



Moat House

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106023
Local Authority Stockport
Inspection number 287387
Inspection date 8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Michael McDowell

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	6 Lower Moat Close
School category	Pupil referral unit		Heaton Norris, Stockport
Age range of pupils	13–16		Cheshire SK4 1SZ
Gender of pupils	Girls	Telephone number	0161 4299015
Number on roll (school)	15	Fax number	0161 4297694
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Judith Davies
		Headteacher	Dr Kathy Burton
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Moat House is a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) for pregnant schoolgirls and schoolgirl mothers from the Stockport area. While registered at Moat House the pupils remain on the roll of the school that referred them. A few girls, whose examination schedule is affected by the birth of their baby, stay on to repeat Year 11. The home language of all the pupils is English. Moat House provides a crèche that cares for the pupils' babies during the school day. This is inspected separately by the childcare inspectorate.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Moat House makes outstanding provision for its pupils. When it was last inspected in May 2001 it was judged to be excellent and it has continued to improve. Its pupils acknowledge the hugely supportive part it plays in enabling them to meet the challenges they face as young mothers. Their parents share this view. They praise the centre for helping their daughters to accept their situation, become confident as pupils and rediscover the ambition to achieve their academic potential. Standards of pupils entering Moat House are broadly average. Frequently, however, pupils have achieved less than they should. When they settle into the centre, they respond to the positive expectations of the staff, take advantage of the exceptional range of learning opportunities, and improve their standards. In accredited courses, they do much better than expected. Pupils of all capabilities make rapid progress and their achievement is outstanding. This is mostly due to the excellent quality of teaching and learning. Teachers help their pupils to experience success. As a result, pupils gain confidence and begin to enjoy what they do. Personal development is outstanding: levels of attendance increase significantly and pupils show excellent behaviour and positive attitudes. The girls understand the importance of a healthy diet for themselves and their babies, as well as sufficient exercise and avoidance of risk. Pregnancy and childbirth for most of the girls result in the development of mature, spiritual, moral and social awareness. Care, support and guidance are first rate. Measures are taken to ensure child protection and health and safety, and arrangements are regularly reviewed. The academic and personal progress of pupils is thoroughly monitored and they are kept informed about what they should do to improve. Relationships between the centre and referring schools are excellent. External agencies work very closely with the centre to provide for the health and well-being of the pupils. These resources are very well used to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils express their views through the Moat House council which includes all who work or attend at the centre in its membership, but there is no 'pupil only' council, which would be more helpful in developing the girls' independence. The success of the PRU is due to outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher is determined to continue to raise standards but equally concerned to continue to develop care, welfare and guidance of exceptional quality. Parents and professionals in the community hold Moat House in the highest regard. It is excellently placed to continue to improve and gives outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enable pupils to further develop their independence by setting up a council for pupils only that is empowered to make proposals to improve the centre.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. Most girls entering the centre have underachieved in their mainstream secondary schools, chiefly because of poor attendance. Their attainments are, rarely, above and mostly below those expected for their age. The exceptional teaching, support and guidance they are given boost their confidence and they begin to make rapid progress. Their standards improve markedly to broadly average. This makes it possible for the centre to enter most girls for GCSE examinations in up to eight subjects. In 2006, all of the 14 pupils entered for GCSE examinations gained at least one A* to G grade and five gained five A* to C grades. Pupils gained far higher grades than their previous attainment would have suggested. In addition to their GCSE passes, pupils gained a broad range of Entry Level certificates. A very small minority, for whom the GCSE courses were not suitable, successfully gained qualifications in adult literacy and numeracy. Those who sit the GCSE and Entry Level examinations this year are on course to do just as well. For pupils to do as well as this at a time in their lives when there is so much uncertainty and change shows that their achievement is outstanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding. In their brief time at the centre, the girls become more confident and happy with what they have accomplished. They show that they are enjoying their learning by improving their attendance, which is good. Within the centre, behaviour is excellent and pupils are considerate towards others. They contribute their views through the Moat House Council. However, this is a forum for staff members and pupils, rather than pupils alone. They are supportive towards good causes, in particular a children's hospice. When asked, they say that they feel very safe at Moat House and are confident that any oppressive behaviour would be swiftly dealt with. They are knowledgeable about the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise and understand the dangers to themselves and their children of smoking. Those who smoke are given support to quit; most try hard to do this. Through the curriculum and through exposure to the ethos of the centre, pupils develop a positive view and look forward to what they might go on to accomplish in their later lives. In most cases, the experiences of pregnancy and childbirth stimulate greater self-understanding. Concern for others is very evident in pupils' attitudes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is exceptional. Consequently, pupils make excellent progress and achieve much more than was predicted before they came to the centre. Assessment is very thorough and information provided by schools is used very effectively to establish the starting points for each learner. Teachers set work that, while challenging, is matched to pupils' capabilities. Those who need additional help are given it. There is systematic support for pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers, in discussion with their pupils, set them targets to improve their performance. They encourage them to assess their own progress and they keep parents well informed about their daughters' achievement. Teachers have very good knowledge of the course requirements in their subjects and lessons are interesting and varied. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have a relaxed and confident approach to learning. Relationships in the classroom are excellent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum and other activities provided by the centre are outstanding and match the needs and interests of pupils very well. A broad range of GCSE and Entry Level courses is provided, together with activities and opportunities for personal development that are essential to the well-being of young mothers-to-be. For example, all girls benefit from a course on caring for a new baby run by the nursery staff. The curriculum is very flexible and closely tailored to the individual needs of every girl. While most girls now follow the Moat House curriculum, they can, at need, continue with courses started at their referring school. They have very good opportunities to prepare for the world of work and many undertake vocational and NVQ 'taster' courses at a local college.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The centre provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Through continuous and careful monitoring, the academic progress and personal development of each pupil is kept under review. Targets for improvement are set for each pupil and discussed with them. The centre has been successful in improving attendance through the appointment of an educational support worker who has established very good links with families. Strategies, such as providing transport for girls nearing the end of their pregnancy or offering vouchers for good attendance, have also worked well. There is a good policy for child protection in place. Staff members have received recent training and know their roles. All required checks on those who have unsupervised access to the pupils or to the crèche have been carried out and records of these are kept. Healthy eating and regular exercise are helped by the provision of nutritious breakfasts and lunches,

and keep-fit classes. Pupils are helped to understand their feelings and emotions in a time of great change in their lives and they are taught how to take care of their baby. Girls receive careers teaching, as well as careers guidance by the Connexions worker. The Young Parent's Project Worker is now based in Moat House. Her support has greatly increased the commitment to their courses of girls who have moved on from Moat House into college education. Links between the centre and other agencies are very well established. The centre has an excellent record in marshalling the resources of these services to help vulnerable pupils and families experiencing crisis.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are extremely effective. The headteacher has built securely on the good work of her predecessor. Standards have been raised, the curriculum has been made more responsive to pupils' needs, and accommodation and resources have been improved. There is a positive ethos and staff and pupils are happy and confident. The leadership team keeps a close eye on both provision and outcomes. It works hard to make the centre as responsive as possible to the needs of its pupils and their families. Planning for improvement is good. In judging the quality of its own work, however, the centre is unduly modest in some areas. Parents have a very high opinion of Moat House and this is shared by the medical, social work, and educational professionals who work with it. The centre promotes inclusion very well. The needs of pupils with difficulties are identified and met and each girl is given the programme of learning opportunities that best suits her needs. Management is very effective and unobtrusive. The centre does not have a fully delegated budget but it uses the resources at its disposal to best effect. The management committee carries out its role of overseeing the centre and scrutinising the proposals of the leadership, well. The local authority has put in place the policies and protocols that govern referral and exit from Moat House and that make clear the place of the centre in its continuum of provision for children educated otherwise than at school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I came to Moat House. I enjoyed my visit and, particularly, our conversation at lunchtime. I was impressed by the interest you showed in your lessons and by how considerate and polite you are to one another and to visitors. You told me that you prefer going to Moat House than attending school because teachers and staff have more time to help you. You feel very safe and are not worried about bullying. It was your belief that the staff would very quickly react if there was any bullying and that matters would soon be put right. You also believe that Moat House assists you by teaching you to care for your babies, by helping you to succeed in your examinations and by preparing you for life when you leave school.

Through my visit I found that:

- you enjoy your lessons and improve the standards of your work when you come to Moat House and that you make excellent progress
- you improve your attendance, think about others more than you used to and try to help them
- teaching is excellent; your teachers understand you very well and give you varied and interesting things to do
- the centre works as hard as it can to keep you safe and to offer you the support you need
- Moat House is led and managed exceptionally well.

To improve Moat House further, I have asked your headteacher to set up a school council that has only pupils as its members so that you can begin to make some important decisions on your own.

Thank you once again for your courtesy and helpfulness.