

Education and Youth Services, Northampton

Independent school inspection report

DCSF registration number 928/6070
Unique reference number 135754
Inspection number 342522
Inspection dates 22 – 23 October 2009
Reporting inspector David Young

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

Age group: 14 - 16

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.¹

Information about the school

Education and Youth Services is located in former office premises in the centre of Northampton. It was registered in May 2008 to provide a Restart programme for students aged 14 to 16 who are disengaged from education or are at risk of being excluded from education as a result of behavioural difficulties or non-attendance. There are currently 23 students on roll, of whom 12 attend full-time and 11 part-time. There are 20 students in Key Stage 4 and three in Key Stage 3; one is aged below 14. One student has a statement of special educational needs.

The school aims to offer accredited qualifications and to support young people with the necessary tools to succeed in life by building self-esteem; raising aspirations; promoting the development of personal and social skills; and preparing young people for further education, training or employment beyond Year 11.

This is the school's first published Ofsted inspection report.

Evaluation of the school

Education and Youth Services provides a satisfactory quality of education. Students make at least satisfactory progress in their learning and are equipped to make a success of future placements in college or at work. Strong, positive personal relationships between staff and students contribute to students' good personal development and a willingness to persevere with their education. Safeguarding arrangements are fully in place, including rigorous procedures for the recruitment of staff. The school meets all but three of the required regulations.

Quality of education

The school's curriculum is satisfactory and provides a foundation for the satisfactory quality of education. The curriculum includes an appropriate range of areas of learning for all students. English, mathematics and science form the core of the daily curriculum and make a strong contribution to the preparation of students for life after school. Themes studied are closely related to real life situations and enable students to appreciate the importance of developing their basic skills. Art,

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

information and communication technology (ICT), cooking and physical education extend students' learning experiences in ways which encourage healthy and safe lifestyles. Students' personal development is further supported by studies in personal and social development (PSD) and citizenship; the teaching of these subjects allows students to express personal opinions and challenges stereotypes. The majority of students also achieve the bronze award of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN); a smaller number achieve the silver award. There are opportunities for all students to take part in vocational courses in the afternoons, including hair and beauty, drama and a construction course provided at the local college. Plans are in place to extend the range of vocational courses next year. Recent links have been established with the local Connexions service, providing one-to-one opportunities for students to prepare for future employment and further education. The extent and range of the curriculum are good and appropriate for students in Years 9 to 11, but there are missed opportunities to exploit its potential fully as the activities provided are not always sufficiently challenging. Academic and active learning are balanced with interesting recreational activities which contribute successfully to the development of social relationships and self confidence.

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory. There are a number of good features within the teaching across the age range. Lessons are planned carefully, and in the best teaching, lesson objectives state clearly what students are expected to learn and understand by the end of the session. Students appreciate the small class sizes, the personal support provided by teachers and teaching assistants, and the relaxed manner in which teaching is conducted. One student, reflecting on previous educational experience, stated "the staff here do not have 'attitude' towards the students". Students sustain their concentration, take an active part in lessons and are generally proud of their achievements. The activities in lessons are too dependent on worksheets and basic paper resources. There are insufficient textbooks and visual resources to stimulate wider interest and from which students can be encouraged to work more independently. Students enjoy opportunities to work with computers in ICT lessons, but these are not integrated sufficiently into learning across a range of subjects.

In the majority of lessons, students within a class are provided with the same work; through the provision of targeted support and advice, students are enabled to achieve individual outcomes. The level of challenge in most lessons is sufficient to ensure that all students can achieve but fails, at times, to extend learning for the more able students. As a result, students' progress overall is satisfactory. For many this represents a significant improvement in attitudes and work rate. The use of 'standardised assessment levels' is variable and teachers do not have sufficient understanding of what could be achieved at different levels and the pace of progress which is achievable. On entry to the school, students undertake initial assessments which provide a sound analysis of the level at which they are working. This results in individual targets for predicted attainment by the end of Year 11. Each student has an individual education and development plan (IEDP) which is used effectively as the basis for review and planning between the students and tutors. One student, who

joined the school recently, has a statement of special educational needs which is currently subject to review with the local authority to ensure that provision matches the requirements of the statement. In the last academic year, 77% of leavers met or exceeded their predicted target. This represents good progress for many students but could be improved for others.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good. Students are provided with a good number of opportunities to reflect on their personal behaviour, attitudes and achievements. Discussions with students, and analysis of the questionnaires completed, show that all are positive about their experiences at the school. They state that they are treated with respect and that staff care about them. As a result, students show respect for staff and are cooperative in lessons. Behaviour is satisfactory which represents significant progress from previous settings. The 'student of the week' award is appreciated by students and contributes to their belief in themselves and their willingness to conform to the ethos of the school.

Students benefit from the social and moral themes discussed in PSD lessons. They extend their awareness of issues related to equality and diversity and managing social relationships. The majority demonstrate increasing maturity in their willingness to listen to the views of others and the ability to shape and express their own opinions. The separate citizenship course encourages students to explore religious and ethnic differences, multicultural Britain and related international dimensions.

Students reported with enthusiasm their experience of setting up a Caribbean restaurant and catering for members of the local community. They contribute to collections for charity. They take part in a learners' forum through which they have made positive suggestions which have been taken up and implemented by the school and by 'head office'. These experiences, together with the contributions made by the curriculum, ensure that students are participating in an active community which reflects the expectations and processes of adult society.

Welfare, health and safety of the students

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good. All the required policies are in place and implementation is systematic and thorough. Training for child protection is up to date and at the required level for the designated persons and for all staff. A member of staff with recruitment responsibility has recently completed 'safer recruitment' training and assessment. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for off-site visits, for the premises and for fire safety. The premises are maintained to an appropriate standard and any potential safety hazards are quickly identified and attended to. Students report that the school encourages them to live healthy and safe lifestyles and there is evidence to support this in wall

displays and curriculum themes. The school meets its responsibilities to produce a three-year accessibility plan in respect of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has secure and rigorous arrangements for the appointment of staff. All the required checks have been completed and recorded in a single, central register.

School's premises and accommodation

The school's premises enable students to learn effectively and in a safe environment. There is good space for classrooms and for recreation. The upper floor of premises is used by the company's E2E provision; there are separate facilities and classrooms on the ground floor for the school students. Staff supervision at all times secures the well-being of students. There is no outside play space on the site. Appropriate indoor facilities are available for recreation and various off-site venues are used for physical education.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school meets all but one of the requirements for the provision of information to parents and prospective parents. A parents' handbook provides a range of helpful information about the school, its curriculum and policies. Parents are provided, each half term, with reports on attendance, behaviour, attitude, attainment and participation in the curriculum. Together with a detailed end-of-year report, these keep parents well informed about the progress their children are making. While the school produces an effective summary of students' performance in the preceding school year, this is not currently distributed to parents.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has appropriate procedures for handling complaints fairly; these meet the statutory requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.²

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

² www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm

- provide classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range and ensure they are they used effectively (paragraph 1(3)(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- ensure there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for students to play safely (paragraph 5(t)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- make available to parents, particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(3)(e)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- increase the range of resources and learning activities, including the use of ICT across the curriculum
- ensure that all teaching provides sufficient challenge to enable all students to make the progress of which they are capable.

Inspection judgement recording form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of students			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of students' needs			✓	
How well students make progress in their learning			✓	

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of students			✓	

Welfare, health and safety of students

The overall welfare, health and safety of students		✓		
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School details

Name of school	Education and Youth Services Ltd, Northampton		
DCSF number	928/6070		
Unique reference number	135754		
Type of school	Secondary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	23 May 2008		
Age range of students	14 – 16		
Gender of students	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time students)	Boys: 8	Girls: 4	Total: 12
Number on roll (part-time students)	Boys: 7	Girls: 4	Total: 11
Number of students with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of students who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees (day students)	£40/day (£70/day for students with statements of SEN)		
Address of school	Horizon House St Peter's Way Northampton NN1 1FB		
Telephone number	01604 639555		
Fax number	01604 630030		
Email address	m.clark@eys.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Chris Hatten		
Proprietor	Mr Richard Atkinson		
Reporting inspector	David Young		
Dates of inspection	22 – 23 October 2009		