

# Mossbrook School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107182
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	377545
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Marian Thomas

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Irving Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Maggie Brough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Bochum Parkway Sheffield S8 8JR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2372768
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<b>Boarding provision</b>	Mossbrook Primary School
<b>Social care Unique Reference Number</b>	SC003048
<b>Social care inspector</b>	Michelle Moss

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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Marian Thomas  
Keith Massett

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 14 lessons and parts of lessons taught by ten teachers. Meetings were held with two groups of parents, pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2, governors, senior leaders and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line (Parent View) survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the school's health and safety policies, data on pupils' progress and the school's self evaluation data. The inspectors also took into account the views expressed in the 28 parental and carers' questionnaires received during the inspection.

## Information about the school

Mossbrook is a 76-place primary community special school. It meets the needs of pupils aged between four and 11 years who come from across the city of Sheffield. Pupils who attend all have a statement of special educational needs for a range of needs, including autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), speech, language and communication difficulties, as well as learning difficulties. Nearly half the pupils are known to be eligible for free meals. The school has a residential unit which provides 24-hour education for older pupils. Approximately one quarter of pupils who attend the school access this care for one night per week. Entry to the unit is through a social care referral. Currently, one child who attends another local special school also accesses the unit. The school has attained the Primary Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People status and Sheffield Healthy Schools standard. The school is in an informal federation partnership with nine other special schools within the Sheffield area.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key Findings

- Mossbrook School is an outstanding school. Since the last inspection, it has continued to grow and develop in all aspects of its work and, as a result, has maintained and improved upon its previously excellent standards.
- Despite a significant year-on-year change in the needs of pupils, senior leaders, at all levels, have been exceptionally successful in maintaining and improving pupils' outstanding progress and achievement throughout the school. The excellent quality of care and guidance given to pupils who attend the residential unit builds upon the strong foundations established in school.
- Teaching is outstanding and is characterised by high expectations for all pupils and excellent classroom organisation. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and activities are exceptionally skilfully-matched to the needs of all pupils. Relationships between staff and the majority of pupils are excellent. However, very occasionally in science lessons, teachers' limited subject knowledge restricts learning.
- Behaviour is excellent in the vast majority of lessons. Despite the behavioural needs of many pupils, staff have very high expectations and the majority of pupils show excellent attitudes. Where a pupil's behaviour does become difficult, staff are highly skilled in ensuring that lessons continue uninterrupted. Pupils make great strides in their personal development, both in school and within the outstanding on-site residential unit.
- The outstanding leadership of the senior team is demonstrated by the continuous delivery of an outstanding curriculum and the development of pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Self-evaluation is accurate at all levels. The management of teaching is linked clearly to performance management targets. The vast majority of parents are unanimous in their support for the school, and feel that their children's care and

academic progress are excellent. Members of the governing body offer very effective support and challenge to senior leaders.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in a small number of science lessons by ensuring that teachers' knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts is sufficiently robust.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

The majority of children who enter the school's Early Years Foundation Stage unit have levels of skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. The vast majority also have significant behavioural needs and associated learning difficulties. As a result of the highly-inclusive and skilled approach of staff, barriers to learning are minimised and all pupils go on to make significant gains both academically and socially. The school is justifiably proud of the success this year of one of its pupils who reached age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This is clear evidence of the school's continued commitment to ensuring that every pupil makes excellent progress over time, an ambition recognised and appreciated by the majority of parents and carers. A comment from one summed up the feelings of many: 'I never dared to hope my child would one day read. Since starting at Mossbrook he has made astounding progress and reads confidently to me.' Overall reading attainment is lower than age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, due to the school's relentless focus on developing reading skills, pupils make exceptional progress from their starting points.

Once they have settled into school routines and engaged with learning, pupils who join the school at a later stage also make excellent progress. An example of this was seen in a Key Stage 1 English lesson. Pupils with a wide range of needs learned how to retell the traditional tale of Little Red Riding Hood. Pupils worked co-operatively in acting out the parts. This activity was particularly challenging for many, particularly those with autistic spectrum disorder. However, all joined in and gained immense enjoyment through the experience of working collaboratively in character and all made significant gains in developing their speaking and listening skills.

The highly-skilled support offered in the nurturing environment of the school ensures that all groups of pupils make exceptional progress in relation to their starting points. Systems to track pupils' progress are used effectively. Any underachievement is identified quickly and is relentlessly pursued. The majority of parents' and carers' views agree with the inspection findings that the school supports their children's achievement exceptionally well.

## Quality of teaching

Outstanding teaching is evident across the school. This enables pupils to make excellent progress both socially and academically. Staff form an exceptionally close-knit team and work together to ensure excellent outcomes for pupils. The majority of teachers across the school plan well for the needs of all learners and share the planning effectively with teaching assistants. This results in learning time being maximised due to high-quality and well-directed support for pupils. Teachers typically have exceptionally high expectations of what pupils can attain. As one commented, 'We aim to get our pupils to reach for the stars at Mossbrook.' Pupils' excellent spiritual awareness is displayed in the outstanding quality of the work they produce in art and music. In a music lesson, Key Stage 2 pupils with a wide range of needs played *Chariots of Fire* on a wide range of percussion instruments. They clearly enjoyed the experience immensely and their timing and ability to follow the music was impressive, given their very high level of need. The vast majority of lessons is characterised by fast pace and teachers' high expectations of both behaviour and achievement. Across the school, the wide range of activities and practical tasks engages learners exceptionally well. The school's very strong focus on improving the English and mathematical attainment of all pupils is clearly evident in the exceptionally well-planned reading and mathematical activities in all classrooms. However, very occasionally, teachers lack a sound knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, particularly in Key Stage 2. This results in pupils misunderstanding key concepts. School leaders are aware of this and are planning training in science.

Teachers mark pupils' work diligently and make very good use of oral praise to encourage and engage reluctant learners.

The curriculum engages learners well and offers a wide variety of memorable experiences. The residential unit staff link closely with school staff and recently contributed to curriculum enrichment by taking a group of pupils to see the Olympic torch in Sheffield. Through assemblies and visits from a range of different organisations and groups, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced. Parents and carers reflect the inspection findings that teaching is excellent and their view of teaching is expressed in the comment made by a parent: 'All the teachers here are just brilliant. They support my child and our family.'

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of the majority of pupils both inside and outside lessons is outstanding. The majority work exceptionally well together despite their high levels of emotional and behavioural needs, and show respect and exceptionally caring attitudes towards each other and staff. Their achievements are celebrated on every occasion through the awarding of stars and certificates. The key focus, in the school and residential unit, on supporting pupils' personal and social development has increased pupils' self-esteem and helped to develop excellent attitudes to learning. Through strong partnerships with health care professionals and outside agencies, pupils are exceptionally well-supported in making highly-effective transfers to the next stage in their education.

Parents, carers and pupils agree that the school makes an excellent contribution to developing pupils' understanding of what constitutes safe behaviour. Overall attendance is high in comparison to similar schools. Compared with their attendance at previous schools, pupils' attendance increases when they join and for a significant number it rises from low attendance to 100%. Pupils say they love coming to school and appreciate how much staff in both the school and residential provision do to help them to make progress. A comment made by one expressed well the views of many: 'Mossbrook is just brilliant. I want to come every day, even at the weekend.' Pupils are aware of what it means to be bullied and know what to do if it happens to them. They are clear about the different forms that bullying can take place, including cyber-bullying, but feel that there is currently no bullying at Mossbrook and are confident that, if there were, staff would sort it out.

### **Leadership and management**

The inspirational leadership from the headteacher, well-supported by other members of the senior leadership team, has continued to move the school forward since the previous inspection. As a result of their relentless drive to improve the quality of teaching across the school, pupils' achievement has continued to rise. Using excellent self-evaluation strategies, senior leaders have an exceptionally accurate view of the quality of provision across the school; they have accurately targeted future improvements. Systems used to track pupils' progress and set targets for learning have been improved significantly since the previous inspection and pupils' overall achievement continues to be outstanding. Through this strong culture of self-evaluation and the clear strategies for improvement, all staff are exceptionally clear about what is needed to raise attainment further. Highly effective strategies for the monitoring of teaching have led to a continuous and carefully planned programme of professional development for all staff which has improved outcomes for pupils. A successful focus on developing English has accelerated pupils' progress in reading and raised their levels of confidence and enjoyment in learning.

Staff and individual pupils feel exceptionally valued in this highly-inclusive community. Systems which promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination are securely in place. As a result, all pupils make outstanding progress, whatever their background and needs. The school clearly demonstrates an excellent capacity to improve further.

The school leadership and members of the governing body ensure that the safeguarding of pupils is at the heart of the school ethos and that all statutory requirements are met.

The curriculum is very well-matched to the needs of pupils and offers exceptional opportunities for developing pupils' moral and social skills. Visits from a diverse range of faith, dance, music and drama groups enhance the school's excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The continued successful engagement of the majority of parents and carers is evident in the positive responses on the school's performance received during the

inspection, but school leaders are aware of the need to continue to strive to engage all parents and carers.

## **Boarding Provision**

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools. Pupils who attend the residential provision are strong ambassadors for the school. They show immense respect for their school community and each other. They thoroughly enjoy their residential stays, utilising all the school's facilities. The atmosphere is relaxed and child-friendly. Care staff are highly skilled and dedicated in their care of pupils. Their effective use of a range of enhanced communication aids, such as symbols, talking mats and sign language, ensures every child can participate in making informed choices and decisions.

There is no doubt from listening to the views of pupils that they thoroughly enjoy their overnight stays, which they describe to be 'lots of fun' and 'fantastic'. The large numbers of stimulating activities in the residential unit enable all pupils to reach their full potential in learning and in developing independence skills. The opportunities to forge new friendships is something cherished by pupils. The smallest of achievements is celebrated and pupils are positively rewarded for good behaviour.

Designated health practitioners visit the school on a regular basis providing staff with advice and guidance. Through the imaginative use of creative play and symbols for supporting language, care staff help pupils to develop an excellent understanding of growing up and staying healthy.

Pupils are afforded excellent opportunities to participate in healthy activities, which enhance their physical well-being. They receive nutritious meals that are plentiful and take into account personal preferences. Meal times are a delightful occasion and pupils thrive on the wonderful interaction offered as well as enjoying the excellent food served.

Care plans are focused on individual needs and on improving outcomes. Wide-ranging targets are set, aimed at increasing independence and building life skills with which pupils engage enthusiastically.

Meticulous attention is paid to ensuring that medication is administered safely. This ensures that pupils receive medication important to their health.

Care staff receive excellent training on all aspects of safeguarding children. They have a thorough knowledge of pupils' vulnerabilities, including any risks. The residential provision is well-designed to take into account the privacy, support and comfort of pupils.

Opportunities to develop life skills through accessing the wider community happen only occasionally. A recent outing to an Olympic torch event provided pupils with an excellent opportunity for wider involvement.

Irrespective of culture, age and personal differences, all pupil feel valued and show kindness and respect towards each other. This creates a family atmosphere within



the unit.

The residential provision is highly valued by parents who describe it as an invaluable part of their children's education.

### **National minimum standards – all met**

One area for improvement:

Develop a wider range of activities which increase pupils' access to the wider community.

*These are the grades for the boarding provision*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the residential experience</b>	<b>1</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	1
Quality of residential provision and care	1
Residential pupils' safety	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	1

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Mossbrook School, Sheffield, S8 8JR**

Thank you for making the inspectors feel so very welcome when we visited your school recently. A special 'thank you' goes to those of you who took time to talk to us during our visit and a particular 'thank you' to those pupils who missed their lunchtime play session to speak to us. We really enjoyed joining you for your lessons and seeing the hard work you all do.

We agree with those of you who told us that your school is brilliant. Many of you also told us that your teachers were wonderful because they helped you in every way possible, and we agree with you. Lots of you told us how much you enjoyed your sleep-overs in the Mossbrook unit and how well staff looked after you. We also think the residential unit looks after you exceptionally well.

Your school is outstanding in so many different ways; we have asked staff to do only one thing to make it even better. We want them ensure that all of you make the same excellent progress in science that you already make in mathematics and English.

A big 'thank you' once again for making us feel so welcome, and particularly for being so polite to us when you met us in the corridors. We know, because you told us, that you love coming to school and we think because you behave so well you are all are very good ambassadors for your school.

Yours sincerely,

Marian Thomas  
Lead Inspector

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