

Inspection of Moorland Waldorf School

The Village College, Botton Village, Danby, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO21 2NJ

Inspection dates: 1 February and 1 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have not ensured effective safeguarding arrangements. The school's procedures for recruiting staff are not robust. Despite some training, staff's knowledge of safeguarding practices is fragile. Risks to pupils are not assessed effectively. Actions are not taken swiftly enough when risks are identified.

The curriculum does not prepare pupils well for their next steps in education. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are too low. Pupils with additional learning needs are not supported well.

Pupils appear happy. They behave well. Pupils understand the importance of attending well. When bullying does happen, it is dealt with quickly by adults. There is someone in school whom pupils can talk to if they are worried or concerned about anything. There is mutual respect between staff and pupils.

There are many opportunities for pupils to learn outdoors. Pupils enjoy this aspect of the school's curriculum. For instance, pupils excitedly showed an inspector the seeds that they had planted outside.

All pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. However, there are no other extra-curricular opportunities on offer. Pupils have limited opportunities to engage in trips and visits beyond the local community.

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

The school's curriculum is disjointed and not well planned. The curriculum does not match the ambitions set out in the national curriculum. Leaders have not thought carefully about the most useful subject content that they want pupils to learn. This includes in early years. Leaders have not considered how they will check that pupils remember what they have been taught. Teachers have not had the professional development they need to help them to design the curriculum or teach subjects well. Pupils do not achieve well for their age. They are not well prepared for their next steps in education.

Teachers do not have the knowledge and understanding to identify pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or to ensure that the curriculum meets their needs. Staff are unaware of the expertise and specialist support they can draw on more widely to support pupils. Current pupils who are presenting with possible special educational needs have not had suitable assessments to check whether this is the case.

Reading is not taught well. The books that pupils read are not well matched to the letters and sounds that they know. This hinders their progress. Teachers have not had any training in reading for a significant amount of time. Pupils do not receive the right support to help them to read fluently. Pupils do not take school books home to read as leaders are concerned that these will not be returned to school.

Pupils do enjoy listening to their teachers reading to them. Pupils also like singing songs and reciting poems and rhymes.

Pupils behave well. On the rare occasions that bullying happens, it is dealt with quickly. Older pupils support younger pupils. For instance, during the inspection, older pupils were supporting younger pupils to remember the words to songs at the school's Candlemas celebrations. Older pupils also enjoyed helping younger pupils with seed-planting outside.

Pupils have a number of opportunities to develop their moral understanding. They know the difference between right and wrong. They learn about this in their daily interactions with staff and through the stories and fables they read or listen to. The personal development curriculum helps pupils to understand the meaning of consent. Pupils do not use computers in school. Despite this, they do understand how to stay safe when online. Pupils know that there are different types of families. However, their understanding of different faiths and cultures is limited. Pupils told inspectors that they would like to visit places of worship and learn more about different faiths and cultures.

While the frequency of trips and visits has declined further than previously due to the pandemic, pupils typically do not have the opportunity to go on trips and visits beyond the local community. Pupils do not learn about public institutions and services in England, as required by the independent school standards (the standards).

Leaders have consulted with parents and carers about the school's relationships and sex education policy (RSE). Leaders uploaded the school's RSE policy to the school's website during the inspection.

Leaders have not ensured that the admissions register is compliant with requirements. There are pupils on the admissions register who do not attend the school. There is no record of the new school that pupils move on to when they leave this school, or of the start date when they begin at their new school. Leaders were unaware that if there are any changes to the admissions or attendance registers, there must be a log of the date on which the amendment was made, the reason for the amendment and the name and position of the person who made the amendment. Teachers are not consistently using the correct attendance codes. Sometimes, no codes are used. This includes when the school closes due to bad weather.

The school's health and safety policy does not include the required detail and is not implemented effectively. A number of necessary health and safety checks are not completed. Leaders are aware that their health and safety policy and procedures are not robust. They have recently asked North Yorkshire local authority to work with them to make the necessary improvements.

Classrooms are well presented, and light and airy. The school meets most of the standards that relate to the premises. However, the hot water in the girls' toilets

presents a scalding risk. Despite their efforts, leaders were unable to rectify this before the end of the inspection.

The school does not meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Trustees were not aware that the school needs to have an accessibility plan.

With support from a recently appointed trustee with state-school experience, trustees are beginning to ask the right questions of the College of Teachers, which performs the function of the headteacher. Trustees are starting to make more checks on the quality of education that pupils receive. However, trustees do not have a good knowledge and understanding of the standards in order that these are consistently met over time. They recognise that they have not accessed any training to help them to carry out their roles effectively. Trustees intend to complete a skills audit so that they can identify gaps in their skills. Trustees were unaware of the extent of the school's weaknesses.

Staff feel well supported. They enjoy working at this school. They feel that their workload and well-being are well considered by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Safer recruitment procedures are not robust. Leaders do not carry out suitable checks on staff before they are appointed to ensure that they are safe to work with pupils. During the inspection, leaders undertook required checks to determine whether leaders were barred from carrying out management roles in school. Suitable checks are not consistently completed on staff and trustees who have spent time overseas. Some of these checks were completed during the inspection, but not all. Information in staff recruitment files does not match the information on the school's single central record.

The school's safeguarding policy is in line with statutory requirements. The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. However, staff's knowledge of safeguarding policies and procedures is inconsistent.

In early years, physical restraint is sometimes used by staff. Staff have not received any training to do this in a safe and effective way. The methods staff described that they use gave inspectors cause for concern. This was referred by the school to the local authority when this was pointed out by inspectors.

Leaders do not take action quickly enough when risks are identified that may put pupils at risk of harm. For instance, an inspector found that children had access to a hot cooker in the kindergarten. There were dangling electrical wires and glasses in easy reach of children. A recent health and safety visit had also identified these risks. However, leaders had not acted to eliminate these safety risks immediately when they were identified. This puts pupils at risk of harm.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not ensured a strong culture of safeguarding. Recruitment checks on staff are not robust. Leaders do not take action quickly enough where risks are identified. Staff's lack of understanding of positive handling techniques puts pupils and adults at risk. Leaders should ensure that staff have a secure understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff should receive training to ensure that they handle pupils appropriately when required to do so. Leaders should also ensure that safer recruitment procedures are in line with statutory guidance and that the school's safeguarding practice matches what is set out in the school's policy.
- The school's health and safety policy and procedures are not fit for purpose. Leaders do not ensure that the necessary health and safety checks are consistently carried out. Where risks are identified, leaders do not take swift action to mitigate the risks. Pupils are at risk of harm as a result. Leaders should ensure that they carry out their health and safety responsibilities effectively so that pupils are kept safe. This includes making sure that Legionella and asbestos checks are completed. Leaders should also ensure that the school's health and safety policy is in line with Department for Education guidance.
- There is not a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Teachers use a number of different phonics programmes. Pupils are not supported to read well. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading and that staff receive any necessary training so that all pupils are supported to read fluently and confidently.
- Leaders have not developed an ambitious curriculum that sets out the important knowledge and understanding that pupils must learn. The curriculum is poorly designed and implemented because staff do not have the necessary subject knowledge. Pupils are not well prepared for their next steps in education. Leaders should take immediate steps to review the curriculum so that it clearly defines the knowledge that pupils will learn throughout the school and in each subject. Staff should receive any necessary training they need in order to teach the curriculum effectively.
- Staff do not have the professional knowledge to diagnose pupils' special educational needs, nor to access support from wider agencies. As a result, some pupils have unmet needs. Leaders should ensure that staff receive training urgently so that they can more appropriately identify, assess and meet pupils' needs.
- The curriculum for pupils' personal development is not planned well enough. There are limited opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures. The wider experiences for pupils are also limited. Leaders should review the personal development curriculum so that there are suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures. Leaders should also ensure that

pupils have the opportunity to experience trips and visits beyond the local community.

- The admissions and attendance registers are not fully compliant. Leaders should ensure that the admissions and attendance registers consistently meet statutory requirements.
- Some trustees do not have the knowledge and skills to hold school leaders to account. Trustees are not providing the necessary challenge and support to leaders in order to rapidly address the school's weaknesses. Trustees should ensure that they have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills to fulfil their legal responsibilities effectively.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	121753
DfE registration number	815/6023
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10202200
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Number of part-time pupils	4
Proprietor	Eskdale Community Trust for Education
Chair	Linda Parker
Headteacher	Moorland Waldorf School has no headteacher. The day-to-day running of the school is carried out by the College of Teachers.
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,500
Telephone number	01287 661206
Website	https://moorlandwaldorf.org
Email address	info@moorlandwaldorf.org
Date of previous inspection	4 to 6 December 2018

Information about this school

- The school follows a curriculum based on the Steiner Waldorf approach to education.
- Children in the kindergarten attend part time in the mornings from Monday to Thursday. Parents and carers whose children are of compulsory school age and are in the kindergarten sign an agreement with the school to confirm that they will home-school their children in the afternoons. From the age of six, pupils attend the school full time. The school is closed to pupils on Friday afternoons.
- The school has exemptions from the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- At the time of the inspection, there were two classes, the kindergarten and a mixed class of pupils from the ages of six to ten.
- The school does not have a headteacher. The day-to-day running of the school is carried out by the College of Teachers. The College of Teachers is made up of all teachers at the school. The proprietor body (formed of the trustees) manages the school.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.
- The site is owned by a private landlord. There are two houses on the school's site. These houses have not been occupied for some time. There is no intention to rent out the houses.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection started on 1 February 2022. Owing to issues with COVID-19 at the school on the second day of the inspection, the inspection resumed on 1 March 2022.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and personal, social, health and economic education. Inspectors looked at the curriculum plans in these subjects. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to teachers.

- Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and looked at pupils' work in other subjects, such as painting and Russian.
- Inspectors met with all pupils in classes 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- An inspector toured the school premises to check compliance with the standards for premises.
- Inspectors met with members of the College of Teachers, three trustees (including the chair of the board of proprietors), the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the deputy DSL, the school's special educational needs coordinator and other members of staff.
- An inspector heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents relating to the school's work to safeguard pupils. Inspectors spoke to staff about the impact of the safeguarding training that they receive. Inspectors looked at the school's behaviour, bullying and attendance logs. The school's single central record, which includes recruitment checks made on staff, was also scrutinised.
- A range of school documentation relating to the standards was reviewed.
- Inspectors considered the views of five members of staff and seven pupils who had responded to Ofsted's surveys. Inspectors also considered the six responses to Ofsted's survey for parents, Parent View.

Inspection team

Michele Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lee Elliott

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2 The standard in this paragraph is met if—
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work—
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan;
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor—
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which—
 - 5(b)(iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school;
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18 (1) The standard in this paragraph relates to the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff.
- 18 (2) The standard in this paragraph is met if—
- 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person—
- 18(2)(c)(i) the person’s identity
- 18(2)(c)(iii) the person’s right to work in the United Kingdom; and
- 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person’s qualifications;
- 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person’s suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person’s appointment.
- 20(6)(b) subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the Chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB—
- 20(6)(b)(ii) checks confirming MB’s identity and MB’s right to work in the United Kingdom; and
- 20(6)(b)(iii) where, by reason of MB’s living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining an enhanced criminal record certificate is not sufficient to establish MB’s suitability to work in a school, such further checks as the Chair of the school considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is—
- 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff (“S”) appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
- 21(3)(a)(i) S’s identity was checked;
- 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
- 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S’s right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
- 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
- 21(6) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation each member (“MB”) of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
- 28(1)(d) the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1)(f) an annual written report of each registered pupil's progress and attainment in the main subject areas taught is provided to the parents of that registered pupil except that no report need be provided where the parent has agreed otherwise;

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
- 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- 3.2 Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well. The requirements in this section explain what early years providers must do to: safeguard children; ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children; promote good health; manage behaviour; and maintain records, policies and procedures.
- 3.9 Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. Providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable.
- 3.65 Providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks. Providers must determine where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers or inspectors. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school does not meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The school does not have an accessibility plan.

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