

# Mowbray School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121779
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	301475
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Emerson

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>	2–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	144
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Robert Dunning
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jonathan Tearle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Masham Road Bedale North Yorkshire DL8 2SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01677 422446
<b>Fax number</b>	01677 426056

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Mowbray School has a very large catchment area covering both rural and urban areas and five military bases. A high percentage of pupils move in and out of the school other than at the usual time because of regimental changes. Pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Mowbray is designated for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. However, a significant number of pupils have been diagnosed as having an autistic spectrum disorder. A number of pupils have severe learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are two specialist classes in the primary department for pupils with speech and language difficulties and one specialist class for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder. Five pupils are looked after by the local authority. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Boys represent 73% of the school population. The school holds a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools Award, Investors in People, a Big Lottery award for outdoor education, a Kids First award for developing playgrounds and a School Travel Plan award. It is also an special educational need technology enrichment centre. The school is subject to reorganisation.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Mowbray is a good school and this judgement matches the school's own view of itself. It has some outstanding features: relationships with parents are exceptionally strong and parents have great confidence in the school. Parents particularly value the very high quality of personalised support which they report their children receive. For example, one parent reported: 'we feel they really care about each individual.' Links with mainstream schools and agencies such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) team are also strong. Such links support pupils' achievement and personal development very well. For example, some Year 10 and 11 pupils access GCSE courses at Bedale High School. This contributes to the GCSE and Entry Level results, which are good given the pupils' low attainment levels on entry to the school. Preparation for working life is outstanding. In 2006, all the Year 11 leavers went into further education or employment.

The school uses its good accommodation and resources effectively. Pupils are offered a good curriculum which is enriched very well by activities such as residential trips and outdoor education. Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start in acquiring personal and social skills and in learning about the world through a variety of well planned and lively activities. Provision for art and design is outstanding. Teaching and learning are good overall with some outstanding teaching. Teachers know pupils very well. Consequently, work is set at just the right level for individual pupils and is well matched to pupils' particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants are skilled and effective and make a very strong contribution to pupils' achievement and personal development. Because teaching is good, pupils achieve well and make good progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. However, teachers do not consistently set homework to enable pupils to practise and reinforce their skills in the home environment.

Pupils' personal development is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils generally try very hard in lessons and behave very well around the school. However, the school is aware that there are still isolated incidents of bullying which worry pupils even though they agree that the incidents do get 'sorted out' quickly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. Pupils contribute to the community through fundraising and other projects such as building a planter for Harlow Carr gardens. They learn to behave safely as a result of activities such as road safety training. 'Family style' school lunches, where staff and pupils eat a healthy lunch together, are effective in teaching pupils to adopt a healthy diet. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and monitored. Consequently, any underachievement is quickly identified. A variety of very well planned and effective intervention strategies are then put in place to raise achievement. All pupils have detailed targets for learning and those who need them also have clear targets for behaviour. Pupils are involved well in setting and reviewing the targets. Procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils meet current requirements.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership and sets a very strong steer for the school. Ably supported by the deputy headteacher, he has been responsible for the good improvement since the previous inspection. For example, he has restructured the leadership team and redefined the roles of the team so that it meets the particular needs of the school much better. However, the involvement of all members of the team in the analysis of performance data and school

evaluation is still underdeveloped. The school has a good capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all members of the leadership team make effective use of performance data and take a full part in school evaluation.
- Set homework on a regular basis so that pupils have good opportunities to consolidate their learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Because of pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities, standards are well below those found nationally. However, pupils in all age groups achieve well. The achievement of boys and girls and pupils of different ethnicity is equally good. Children in the Foundation Stage make a strong start in acquiring early skills in literacy and numeracy. This good foundation is built on well as pupils move up the school. Results achieved in the national tests demonstrate clearly the progress which pupils make. For example, in 2007, around half of the Year 9 pupils achieved Levels 2 to 4 in mathematics and science. Pupils in Year 11 gain good accredited results. In 2006, Year 11 pupils achieved GCSE passes in drama, mathematics and art, and Entry Level passes in English, French, information and communication technology (ICT), mathematics and science. Pupils achieve best in art. In 2006, four pupils achieved GCSE art at grade C. In 2006, five Year 11 pupils gained the ASDAN bronze award and four pupils gained the silver award.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' attendance is good because they really enjoy coming to school. The number of exclusions is declining. The majority of pupils behave very well and tackle tasks set with enthusiasm and perseverance. However, a small minority engage in bullying others. The school is very aware of this issue and has implemented a variety of suitable and carefully planned strategies to address it. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted well. Art and design makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development but the role of assemblies is under developed. Although pupils learn about people from other cultures there are fewer opportunities to learn about life in multi-cultural Britain. As a consequence of the good emphasis on health and safety, pupils make good progress in learning to behave safely, make healthy choices and engage in exercise. The school has held the Healthy School Award since 2005. The school council is actively involved in improving the school, for example through the development of the school planner. Pupils make outstanding progress in developing workplace skills because of the excellent work-related learning programme which includes lively enterprise schemes.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding practice. Teachers and support staff work as seamless teams to provide very good individual support for pupils. Work set is well matched to pupils' particular needs and based on accurate assessment. Consequently, all pupils are fully involved in lessons and make good progress. Relationships are excellent and teachers have high

expectations for learning and behaviour. Lessons are lively and enhanced by the skilful use of high quality resources. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and try hard. An example of this was seen in an outstanding design and technology lesson where Year 10 and 11 pupils concentrated intensely and made excellent progress manufacturing benches, enhanced by a laser cutter. Opportunities to consolidate learning are lost because homework is not set consistently.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is effectively adapted to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. For example, in the speech and language resourced classes, the focus on speaking and listening enables pupils with speech and language difficulties to achieve well. There is a good balance between teaching key skills such as literacy and numeracy and creative subjects such as art and dance. The curriculum is delivered effectively through a topic-based approach in the primary department. Although there is a very good programme of outdoor education, the delivery of physical education has been restricted by the school's inability to appoint a specialist teacher. Pupils benefit from strong links with mainstream schools. Good use is made of the local community and pupils particularly enjoy the very well planned residential trips.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Mowbray is an extremely caring school where every pupil is valued and nurtured. All procedures for child protection, the safe recruitment of staff, health, safety and risk assessment are in place. There are strong systems to track pupils' progress and respond to any underachievement. Strategies, including the use of detailed behaviour plans, are effective in promoting good behaviour. Pupils are involved well in setting and reviewing their targets and teachers refer to the targets often in lessons. Strong links with parents, outside agencies and therapists support pupils very well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He has been extremely effective in ensuring that the school continues to develop and improve despite the uncertainties resulting from the local authority's review of special educational provision. Although it is still large, the leadership team has been reduced and restructured so that leaders' responsibilities more closely match the needs of the school. Monitoring and evaluation has improved well since the last inspection. In particular, the school is making much better use of data to track pupils' progress and to take action to address any underachievement. However, the involvement of all members of the leadership team in school evaluation is under developed. The curriculum is now properly monitored and there are strong systems in place to monitor and improve teaching. The school has a good capacity to improve further. Financial planning is good and the school provides good value for money. There is a good range of expertise within the governing body. The evaluation and framework for governance which the governors have produced forms a strong basis for supporting and challenging the school.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about the things you are doing. It was very useful to know what you think about your school.

There are some things that are really good about your school. These include:

- the excellent relationships you have with teachers which make you want to learn
- the very good individual support you are given in lessons which enables you to make good progress with your work
- the fun activities which you enjoy such as outdoor education and residential.

All of this is possible because your headteacher does his best to make the school as good as he can for you.

I have asked your teachers to improve two things to make your school even better. These are:

- to ensure that all the senior teachers make really good use of the information which is collected to show how well the pupils and the school is doing
- to make sure you are set homework regularly so that you can practise the skills you learn at school when you get home.

I hope you carry on enjoying what you are doing and continue to help your teachers all you can.