

Meadow View Farm School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	855/6019
Unique Reference Number (URN)	136949
Inspection number	393258
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2012
Reporting inspector	Jane Melbourne HMI

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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 by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Meadow View Farm School opened in September 2011 and is located in the village of Sileby in Leicestershire in the grounds of an organic smallholding. The school provides a primary education for pupils aged six to 11 years who have statements of special educational needs because of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). There are currently six pupils on roll, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. The school aims to provide 'excellence as standard', within an engaging farm environment and with outdoor learning playing a large part in the curriculum. This is the school's first inspection since registration in July 2011.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of education is good. It has a number of outstanding features, including the quality of the curriculum, which meets pupils' needs very well. Teaching and assessment are consistently good and are often outstanding; consequently, all pupils are making good progress. The welfare, health and safety of pupils are given utmost priority and are also outstanding because of the high level of care and attention afforded to each pupil. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are rigorous and meet regulatory requirements. All of the independent school regulations are met; the school promptly addressed the two regulations outstanding from the registration inspection.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding. Schemes of work are in place for all of the required areas of learning and almost all are of high quality. The school has correctly identified that the curriculum policies for physical education, aesthetic and creative learning, and music are adequate but less comprehensive. Staff ensure that the curriculum meets pupils' specific needs, including the objectives specified in their statement of special educational needs. It provides enriching experiences across all areas of learning and appropriately prioritises the core skills of literacy and numeracy. Schemes of work closely follow the National Curriculum guidance and are adapted according to whatever level is appropriate for each pupil. Pupils' needs and interests are also accounted for in the choice of topics, and in the choice of extra-

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

curricular activities and outings. The curriculum is broad, including activities such as horse riding, cycling, swimming and dancing. Musical instrument tuition is also available, as the headteacher is a professional musician and recording artist, although currently this expertise has yet be used fully to develop pupils' musical skills and talents. Good quality resources, including information and communication technology, support pupils' learning across the curriculum very effectively. Equipment and resources are suitably matched to pupils' specific needs. Pupils' personal, social and health education including citizenship is developed very well in all curriculum areas. The school makes full use of its location on the small holding. Learning to care for the small farm animals is a unique feature of the curriculum. Pupils are given hands-on experiences to develop their knowledge of nature and the environment, which they learn to respect and care for. The school very effectively fulfils its aims, through the curriculum, to unlock each child's potential and build their confidence to re-engage with learning. It also very effectively widens pupils' life experiences, for example, when they take part in trips to London and camping in the New Forest.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Provision is not outstanding because all pupils are not making outstanding progress over time and their behaviour is not yet consistently good. Writing skills are not fully developed in all subjects. Teaching and support staff bring a range of relevant experience and training to the school. They are highly skilled in their ability to manage pupils with complex behavioural and emotional needs. They have strong relationships with pupils and have an excellent understanding of preparing each pupil for learning. Consequently staff quickly assess pupils' immediate needs each morning and settle them for the day ahead. Lessons are taught enthusiastically and staff challenge appropriately, with sensitivity to how long pupils will remain focused and engaged. Their concentration spans are increasing and they remain on task for longer periods, enabling them to complete more pieces of work to their satisfaction. A good range of assessment materials is used, including profiles that indicate pupils' attainment levels and progress across all subjects that allow comparisons with national expectations. There is daily and weekly assessment of pupils' progress socially and emotionally, including measuring improvements in their behaviour. Pupils' achievements, including their academic achievements, are immediately celebrated, and are shared with parents and carers. This all helps to effectively develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem, which further increases their self-worth and level of success. Targets set are challenging, but realistic. They are reviewed regularly. Pupils are clear about what they are working towards. Staff have high expectations about what can be achieved and are aware of any gaps in pupils' learning which must be rectified. The size of the school ensures that staff can meet pupils' needs flexibly, speeding up or slowing down learning where necessary. Pupils consolidate their learning as they use and apply their reading and mathematical skills in practical ways, including around the farm and small holding. Pupils are generally more reticent to write and the school works hard to find innovative ways for pupils to write for a purpose. In general there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum. Pupils' handwriting has improved over their time in school but still requires further improvement. Most importantly, children are now enjoying their learning and are better engaged than they have been previously.

Pupils' progress in lessons and over time is at least good. Pupils who have been at the school since the beginning of the academic year are often making outstanding progress academically, socially and emotionally. Their progress is accelerating because of their increased receptiveness to learning, their sense of belonging to the school family and the high expectations that staff have of them. This together with very thoroughly planned lessons, an outstanding curriculum and good use of time throughout each school day ensures good or better gains in learning. Pupils have made particularly good progress in their knowledge of the sounds that letters make. Consequently they are developing a love of, and confidence in, reading. They are trying really hard to decode words and read independently. This is equally true of the boys as it is the girls.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are learning to make the right choices and to understand the consequences of their behaviour, which is satisfactory overall but improving. This is as a result of effective policies for behaviour and anti-bullying, which are consistently applied and skilfully managed. Pupils are increasingly able to complete tasks independently and are becoming more successful working with others and as part of a group. Pupils love being at Meadow View Farm School which, according to their parents and carers, is 'helping to turn their children's lives around.' It is therefore, no surprise that they attend regularly.

Pupils genuinely look forward to caring for the animals upon arrival each morning, which is often a highlight of the day. There are many opportunities to be reflective: when things have gone particularly well or gone wrong, or when they are in awe and wonder about something in the natural or farm environment. There are frequent discussions and stories about moral issues, helping to develop pupils' understanding of right and wrong. The pupils are learning to cooperate socially as a group and pupils from different backgrounds get along well. They are developing a knowledge of social conventions, which means that they are able to go on more outings to public places and take part in the community. Mealtimes are becoming more successful social events. Disruption is reducing. Pupils are encouraged to work in harmony, to tolerate each other and to play well together. Sharing and turn taking is encouraged throughout learning activities. Pupils are developing a broad general knowledge of public institutions. For example, they make use of local amenities in the village and nearby city of Leicester. The school does a great deal to raise pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. They use the pupils' own backgrounds and location of their homes to enable them to gain an understanding of cultural diversity.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. The whole staff team ensure pupils are extremely well cared for and are kept safe and secure. They understand the needs of each individual very well indeed. Welfare, health and safety are a given high priority because of the location of the school within the small

holding and because of the needs of the pupils it cares for and educates. The multi-use of the site does not compromise the safety of the staff or pupils at any time. Since the registration visit, the school has improved safety arrangements. It has erected a fireguard around the wood burning stove in one of the classrooms and increased the height of the boundary fencing in order to fully comply with regulations. Pupils are supervised exceptionally well. They are accompanied by staff to all areas of the school site. All staff have a thorough training and knowledge of safeguarding and child protection. All policies and procedures, including those for child protection, follow current guidance and are implemented very effectively. Risk assessments are comprehensive. There have been only a very small number of minor accidents since the school has been operating. All were dealt with appropriately and recorded thoroughly. Each accident was followed up with pupils to raise awareness of preventing accidents. Pupils' hygiene routines are well-established. All aspects of record keeping are thorough. Admissions and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. The school has an exemplary track record for attendance, with no unauthorised absences and no exclusions to date. All regulations are met, including fulfilling the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has appropriate procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff and others and guidance is followed systematically. There is a single central record which contains all of the necessary checks that have been made on the proprietors, staff and volunteers to confirm their suitability to work with children.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The main premises are a single-storey building converted from a tea room. This provides a large open plan classroom and a kitchen and smaller classroom with suitable washroom, kitchen and storage facilities. A separate building, formerly stables, houses the office, further storage and suitable medical facilities for those who are ill. Classrooms and facilities are adequate for the number on roll. Pupils have a safe enclosed play area. The premises and accommodation are suitable for the unique nature of the school and provide a safe learning environment for pupils.

Provision of information

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is clear, accurate and up-to-date. It is of high quality and fully complies with the regulations. Communication with parents and carers is very regular. The school places a high value on working closely with parents and carers as well as with pupils. Consequently this aspect of its work is a strong feature. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the contribution the school makes to their children's personal and academic development.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints policy is clear and meets regulatory requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 (‘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 comprehensive programmes of study for pupils’ physical, aesthetic and creative learning, as already identified in school planning
- encourage pupils to write accurately and at length in all areas of the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

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

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary		
Date school opened	September 2011		
Age range of pupils	6–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls: 3	Total: 6
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 3	Girls: 3	Total: 6
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,000		
Address of school	Cossington Road Sileby Leicestershire LE12 7RT		
Telephone number	07903 212522		
Email address	mvfs@btinternet.com		
Headteacher	Jonathan Read		
Proprietors	Jonathan Read and Jayne Riley		

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.

17 May 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Meadow View Farm School, Leicester, LE12 7RT

Firstly, thank you for being so helpful to me during my visit. I really enjoyed my time with you, particularly as you collected eggs, gathered in the sheep and watched the sheep being sheared. Wasn't it fascinating?

I was very pleased to hear about how much happier you have been since coming to Meadow View Farm School. You told me that you can see improvements in your own behaviour and attitudes. It is really great that you all come to school every day and want to be there. I was pleased to hear how much you like learning to cook and using technology, including making DVDs. You seem to love the animals and learning with Lyn and Snowy. You are making good progress, particularly in activities like riding, cycling, swimming and dancing. I am so pleased most of you are enjoying books and trying to read on your own! Well done.

Although it is quite a new school, Meadow View Farm is a good school and the range of activities you do is outstanding. The grown ups all really care about every one of you and make sure you are kept very safe. The school meets all of the regulations that I had to check. It is keen to keep getting better and so I have asked your leaders to think about:

- ensuring that comprehensive schemes of work are produced for physical, aesthetic and creative learning planning to further develop your large and small muscles, and help you to develop more of your artistic and musical talents
- providing lots of ways to support you practising your writing in all subjects and to get you to write at length – you can help by trying very hard with this.

Well done to all of you during your time at Meadow View Farm School. I hope you continue to attend well, make the right choices about your behaviour, and enjoy your time here while learning lots!

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector