

Hob Moor Oaks School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 134728 |
| Local Authority | York |
| Inspection number | 341516 |
| Inspection dates | 16–17 November 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Michele Crichton |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Community special |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 66 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Nicholas Smart |
| Headteacher | Mrs Angela Charlton |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6 November 2006 |
| School address | Green Lane Acomb, York North Yorkshire YO24 4PS |
| Telephone number | 01904 555000 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited all classes in the school, observed eight teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They also held meetings with parents and carers. They observed the school's work, looked at its joint development plan and the latest reports from the School Improvement Partner. Documentation was scrutinised, including information related to the tracking of pupils' progress, pupils' safeguarding and community cohesion. The responses to pupils, staff and 16 parental questionnaires were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How effective leadership and management is at all levels.
- How cohesive the staff team is in pursuing a positive vision for the school.
- The degree to which pupils' outcomes has benefited from the federation.
- How consistent teaching, assessment and progress are throughout the school, and their impact on pupils' outcomes.
- How different groups of pupils benefit from the inclusive curriculum.

Information about the school

Hob Moor Oaks is a smaller than average-sized special school. It is part of a hard federation with Hob Moor Primary School. The schools are based at Hob Moor Children's Centre, which is a purpose built site. The federated schools share communal spaces and many facilities and resources. In addition to the school's provision for Early Years Foundation Stage, the governing body manages The Cherry Tree Neighbourhood Nursery. The nursery provides care and early learning for children aged between six months and five years. It was registered in April 2010 and was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare act 2006. The report can be found on the Ofsted website. A breakfast club and the Hob Moor Fun Club, which provides after-school and holiday childcare for pupils from both schools within the federation, is managed by an independent provider. The children's centre and the registered childcare provision were not inspected during this visit. They are subject to separate inspections and reports.

The majority of children who attend Hob Moor Oaks have severe or profound learning difficulties and approximately a third of pupils are on the autistic spectrum. There are a very small number of looked-after children and from Traveller families. Currently, all children who attend the school are of White British heritage. Since the last inspection, there has been a complete change to the leadership team and many other staff changes. The school has also achieved a wide range of national awards for sport and the arts.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Hob Moor Oaks is a good school which deserves its good reputation with parents and carers. Their views are reflected well in the comment, 'Our daughter has made considerable progress. Home–school communication is very strong with lots of flexibility for parental ideas. The staff are truly dedicated to bringing out everyone's potential in a fun and positive way.'

Although attainment is low, owing to the nature of the pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils make good, and at times, outstanding progress from their individual starting points. This is because of good teaching and carefully tailored learning programmes. Occasionally, learning is not as effective because teaching assistants are not used well within lessons. Predominantly, class teams work together well and their enthusiasm is infectious, resulting in pupils thoroughly enjoying their learning. Pupils' progress is recorded and monitored well. However new tracking systems are taking some time to embed as staff are anxious that they accurately reflect and capture the progress of the wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities within the school.

An important factor in the school's success since the last inspection has been the federation with Hob Moor Primary and its highly effective range of partnerships with others, including the children's centre. Benefits have included a strengthened leadership and management team and the now good and occasionally outstanding outcomes for pupils. The commitment of a unified governing body, the principal and staff, to build on these improvements, is clear and shows the school has good capacity to improve further. Self-evaluation is overcautious in some areas and inspection revealed a stronger picture of pupils' progress and of the quality of teaching and of leadership than the school judged. There are good relationships with parents and carers and outstanding partnerships with a wide of range of agencies and partners. However, the school fully recognises that its promotion of community cohesion is currently no better than satisfactory.

Pupils' response to the school's provision of healthy lifestyles is outstanding, with a range of physical activities enjoyed by children. Pupils say they feel safe and behaviour is good and well managed. Opportunities for pupils to make a positive contribution and to develop moral and social awareness are strong. Multicultural awareness, however, is less well developed. The curriculum is well matched to pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities, with further steps planned to secure greater benefits to all pupils across the federation.

Consistent routines, practised by all staff, ensure that the additional support that children need is skilfully incorporated into lessons. For example, rebound therapy and hydrotherapy are carried out sensitively but efficiently, demonstrating good care with due attention to hygiene and safety.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - - ensuring that all support staff are well deployed in lessons
 - - sharing the existing examples of good and effective practice, so that these are adopted more widely by all support staff
 - - developing staff confidence and familiarity with tracking and assessment procedures
 - - fully embedding assessment procedures across the school.
- Enhance the school's promotion of community cohesion and extend pupils' multicultural awareness by:
 - - broadening pupils' cultural understanding of communities in the United Kingdom and farther afield
 - - embedding more global links
 - - monitoring and evaluating the impact of these measures on pupils' outcomes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils want to learn and succeed. Communication and increasing independence are key features of their development. All pupils make good progress regardless of the nature of their learning difficulty. Pupils say they are happy to come to school and this is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils' moral and social development is good because of the many shared play and social opportunities that are created by the schools. Pupils gain much from joint experiences with pupils from the primary school. For example, they share the sensory garden and playground space and dine together. These opportunities for peers to interact as part of their everyday experience foster communication, tolerance and acceptance. One child's interpretation of this was succinctly captured in saying, 'It's fun to play with my friends'. Pupils' cultural understanding is enhanced through a range of visits and visitors into school, ranging from drama companies, to musicians and authors. However, their multicultural awareness is not as well developed.

Pupils' understanding and participation in a wide range of activities relating to a healthy lifestyle is outstanding. Pupils, including those with severe and profound learning difficulties, are consistently involved in a range of activities, including football, rebound therapy and wheelchair dancing. Continuous interaction with pupils during hydrotherapy sessions enables them to make responses and to indicate preferences. Healthy eating is fostered exceptionally well, for example, through healthy snack routines, lunches and food technology lessons. These enable, for example, pupils with autism to extend the range of foods they will eat because of numerous fun opportunities to try new flavours and textures. Pupils adopt daily routines concerning personal hygiene, including cleaning teeth, washing hands and toileting, which help them to understand how to prevent the spread of germs. Behaviour is good and challenging behaviour is dealt with calmly by staff. This ensures that other pupils in the group do not themselves become agitated or disturbed. A peaceful, but industrious atmosphere prevails in the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | * |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Staff are skilled at carefully planning lessons that are specific to the needs of learners. In an exemplary lesson, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties were active participants in their own development. A range of stimulating resources, a darkened room, skilled staff and a variety of sound effects, focused pupils' attention and resulted in much excited response. In the few examples where teaching is less than good, it is usually because support staff have not been deployed well by class teachers, are passive, or do not exploit opportunities to promote communication and learning for pupils in that class. Most staff use assessment information to monitor progress and to set challenging learning targets. New tracking procedures have recently been introduced, which are running alongside existing schemes. Staff are developing confidence in the new arrangements but this aspect of assessing pupils' progress is not yet fully rooted.

The curriculum is good across the school and is made appropriate for all pupils. Autistic pupils benefit from the well-structured and familiar activities on offer. Highly sensory environments ensure that pupils who have severe or profound learning difficulties also make good progress. Music is regularly used for all pupils' enjoyment, while also developing a range of skills, such as listening, communication and turn-taking. There are

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actions already in place to extend creativity in the curriculum across the federation and to further develop inclusive learning opportunities.

Care, guidance and support are good. There are well-organised systems in place for the care of pupils in the school and the vast majority of parents and carers are highly supportive of the arrangements that are made. Transport arrangements are good. For example, in the morning, pupils exit safely and quickly from buses and taxis into their classes, without any time being wasted. Transition arrangements, throughout the school and onto the next stage of learning, are effective in reassuring pupils and their families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Despite many staff moving from the school and federation since the last inspection, change has been managed well. The single principal, two heads of school and the effective governing body, ensure there is a unity of knowledge, leadership and management across the two schools. Their clear and uniform focus on ensuring the best quality of education for all pupils has remained constant throughout. Federation has brought many benefits, such as dual staff training, raised expectations of pupils, joint use of the very good on-site facilities, and access to a range of agencies, plus the development of an inclusive curriculum. Although there are shared development actions, leaders and managers are also clear that there are differences between the schools. Within Hob Moor Oaks there has been the creation of pastoral and learning teams. These teams enable management roles to be strengthened and developed at all levels and move the school forward well. Safeguarding is good. The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements and are rigorously applied throughout the day-to-day work of the school. The site is secure both internally and externally. The school gives high priority to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities, and measures such as whole-staff training ensure that no groups are disadvantaged.

A minority of parents and carers have had some reservations about the impact of federation on their children. However, through regular consultation and communication with staff, the predominance of concerns has been allayed. This is also evident from the positive comments on the returned questionnaires from parents and carers. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily with additional links to differing ethnic communities and global connections yet to be effectively established.

Outstanding partnerships work seamlessly together, impacting extremely positively on pupils' outcomes, especially those that are health-related. The school's work with services such as Portage at nursery level and strong links with the local secondary school for pupils

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leaving school means that transition arrangements are smooth and result in minimising the disruption to pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall, there is parity in provision between the two learning areas provided by the school for children with autism and for those with severe and profound difficulties. Extensive knowledge of children's needs, stimulating resources and detailed personal programmes, are the best features of both. However, the quality of teamwork varies between the learning areas, with stronger teamwork visible with staff who worked with autistic children.

Overall, outcomes for all children across the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, with children making good and sometimes outstanding progress. The extremely positive links with other agencies enable staff to have a secure understanding of the profile of need of the children as soon they enter at this stage of their learning. Accurate observations are made and recorded in children's 'learning journeys', which are regularly shared with parents and carers. These records have developed in line with a strong focus on assessment procedures throughout the school. Learning is made fun and enjoyable, for example, through throwing and crumpling dried leaves to explore texture and movement or by tapping loudly with drumming sticks to follow repeating patterns.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

Of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, a very large majority are supportive of the school. Parents and carers appreciate the dedication and skill of the staff, and the good progress their children make. Many expressed their support for the federation. Inspection evidence supports these views. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concern about the promotion of healthy lifestyles in the school. Inspection findings do not endorse these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hob Moor Oaks School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 16 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 66 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 10 | 63 | 6 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 12 | 75 | 3 | 19 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 9 | 56 | 6 | 38 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 9 | 56 | 6 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 9 | 56 | 6 | 38 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 7 | 44 | 8 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 7 | 44 | 6 | 38 | 2 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 6 | 38 | 5 | 31 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 10 | 63 | 4 | 25 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 6 | 38 | 7 | 44 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 8 | 50 | 6 | 38 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 9 | 56 | 3 | 19 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 11 | 69 | 4 | 25 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Hob Moor Oak School, York, YO24 4PS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to meet and talk with you. You told us about what you learnt at school and about the many good things that go on every day. It was very clear from our chats and the questionnaire replies we received from you, and from your parents and carers, that you are happy at school, and think that you are safe and cared for well. You also knew lots about being and keeping healthy. As well as working hard, you are well behaved. You make good progress at school but we think there are a few things that could help you learn even more. These are:

- that all support staff help you to learn as well as you can in lessons
- that your teachers are happy and confident with the ways they check to see the progress you make in learning
- that you know more about people who are different from those who live close to your school and also those that live in other countries.

We know that you will do all you can to help your teachers and wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Michele Crichton

Lead inspector

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