly you talked to me about your lives and work and how strongly you conveyed the message that you enjoy attending. Thanks to all of you who stopped for a chat.

I'm sure you must be proud of the work you're doing. There must have been times over the last year when you wondered if you'd blown the chance to get qualifications before you left school. It must have been a huge relief to discover that you still have the chance. Looking at the way you work and behave left me in no doubt that you will do your very best when examinations come round in the summer. You will be greatly helped by your good teachers. One thing that particularly sticks in my mind was learning about how fully you are involved in making decisions that affect you. I don't know of any other unit which gives students such responsibility. Life must be very complicated for you at times but I'm sure you recognise how well staff try to simplify it for you, helping with appointments and putting you in touch with other people who can help you and your babies. You have a great headteacher. Look after her as well as she looks after you.

I did find one thing that I felt could give you better opportunities. As so often happens, it comes down to money. The unit doesn't have enough. This is stopping some of you from being able to repeat Year 11 even when you missed the chance to complete your courses because you were having babies. I hope something can be done about that as soon as possible.

I wish you and your babies all the best; good luck for the future.

Alastair Younger (Lead inspector)

Name of setting

School Girl Mum's Unit Childcare Provision

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number

509992

Inspection date

14/02/2006

Childcare inspector

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about

These are

The provision is good.

The excellent use of photographs enables mum's to be kept very well informed about the setting and activities that their children are involved in.

