

Inspection of Forest Moor School

Menwith Hill Road, Darley, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 2RA

Inspection dates: 17–18 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

There have been lots of changes in leaders and staff over the last few years. Now that a new headteacher is in post, she is bringing much needed stability. Most pupils trust her. They can see the improvements that she is making. For example, the behaviour of pupils has started to improve. Although some pupils do not always behave well, the school is generally calm.

Pupils' learning and experiences of school are also starting to improve. Some of the older pupils have major gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They do not read or write as well as they should. Their achievement in mathematics is weak. Teachers do not build upon what pupils already know. Staff have not expected pupils to aim high. Pupils are not following a structured programme and learning enough.

Pupils generally feel safe. Most are happy to be at school. They attend regularly. Some pupils say that bullying exists but that teachers do their best to deal with it. Pupils receive the social and emotional support they need.

Changes are already afoot. There is now a stronger focus on outdoor education, conservation and current affairs at school. Teachers are using the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme to support pupils' personal development.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

This school has failed its pupils in the past. Members of the interim executive board (those responsible for the school) tried to steady the ship but have only recently managed to do so. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour used to be poor. The lack of respect shown by some pupils made it hard for teachers to get on with their jobs. The standards that pupils reached by the end of Year 11 in 2019 were too low. Pupils left school without the qualifications that they needed and deserved.

Weaknesses in the curriculum have affected the oldest pupils the most. The range of subjects which pupils study at key stage 4 is limited. Some subjects are poorly planned. Leaders have not helped teachers to identify the important content that pupils must know and remember. Teachers do not build upon the skills and knowledge that pupils have already mastered. Inspectors found that the quality of written work in English was only a little better in Year 11 than in Year 6. School leaders know this. Teachers do know what different pupils in their classes need to help them to learn. Yet, sometimes, they do not plan learning well enough to meet these needs. The curriculum does not aim high enough for these pupils.

Since the appointment of the new headteacher the school has begun to improve. The quality of the curriculum is stronger at key stage 2. For this age group, teachers make sure that pupils think and work hard. Teachers plug gaps in pupils' knowledge and build on their understanding step by step. This includes when pupils struggle with their reading. The headteacher has used these strengths to begin to improve

the curriculum in Years 7 and 8. She has changed the structure of these classes. Teachers are beginning to expect more in key stage 3. It is still early days. Standards remain low but things are starting to move in the right direction.

School leaders have been effective in improving pupils' behaviour. Although some older pupils still have negative views about school, Forest Moor is generally a calm and focused place to learn. Teachers help pupils to concentrate on the task in hand. Adults are getting better at spotting the issues that pupils find hard to manage. Teachers plan to avoid these. Exclusions are not commonplace. The number of times that pupils are restrained for their safety and that of others is reducing. School leaders are making sure that everyone expects much better behaviour from pupils.

Outdoor education is helping pupils to develop resilience and become more organised. Pupils study physical education and food technology. This helps them to understand how to stay healthy. It also helps them to develop teamwork, cooperation and independence.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. Leaders take pupils' welfare seriously. Members of staff keep a careful watch on pupils' safety. Staff act quickly to report concerns. The head of inclusion works effectively with external agencies. She is persistent in making sure that pupils get the support that they need.

Members of staff understand the social and emotional needs of their pupils. Leaders have put appropriate programmes in place to help pupils to manage their feelings and emotions.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum at key stages 3 and 4 has not helped pupils to build their knowledge progressively over time. Pupils tread water, repeating content without learning it and without moving on. Standards are too low. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics. Leaders should ensure that standards rise for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. Teachers should have higher ambitions for pupils academically.
- Subject content is not sequenced well in some curriculum plans. Teachers do not revisit the important content so that pupils remember it. This is the case in subjects such as history and geography at key stage 2 and in personal, social and health education across the school. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are planned carefully so that pupils learn and remember key content and achieve well.
- Pupils with learning needs in addition to their social, emotional and mental health

needs do not acquire the knowledge they need to succeed. Leaders need to make sure that the curriculum is tailored to their specific needs more effectively.

- Subject leadership is underdeveloped. Leaders have begun to introduce professional development programmes linked to different subjects. This work should continue and expand so that the curriculum is effectively designed and delivered in all subjects.
- Although behaviour has improved recently, some pupils are still disrespectful to staff and to others. This sometimes disrupts learning. Leaders need to continue to improve the culture at school so that any major instances of misbehaviour are eradicated.
- Careers information, advice and guidance, although in place, is too generic. In the past, the courses that pupils went on to study after Year 11 were at a similar level to those at school. This was not ambitious for these pupils. Leaders should ensure that pupils' ambitions, the courses they follow and the destinations that they reach are more closely matched.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	121780
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10110576
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	9 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Phillip Bennington
Headteacher	Gemma Dixon
Website	http://www.forestmoor.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 May 2017

Information about this school

- Forest Moor School provides for pupils with social, emotional and mental health issues, all of whom have an education, health and care plan. Pupils travel from across North Yorkshire to attend the school.
- Since the last full inspection, the local authority replaced the governing body with an interim executive board and a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school works with outside providers as part of the curriculum on offer for pupils. At the time of the inspection these were Hilltop Farm, Nudge Education and Principal Teachers.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.

They spoke to members of the interim executive board, including the chair. Inspectors spoke with two officers from the local authority.

- Inspectors met with the head of inclusion, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including: child protection policies and procedures; absence data; documentation about the use of restrictive physical intervention; and exclusions data. Inspectors spoke with pupils across the course of the inspection and asked them about aspects of behaviour and safety. An inspector visited alternative providers used by the school and checked safeguarding arrangements between providers and the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with those responsible for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors looked at English, mathematics, science, physical education and personal, social and health education in detail. Inspectors talked to leaders and teachers about their curriculum plans. The inspection team talked to pupils about what they knew and remembered in these subjects. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Michael Wardle, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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