

# Future First

## Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	330/6121
Unique Reference Number	135422
Inspection number	329410
Inspection dates	10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Marian Harker HMI

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

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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.

## **Information about the school**

Future First is an independent school for students aged 14 to 16 years who have been excluded from, or are at risk of being excluded from, maintained provision. The school is part of the wider work of the Birmingham Community Venture (BCV) project and aims to, 'help students succeed and return to mainstream education or vocational courses.' The school is situated in Hockley Port Moorings, near Birmingham city centre. It opened in 2004 as part of the BVC project and was registered with Ofsted in 2007. The school is registered for 20 students and there are currently 17 full-time students on roll. This is the school's first published inspection report by Ofsted.

## **Evaluation of the school**

Future First provides a good standard of education and care for its students. It is particularly successful in achieving its aims of developing their potential and re-engaging them in learning. Students value being treated as equals and appreciate the high levels of respect for everyone in the school. The school meets all of the requirements for registration.

## **Quality of education**

The curriculum is good and is closely matched to the students' needs, enabling them to make good progress. Effective use is made of National Curriculum, Open College Network, Award Scheme and Development Accreditation Network and Virtual Learning Academy materials. Programmes are carefully tailored to meet the needs of individual students as a result of rigorous initial assessment procedures. Provision for the development of basic skills in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology is good. Personal, social, and health education (PSHE) and citizenship provision are considerable strengths of the school and the teaching of life skills is embedded across the curriculum. For example, all students undertake a carefully structured self-development programme which contributes to improvements in behaviour, attendance, punctuality and attitudes to work. Students also have good opportunities to develop their skills in first aid, decision making, teamwork and cookery. Opportunities for physical education are good with regular visits to a local

gymnasium and, as a result, students have a secure understanding of keeping healthy.

Students benefit from the school's strong relationship with the Connexions service. They meet their personal advisor regularly and, as a result, they have a good understanding about their future career options. Good opportunities are provided to experience the world of work through visits to colleges, universities and local businesses. The large majority of students move to education, employment or training when they leave Future First. Schemes of work are comprehensive and progression routes clearly established. Students have the opportunities to further develop life skills on a residential outward bound course in Wales and through working with the West Midlands Fire Service on the Fire Intervention Re-prevention and Education scheme.

Teaching and assessment are good and the students make good progress. This is because teachers know their students well and lessons are planned to meet the needs and interests of the individual students. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make good use of a range of appropriate and challenging activities. As a result, students are motivated to learn, have good attitudes in lessons and are generally keen to complete work. Teachers' high expectations and the very good relationships between staff and students contribute to students' good behaviour in lessons. Teachers and support staff work effectively together and provide a good level of support. On occasions, opportunities in lessons are missed to encourage students to develop their independence and take an active role in their learning.

Students are referred to Future First directly through the local authority and local schools, and undergo a rigorous assessment and induction process. As a result, the school has an excellent understanding of each student's abilities and interests and builds on this in its teaching. Each student has an individual learning plan with clear targets and students gain a good range of awards for their achievements. The school has a comprehensive tracking system in place, but it does not clearly indicate the amount of academic and personal development progress made by individual students.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a high level of respect and students are given regular opportunities to discuss their feelings and opinions. Attitudes to learning are positive and this is reflected in their generally good attendance. The comprehensive PSHE programme develops students' understanding of themselves and others. Consequently, they have a good understanding of right and wrong and there are very good relationships throughout the school. Visits to local places of worship contribute to the students' good understanding of other cultures and faiths. The school is a harmonious community where students and adults work well together. Students are given the opportunity to

take on specific responsibilities, such as making tea and toast for their fellow students during break times and helping to keep the school clean and tidy. The Wizz Kids positive recognition scheme is successful in encouraging students to improve their attendance, punctuality, behaviour and academic achievements. As a result, students have a good understanding of their responsibilities to the school community. Students are also given good opportunities to learn about public institutions through visits from the police and fire services and a visit to the magistrates' court. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is well managed and staff have high expectations. As a result, behaviour observed during the inspection was good. The school is particularly successful in its aim of re-engaging students in their learning. Most students have come from situations where their attendance was poor or non-existent. Records indicate that attendance for virtually all students improves significantly during their time at Future First. The majority of students also express a keen desire to return, re-engaged, to further education provision.

## **Welfare, health and safety of the pupils**

The welfare, health and safety of the students are good. Procedures to ensure the safety of students are robust and all required policies are in place. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out for activities both on and away from the school site. Rules are clearly established and students are expected to sign the school behaviour code. They are well supervised by staff at all times. Routine checks are made on electrical equipment and fire evacuations are practised regularly. Suitable procedures for first aid are in place and an appropriate number of adults have been trained. The designated person has undergone child protection training to the required standard and all staff have been trained accordingly.

Students report that they feel safe in school and are well supported and cared for by the staff. The school is particularly successful in promoting students' well-being. For example, the recently appointed family liaison officer works closely with students, their families and outside agencies to ensure the school meets their individual needs. Students have a good understanding of health and safety procedures. For example, a fire drill during the inspection was calmly managed and students were familiar with the evacuation procedures. The school has planned well to increase accessibility and will be drawing up a further plan to review the possibility of further improving access.

## **Suitability of the proprietor and staff**

The school fully complies with the regulations in respect of the checks it makes on prospective employees with regard to their identity and suitability to work with children.

## **School's premises and accommodation**

The school is located in a 1980s single storey building which is owned by Birmingham local authority and leased to the BCV project. It has been recently modernised and provides good internal teaching and recreation areas. There is a specialist teaching room for creative arts and a suitable hard court area for physical education and recreation activities.

## **Provision of information for parents, carers and others**

The school has established strong links with parents, Birmingham local authority, outside agencies and students' previous schools. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress through accurate, regular written reports, telephone contact and home visits. The end of year reports are a helpful summary of each student's progress and attainment in key areas of learning and personal development.

## **Procedures for handling complaints**

The school has a clearly written and fair complaints procedure which meets the requirements.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations").

## **What the school could do to improve further**

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

- Further develop the school's tracking system, so that assessment records clearly indicate the amount of academic and personal development progress made by individual students.
- Take every opportunity in lessons to promote independence and engage students actively in their learning.

## 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 pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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## School details

Name of school	Future First		
DCSF number	330/6121		
Unique reference number	135422		
Type of school	Emotional, Behaviour Disorder Centre		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	2004		
Age range of pupils	14-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 16	Girls: 1	Total: 17
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£150 per week		
Address of school	Hockley Port Moorings All Saints Street Hockley Birmingham B18 7RL		
Telephone number	0121 551 4837		
Fax number	0121 551 4837		
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@birminghamcommunityventure.org.uk">info@birminghamcommunityventure.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:bcv1@hotmail.co.uk">bcv1@hotmail.co.uk</a>		
Headteacher	Mr Mohammed Majid		
Proprietor	Mr Barket Hussain		
Reporting inspector	Marian Harker HMI		
Dates of inspection	10 December 2008		