

# Moor House School

Inspection report

**Unique Reference Number** 125454 Local Authority Surrey **Inspection number** 359889

**Inspection dates** 22-23 March 2011 Reporting inspector Denise Morris

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

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school Special

School category Non-maintained special

Age range of pupils 7-16 **Gender of pupils** Mixed Number of pupils on the school roll 70

Appropriate authority The governing body

Cha ir Andrew Dick Headteacher Hilary Dobbie

Date of previous school inspection 13 September 2007

School address Mill Lane

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Age group 7-16

**Inspection dates** 22-23 March 2011

**Inspection number** 

Boarding provision

Social care Unique Reference Number

Social care inspector

Age group	7–16			
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011			
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### Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors and a social care inspector. Fourteen lessons were seen, taught by fourteen different teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at planning documents, assessment information, minutes of governing body meetings, and pupils' work. They also considered responses to 48 questionnaires submitted by 48 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of improvements to teaching and learning since the last inspection.
- Whether the use of assessment information has improved since the last inspection.
- The quality of boarding provision and whether the dormitories have improved recently.

### Information about the school

Moor House caters for pupils who have a statement of special educational needs relating to speech, language and communication difficulties. A few pupils have additional autistic spectrum disorders. The vast majority are of White British origin. A few are from minority ethnic groups but none are at the early stages of speaking English. There are many more boys than girls. Almost all pupils board during the week and most go home at weekends. The school is a member of a local schools federation. It has Healthy School status.

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

## **Inspection judgements**

### Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

## The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

## **Main findings**

Moor House is an outstanding school. As a result of continued improvement, the school now provides exceptionally well for all its pupils. 'Moor House has unlocked our child's potential in a way which we could only have dreamed of a few years ago,' wrote one parent. Another commented that 'the school provides an excellent environment for the children to thrive and meet their potential'. Inspirational leadership by the headteacher has resulted in improvement in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils value their time at the school, as shown by their rising attendance rates and exemplary behaviour. Pupils are extremely well cared for and show outstanding awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Their excellent understanding of the importance of leading healthy lives is demonstrated in their active lifestyles, which include plenty of exercise, and the way that they regularly choose fruit at mealtimes. Although they are frequently questioned about their opinions, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to influence what goes on at the school. Pupils themselves say that they would like to make more decisions about their learning and their leisure activities.

Pupils achieve well during their time at the school. They make outstanding progress from their individual starting points so that by the time they leave the school in Year 11 many achieve national accreditations, such as GCSEs or vocational qualifications that will contribute well to their future careers. Those with additional special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as autistic spectrum disorders, as well as pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve as well as their peers. Throughout the school pupils benefit from at least good, and often excellent, teaching which has improved since the last inspection. Particularly strong teaching in mathematics, for example, is leading to exceptional progress in the subject. Pupils also achieve extremely well in art, with eight out of thirteen pupils attaining A\* or A grades in the most recent GCSE exams. The exciting and rich curriculum provides a very wide range of exciting visits and activities that inspire and engage pupils. Close liaison between teachers, teaching assistants and therapists is a major strength.

Excellent leadership and management have resulted in very positive outcomes for all groups of pupils. Leaders have worked diligently to improve all aspects of the school. Teaching has improved due to rigorous monitoring. Many aspects of the good boarding provision have also improved, including increased training and improved dormitories since the last inspection. Parents and carers are happy with the improvements. 'We are particularly pleased with improvements which have occurred in the care side of the school in the last two years,' wrote one. However, the school does not fully meet all the National Minimum Standards for boarding. Exceptional partnerships with local businesses and schools have resulted in greatly improved facilities and exciting opportunities for all the pupils. Governors are supportive and many are regular visitors to the school. They offer challenge and help to leaders. School self-evaluation is very accurate and leaders know

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what is working well and what needs improving. As a result of improvements in pupils' progress and the school's provision over the past three years, the school has an excellent capacity to continue improving.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase opportunities for pupils to have a voice so that they can make more choices about their own learning and influence decisions about their provision.
- The school must ensure that it meets the National Minimum Standards for boarding which have not been met.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils achieve well in their lessons and make excellent progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. They make the best progress in mathematics because of consistently outstanding teaching and exciting activities that engage their interests. For example, in Year 10, pupils made excellent progress as they found fractions, decimals and percentages that were equivalent to each other. Because the teacher had exceptional skills and made very effective use of visual and auditory resources, pupils were interested in their tasks and found the 'power pods' game exciting, working extremely hard to find answers as guickly as they could. Mathematics is used very well to support learning in other subjects, helping to further consolidate numeracy skills. In a Year 7 history lesson, for example, pupils were learning the best ways to defend a 'Motte and Bailey castle'. They were given a budget of \$\infty\$400 to spend on changes to the traditional Motte and Bailey style in order to make it easier to defend. Following a list of prices for various improvements, pupils were able to allocate their money to the last penny, accurately using a range of calculations to do so. These lessons are examples of how teachers are firmly supporting the school's drive to raise achievement. Pupils' excellent gains in learning were the result of skilled teaching and carefully-focused questions that extended their knowledge. Pupils make outstanding progress in their accredited courses. Over half of all pupils who take GCSEs attain grades A\* to C. In vocational courses a similar number attain these high grades.

We are very happy here,' wrote one student. They enjoy school very much, but several pupils, including those in the school council, say that they would like to have more say about what happens at school. They would like to be involved in planning menus, for example, and in negotiating activities such as the use of electronic games. They say that they would like more opportunities to make choices such as where to sit in assemblies. Many pupils keep fit by attending after-school sports clubs and joining in with sports activities with other local schools. Partnership activities provide excellent opportunities for inclusion and friendships with mainstream peers. Pupils' excellent moral development is evident in the way the pupils regularly raise funds for a range of charities such as Comic Relief and 'Send a Cow to Africa'. Most have a good awareness of different cultures because of some good themed activities that enable them to study different countries in depth. They show effective awareness of the different faiths that make up the United Kingdom because of a wide range of visits to places of worship, such as to the local synagogue and to a mosque. They get on very well with each other and older ones regularly help younger pupils. From their earliest years pupils develop good attitudes to

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learning because of the very effective support systems in each class. Despite many pupils having a history of poor attendance in their previous placements, they quickly settle at Moor House and, as a result, attendance is high. They are well prepared for their futures.

#### These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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:	1
Pupils' attendance 1	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

The rich and varied curriculum has an excellent impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement. Partnerships have ensured that the school is fully involved with the local community and that it provides pupils with the skills to become good citizens. Enrichment through visits, sports activities and visitors is exceptional and helps to engage pupils fully in learning.

Lessons are very well planned to meet individual needs. Expectations are high and result in lessons that have very good pace and clear learning objectives. Classroom management is excellent, resulting in a harmonious atmosphere in almost all lessons. Assessment is a particular strength. Pupils' achievements are tracked rigorously so that each small step to progress is checked. As a result, teachers are able to plan the next steps of learning and data clearly show an accurate view of pupils' individual successes. Questioning is a key feature of many lessons, helping to extend understanding and ensuring that pupils of different abilities access learning successfully. In an English lesson in Year 11, for example, pupils consolidated prior learning about characters in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Questioning extended pupils' understanding of how to search the text to learn

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about different aspects of each character as part of their GCSE preparation. Visual resources were a key feature of pupils' understanding of the task. Successful working partnerships between teachers, teaching assistants and therapists have a very positive impact on pupils' achievements and particularly on improving their speech and language skills.

Pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and additional special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported in lessons and tasks are tailored carefully to meet their needs. For example, one student working individually with an adult was able to succeed in working out mathematics problems because the teacher knew him well and made learning accessible by explaining each small step carefully. Very effective links with a wide range of agencies and other professionals, including the excellent speech and occupational therapists, ensure that pupils' personal needs and their language needs are extremely well met. Induction and transition procedures are outstanding so that new pupils quickly find their way around, and older pupils transfer smoothly to the next stage of their education. Strategies to support the learning and personal needs of all groups of pupils, including boys and girls, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are more able are excellent, resulting in full inclusion and enjoyment by these groups.

### These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	
Taking into account:  The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	

## How effective are leadership and management?

Inspirational leadership is a key feature of the school. The headteacher is rigorous about driving improvement in all areas of the school and beyond. As a result, the school is very effective and pupils benefit from some exceptional provision that meets their needs very well. The headteacher has an excellent vision for the future of the school and all staff are aware of this. She is ably supported by her deputy and by the senior leadership team. Leaders rigorously promote equality and strenuously work to eliminate discrimination. Very high levels of supervision in all areas of the school ensure that there is no evidence of any bullying. All pupils have equal access to all the opportunities. High levels of monitoring and training for staff have resulted in a rich learning environment that contributes very well to pupils' learning.

The senior management team has embedded its ambition for the school by developing strong local links through the good community cohesion strategy, helping to create an environment in which pupils thrive and which serves them very well. Governors are fully involved in the school's management, although there are currently vacancies on the governing body and governors feel that they could be even more effective with additional members. Emerging links with a school in Africa are extending pupils' understanding of

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other cultures. Very close local links promote effective working relationships with many other local schools and links with schools in the wider United Kingdom are developing. Partnership activities are outstanding and have a very positive impact on learning for all pupils. Older pupils, for example, attend courses every Thursday at the local college. They learn to travel independently by train and succeed because the whole local community is very supportive. Excellent links with parents contribute very well to pupils' improved attendance. Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are good. They are monitored rigorously and the site is very safe and secure.

#### These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement		
Taking into account:  The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1	
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	1	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination		
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2	
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money		

## **Boarding provision**

Pupils receive an excellent service with regards to their general health and medical needs. Nursing and medical care are delivered with sensitivity and competence. Pupils say 'they really look after you'. Records are held securely; confidentiality is assured. Information is shared carefully throughout departments. Hence, pupils with specific health needs are safeguarded effectively. Appropriate external referrals are made for any pupil requiring specialist treatment. Access to GP, dentistry and optical care is routine and the arrangements are agreed with parents. Staff receive the guidance and training they need to ensure the pupils enjoy good health. First aid and medication administration training are mandatory for the care team. The school has been awarded recently with the title of 'Epilepsy Champion' by a leading epilepsy specialist service. Allergies and special dietary needs are accommodated and the catering provision has recently been commended by a dietician audit. Pupils say they are generally happy with meals, but they would like greater opportunities to liaise with the catering team about menus.

Pupils say they feel safe. They thrive in a nurturing environment, which provides effective safeguards. Pupils know how to complain and ask for help. Contact details for external

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agencies are advertised widely in order for pupils to be enabled to express any concerns they may have to independent bodies and organisations. They confirm that bullying incidents are rare and managed effectively when they do occur. Staff across all departments are fully conversant with safeguarding procedures and they implement these in practice. Written records show a low level of child protection concerns. Clear and effective individual behaviour management plans and risk assessments have a positive impact on everyone's safety. Rules and expectations are understood. A rewarding culture for positive conduct is effective. Pupils believe that punishments are fair; written records demonstrate these are evenly distributed and stringently monitored. The need for physical interventions is rare and staff receive appropriate training and guidance on its use. Boarding accommodation is safe and secure. Pupils understand the fire evacuation procedure and this is practised regularly. Safety and security checks are conducted regularly and a robust recruitment process serves to protect pupils from potential harm. Senior staff members have all benefited from safer recruitment training.

Communication across all departments is a particular strength. A seamless approach increases the likelihood of progress and achievement. Care, therapy and teaching teams work collaboratively to ensure that goals and targets for individual pupils are realistic and meaningful. Pupils receive the individual support they need and key workers readily seek advice from their colleagues to ensure changing needs are effectively provided for. Care staff work very hard to provide a wide range of activities outside of the school day. Afternoons and evenings are very busy. Pupils enjoy using the school's facilities including the sports hall, swimming pool, grounds and play area. Common rooms are furnished in accordance with the age and interests of the pupils and external activities include horse riding and judo.

Opportunities for pupil consultation have increased since the previous inspection. Such forums remain in their infancy and staff recognise the need to develop these further. Pupils join the school based upon detailed and thorough assessment processes. Hence, their needs are communicated effectively to all departments from day one. Key workers ensure that care plans remain current and up to date. They liaise regularly with parents and this promotes collaborative working. Parents provide very positive feedback and confirm the school meets their child's needs.

Improvements to the boarding accommodation continue. The school recognises that privacy is compromised and a further dormitory has been refurbished to provide single bedrooms. Pupils report positively about this by saying, 'I love my room,' and, 'I can bring in my own things from home.' All areas of the boarding provision are cleaned to an excellent standard and maintenance issues are expedited. Current plans to develop senior provision are being received positively by parents. The school remains very keen to implement its plans, largely because it wants to extend its current age range to incorporate pupils over sixteen-years-old. Although pupils are actively encouraged to maximise their independence skills, the school believes improved results would occur if pupils remained for longer, prior to moving on to college or work.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Individual and specific needs are catered for effectively. The school actively celebrates differences through assemblies, project work, food and special festivals. The senior management team is visionary and cohesive. The strong leadership of the care team ensures staff receive good-quality supervision and training. The vast majority of the care team now has, or is working towards, the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in childcare. Senior staff, and those who already possess this qualification, are pursuing additional qualifications and

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training. Pupils receive excellent standards of care from a motivated and dedicated team as a direct result. The governing body continues to grow in terms of membership. Various sub-committees monitor a range of areas, including the boarding provision and safeguarding. However, there is no separate committee for generic health and safety matters, which risks some areas receiving less robust monitoring. Minor omissions within specific documents, such as induction checklists and daily logs are sometimes missed; neither are some of these documents being signed off by the persons responsible for monitoring.

#### National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care

- ensure pupils are engaged in meaningful consultation processes (NMS 2)
- ensure that all of the areas described under this standard are robustly monitored, with records clearly being signed off (NMS 32)
- consider the value of establishing a separate health and safety committee as part of the governing body (NMS 33)

### These are the grades for the boarding provision

The effectiveness of the boarding provision	2	
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## Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaires. Almost all are extremely pleased with the school. 'I am very happy with this school. I am left feeling that my child is in a safe, happy environment where she can flourish both on an academic level and emotionally,' is a typical response. A small minority of those who completed the questionnaire would like more support to enable them to help their child at home. Inspection evidence found that the school provides very good opportunities for training for parents.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moor House 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 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	48	23	48	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	73	13	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	60	18	38	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	60	17	35	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	77	10	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	56	18	38	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	58	18	38	1	2	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)	33	69	15	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	81	8	17	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	58	15	31	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	60	17	35	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	73	13	27	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	73	12	25	0	0	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)					
Type of school	Outstanding	ng Good Satisfactory		Inadequate		
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3		
Primary schools	9	44	39	7		
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11		
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3		
Special schools	35	43	17	5		
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9		
All schools	13	43	37	8		

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk">www.ofsted.gov.uk</a>).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success	s of a pupil in their	learning,
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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: 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.

■ 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.



24 March 2011

#### **Dear Pupils**

### Inspection of Moor House School, Oxted, RH8 9AQ

Thank you for your help during our recent visit to your school. This letter is to tell you some of the things we found out during our visit.

- Moor House provides you with an excellent education.
- You behave extremely well in and around the school and get on very well with your peers.
- You have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and an excellent awareness of how to keep healthy.
- You are coming to school more often than you used to, well done your attendance is now high.
- You make excellent progress in your lessons because of some excellent teaching, high quality therapy and support.
- You have some exciting visits and activities. We were impressed with the way you learn to travel around the local area independently as you get older.
- Your teachers, care staff and leaders take very good care of you.

We are asking your school to do two things to help you do even better. You can help by thinking carefully about the choices you make.

- Make sure you are consulted about decisions and have more opportunities to be involved in choices about the things that affect your learning and leisure time.
- Make sure requirements for the boarding provision are met in full.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris

Lead Inspector

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