

Hob Moor Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133609
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	316166
Inspection dates	9–10 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Joe Peacock

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nick Smart
Headteacher	Mr R Jarvis
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Green Lane Acomb York North Yorkshire YO24 4PS
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school is in a former traditional village that still retains its identity. Most of the housing is owned by the local authority. The school opened in a new privately funded building in May 2006 which it shares with a primary special school and Hob Moor Children's Centre. The number on roll has increased rapidly with many additional new pupils starting this term. Boys outnumber the girls by a significant margin in some classes. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' standards and achievement at Key Stage 1, standards in science at Key Stage 2 and pupils' personal development and well-being.

Inspectors agree with some of the school's positive views of itself but its overall effectiveness is being badly affected by poor attendance and pupils' challenging behaviour. The management of pupils' behaviour is inconsistent throughout the school. In some instances it is not strong enough and as a result incidents of very poor and unacceptable behaviour arise. There are a high proportion of boys in some classes. Too often a significant number of them quickly lose interest in their lessons and their inattention becomes a distraction for other pupils and interrupts the flow of learning. The school has had other barriers to learning to overcome since moving into the impressive new school building. It has been well supported by local authority consultants and advisers for the past two years, working together with the experienced headteacher and senior staff to tackle issues with determination. 'Life is consistently challenging here' is an apt quote from school staff as they cope with many new pupils starting at the school. A high proportion of these pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision for these pupils in school is a strength and results in most making good progress. However, parents are not routinely involved in their children's learning, particularly in evaluating progress made or setting new targets. Opportunities to involve parents more in their children's learning is recognised by the school as an area in which it could do better.

Parents returned very few pre-inspection questionnaires. Of these, a high proportion raised concerns about bullying and pupils' behaviour. One parent commented: 'A minority are letting the school down.' Nevertheless, overall, this is a friendly and welcoming school.

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and here the consistently good quality of teaching ensures that most enjoy school and make good progress. Throughout the rest of the school the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but inconsistent in enabling all pupils to make the progress they are capable of. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning for literacy and numeracy, for example, are helping to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards to a broadly average level in English and mathematics by Year 6. This is not the case in science or at Key Stage 1 where pupils' progress is inadequate. Standards in Year 2 reading and writing and in science in Year 6 are significantly below average. Pupils have big gaps in their knowledge and understanding, as shown by the school's national test results. Although there has been slow improvement in Year 6 results, overall attainment remains significantly below average.

There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection, particularly with regard to pupils' attendance. Moreover, incidents of challenging behaviour are now more widespread than just in Years 5 and 6, as reported previously. However, in the fairly short time since the school moved into the new premises, the headteacher has created a good team spirit among staff. The correct priorities for improvement have been identified but overall the pace of change has not been fast enough. Staff are beginning to tackle with determination the low standards and areas of significant underachievement across the school. Involvement in an intensive

support programme with the local authority is bringing a sharper focus to raising standards. There are clear signs that collective efforts, particularly in improving standards and pupils' progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2, are beginning to pay off and demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. One governor commented: 'We can see a difference but know that there is still much to do.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision is good. Children enter Nursery with levels that are generally below those expected for their age, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy skills. A wide range of exciting creative and physical opportunities enhance children's basic skills and personal development. Staff understand the needs of young children well and plan lively activities which stimulate their curiosity and desire to learn. The excellent communal outdoor play area, used by the adjoining special school, is an asset providing an exciting range of shared learning opportunities. The quality of teaching and learning is good and results in most children making good progress. By the end of Reception, children reach the levels broadly expected of them for their age. Established systems assess children's development carefully, and this information is used effectively to challenge and support their individual needs, ensuring that the least able and most vulnerable children settle in quickly and do well. Children work and play happily together, follow school routines sensibly and enjoy the opportunity to participate in joint activities. They enjoy their time in school. Relationships are strong.

Parents are welcomed into the Foundation Stage. However, opportunities are missed to engage parents in their children's education, for example to involve them in the newly implemented initiatives to improve children's communication, language and literacy skills. Overall, the Foundation Stage is managed well and there is smooth transition between Nursery and Reception. The transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It has been identified by the school as a priority and is presently being addressed to ensure continuity in children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards and achievement by Year 2, and also raise standards in science by Year 6.
- Improve pupils' attendance and behaviour, in particular the behaviour of boys, in order to improve the overall quality of learning.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school.
- Increase the level of parental involvement in children's learning and in the life of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils join Year 1 with standards that are broadly as expected. Although standards and achievement are improving, particularly in English by Year 6, pupils are still underachieving in science and in Key Stage 1. In the 2007 tests at the end of Year 6, the strong focus on mathematics has helped bring standards closer to the national expectations and similar to those in English. Boys and higher-attaining pupils in particular do not do well enough by the end of Year 2, with standards overall being significantly below average. Writing is a particular weakness. Standards for the current Year 6 pupils are broadly as expected in English and mathematics

but they remain significantly below expectations in science, showing little improvement in this subject for the past three years. Assessment information indicates that pupils now make satisfactory progress from Year 3 to Year 6 in English and mathematics but inadequate progress in science.

Standards in reading are improving throughout the school due to the strong emphasis on reading skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they benefit from individual attention, both in the classroom and in small groups taught by skilled teaching assistants away from other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 4

Overall, pupil's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is inadequate. Attendance is unsatisfactory and well below average. The school has not tackled this issue successfully since the previous inspection. Not enough has been done to raise the profile of regular attendance and punctuality to lessons.

Behaviour is inadequate. Pupils and parents expressed concerns over issues of bullying and disruptive behaviour. Despite this, pupils say they feel safe in school, appreciate their friends and generally get on well with each other. There is, however, too much distracting behaviour in too many lessons, which slows the pace of learning. Lunchtime supervisors indicate an increase in the number of detentions they have to refer because of playground incidents. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards those pupils in the partner special school are not an issue and they are praised for the support, friendship and care that they bring to these relationships.

Assemblies make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal development through reflection on social and emotional aspects of learning. Pupils respond well to cultural initiatives such as the European language development day. They especially enjoyed a community art project which celebrated Ramayana. Pupils are keen to participate in community events, for instance singing to raise funds for charities such as Mencap. They know why they need to eat healthy foods, and understand the importance of exercise and how it will improve their learning. There is an improving development of skills for their future economic well-being as standards in literacy and numeracy rise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The constant struggle faced by even the most experienced teachers in controlling pupils' behaviour in lessons detracts from the quality of learning in some classes more than others. Despite this, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In some year groups such as Years 5 and 6 and the Foundation Stage, teaching is good, and on occasions outstanding. Pupils in a Year 5/6 class thoroughly enjoyed an outstanding drama session in the hall, for example. Where it is less effective, it results in underachievement. Recent efforts to improve the quality of teaching are starting to improve the quality of pupils' learning. Lessons still vary in quality. There are lessons that do not challenge pupils' thinking sufficiently and do not move pupils on quickly enough. Pupils' learning is also held back by frequent interruptions to maintain discipline or concentration, especially involving boys. Teachers and well trained support staff work together closely in their efforts to meet the varying needs of the pupils. Teachers

are clear about what they want pupils to learn but some do not have high enough expectations of their pupils: some of the tasks set lack challenge and fail to engage pupils. Even with the continuing support of the local authority consultants and advisers, some teaching is not effective enough to enable pupils to make the progress they are capable of or to catch up on lost ground.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Improvements to planning the curriculum within newly developed strategies are beginning to impact successfully on pupils' learning, especially in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 2. The curriculum for science does not promote good enough standards or achievement. The closer links between the different subjects when planning learning are helping to engage the interest of many pupils. However, maintaining the interest of boys during lessons is a concern, and teachers, with their support staff, work hard to ensure that topics are of interest to boys in particular. The school has introduced the teaching of French at Key Stage 2, and pupils' enjoyment of the subject is clear. They especially like working with teachers from the local secondary school.

A good range of well attended extra-curricular activities broadens opportunities for pupils. Art displays are of very high quality and pupils actively participate in the production of fabric wall hangings, sculptures, fine drawings and paintings. A number of pupils take the opportunity to extend their musical abilities through individual instrument lessons in addition to group recorder lessons and the school choir. Older pupils in particular enjoy their increased access to outdoor games. Work in personal, social and health education helps pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities in the community and there are strong connections with the adjoining special school which actively promote inclusion. However, there is more to be done in promoting pupils' social skills and developing self-discipline, particularly in lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. A significant number of parents have concerns with regard to behaviour in the school. Although staff know the pupils well and always have their best interests at heart, the amount of time they devote to behaviour management detracts from other aspects of care and guidance. Despite this, pupils know who to talk to if they have concerns. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are in place and meet requirements. Procedures to promote good attendance are not proving successful at present. The school has identified those who are absent the most and is trying to encourage their better attendance. It is too soon to see the impact of this.

The school has good systems in place to assess pupils' attainment and to track their progress. However, assessment is not always used effectively enough by teachers on a daily basis to plan their lessons. As a result, there is often a lack of challenge for potentially higher-achieving pupils which limit their progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and have clear, well monitored targets. Parents are not always sufficiently aware of their children's targets and this limits their involvement in improving their learning. Nevertheless, there is a well constructed programme of support which enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's track record of poor performance and underachievement over several years is being addressed with urgency. Involvement in an intensive support programme with advice readily available from local authority consultants and advisers is successfully bringing about improvement. As a result, pupils' achievement is now much higher in English and mathematics by Year 6 but is still not as good as it should be by Year 2. This means that the school provides unsatisfactory value for money. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, supported well by senior staff, is beginning to turn things around. Together with the excellent support from the local authority personnel, the school is currently able to demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to improve. The school runs smoothly and some parents appreciate this. There is an increasing sense of unity and teamwork among staff. The role of middle managers is being developed quickly, with those for literacy and numeracy using their management skills most effectively to raise standards. The school has an ambitious plan for improvement but with perhaps too many priorities to be realistically tackled this academic year. Governors are very supportive but their role in monitoring the effectiveness of the school is underdeveloped.

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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	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	4
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	4
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

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

Thank you for talking to the inspectors and for being so friendly and helpful. We really enjoyed seeing your wonderful new school building and the excellent artwork on display around the school and in your classrooms.

We think, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools agrees, that your school is not doing very well in some things at present and needs significant improvement in several areas to make it successful. Another inspector will visit you again in about six to eight months' time to see if things are improving.

We were pleased to see how well children in Nursery and Reception are doing and how hard all of you have been working to improve your reading, writing and mathematics by the time you are in Year 6. This is a good start but we hope that you will now concentrate on improving how well you do in science. We also want you to do much better in all your work by the time you leave Year 2.

We were disappointed to see how much time some of you are away from school. You miss so much when you are absent. It was also sad to see some children, behaving in a poor way and not concentrating enough in lessons. We hope that your teachers will do even more to make sure all lessons are interesting and give you work that makes you think really hard to help you all do as well as you can. We are sure you will enjoy the challenge. Your headteacher, governors and staff are all working together and have their own programme firmly in place to make school more interesting and enjoyable for all of you. They are right to concentrate on improving your reading, writing and mathematics. We hope that they can also encourage your parents to help much more and that all the governors will visit school often to find things that can be further improved.

Thank you again for helping us with this inspection. We really liked the way you make friends with and look after the pupils from the special school. I hope that you will carry on enjoying school, and with the staff, try your best to make it better.