

# Moon Hall College - Burys Court

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration	936/6251
Unique Reference Number	125385
Inspection number	332985
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE  
T 08456 404040

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

The school, now owned by Moon Hall Trust, is a charitable foundation housed in an attractive Victorian building in Leigh near to Reigate. It has extensive, secluded grounds of 12 acres and a large swimming pool and gymnasium. The school is presently undergoing an extensive programme of refurbishment.

The school provides places for a total of 98 pupils between the ages of 3 and 16. It makes specialist provision for pupils between the ages of 5 and 16 who are identified as having dyslexia. Five pupils have statements of special educational need and 52 are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This amounts to almost half the pupils at the school. Fifteen children are receiving local authority funding and currently there are no looked after children. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The aim of the trustees is to develop a school in which dyslexic children can flourish alongside mainstream peers and acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills as quickly as possible. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2009.

## Evaluation of the school

This is a good school. It broadly achieves its aims of providing a secure base for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and ensures most pupils have received a good quality of education by the time they leave at sixteen. However, there is still a lack of clarity about how the school might see its future development, status and role whether as a special school or as a mainstream school with specialism in dyslexia.

Pupils behave well and members of staff ensure that all pupils receive a rich and diverse education in relation to their range of ages and abilities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good and provides pupils with a good insight into the different cultures and heritages of multicultural Britain. As a result, most pupils are well prepared for their futures, make good progress and gain entrance to future schools from the age of eleven years or to college at 16.

The school has addressed most of the weaknesses raised by the last report. It has addressed the aspects of welfare, health and safety, has begun a programme of repair and maintenance to the premises and accommodation and now provides pupils with appropriate careers guidance. Information provided to parents is now good in most respects although the school still does not provide enough information

about pupils attainment compared to national norms. It now has in place a three year plan to improve accessibility of the premises.

## Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. There are suitable policies, plans and schemes of work which broadly follow the National Curriculum. Pupils are prepared well for common entrance at eleven years of age and the older pupils in Key Stage 4 follow a course leading to GCSE. Specialist teachers provide lessons in French, art, drama, dance, physical education (PE) and music; all of which have a high profile in the school. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Most pupils have individual learning programmes (IEPs) and some have regular one to one teaching which enables them to catch up with missed work and make good progress in their studies of key skills.

Basic skills are taught well, and the information and communication technology curriculum (ICT) has a high profile in the school. ICT skills are taught in a dedicated computer room and pupils have access to work stations around the school. The ICT work is closely related to on-going topics they are studying in other subjects. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements here. Art work is of high quality and many pupils play a musical instrument. Pupils are well prepared for their future choices of school whether they leave at the age of eleven or at 16. Personal, social, and health education is good and there are many enrichment activities and after school clubs. Pupils learn useful life skills such as how to lay tables and clear and take on responsibilities for house or form captains as well as represent their friends on the school council.

The quality of the teaching is good and pupils generally make good progress from their starting points. Teachers know the pupils well and individually so that they can plan tasks that suit their individual needs. This works well for pupils that need additional support in learning but not so well for the average and above average pupils. Nevertheless, many pupils at the school are thriving because of the care and attention given to them and the focus members of staff have on ensuring their needs are met well. Pupils are happy in the school and many have a higher self-esteem than when they arrived at the school. Teachers know the pupils well and ensure their individual needs are taken into account when lessons are planned and groups organised. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of their subjects and prepare well for lessons using resources where appropriate to support pupils' learning needs. These are used well by the teachers to enhance the learning and make it fun. Pupils' behaviour is good and the relationships staff have developed with pupils ensure that pupils have good attitudes to learning.

The school uses some public examinations, standardised testing for reading, writing and spelling and numeracy, and entry tests for future school to assess pupils' achievements at different times of schooling. However, this has not been developed into a framework that enables teachers to assess the progress pupils make while at

school. Consequently, teachers are unclear whether they are planning work that is sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils in the school, even though it is confident that it supports those that have learning difficulties and/or disabilities well. This is because the school is unclear at this stage of its development whether it wants to focus on supporting more pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities or whether it wants to develop as a mainstream school with specialist facilities. There is currently no consistent use of the assessment data in the school which enables staff to adequately assess and gauge how well mainstream pupils are doing against national expectations and over time.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

This area of pupils' development is good. Pupils enjoy their education and this builds confidence and helps develop their self-esteem. Behaviour is good and generally pupils are eager to complete their work and enjoy the responsibility and independent aspects of this. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and assemblies, circle time and form sessions all reinforce and develop their understanding in this respect. The school has a positive sense of community and pupils report there is little bullying. However, both age groups say that they would like to be separated more when playing outside, with the older pupils feeling they could be given more trust and freedom in the grounds. Personal skills are well developed and at lunch time all children eat a hot lunch which is served to them in a formal and social setting in the school dining room. The older and younger pupils eat separately which prevents the older ones from gaining confidence in looking after the younger pupils. All pupils gain an understanding of our diverse society through the study of different cultures, religions and research in cross-curricular activities and assemblies

Pupils have excellent discussion skills. They demonstrate good social skills and the older children experience a range of work experience opportunities; the local Connexions service now provides a regular careers input into the school. Attendance is good and while it is average for the younger pupils it is above average for the older ones. Many students live some distance from the school but manage to arrive promptly.

Pupils relate to each other and staff well. The pupils feel part of the school through opportunities to express their views through the school council. They say that teachers respond to their views even though it seems to take a long time to action their ideas. They have a strong sense of community responsibility and have undertaken visits to the House of Commons. Visits by a range of community leaders and local politicians have supported the school in this aspect of pupils' development. Since the last inspection the school has developed a 'life skills' course and suitable careers guidance opportunities for the older students.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is good and pupils feel well cared for. The school provides delicious, healthy school lunches, cooked daily by a qualified chef who sources fresh food locally. Fruit and water is provided should pupils want it. Pupils are encouraged to be physically active at break times and the school policy on healthy lifestyles is cross-curricular. This view was confirmed by the children who stated they knew about healthy living through various subjects. They understand about drugs and smoking issues. PE is very important to the children who say that they really enjoy their games lessons, but also the range of extra curricular sports such as Karate, dance, and trampoline that help them to stay fit.

All safeguarding and welfare requirements are robust and employment regulations are followed. Risk assessment and fire safety regulations are carried out regularly. Pupils are encouraged to adopt safe practices in rooms such as the science laboratory and in design and technology. Pupils explained that staff ensured they are safe by securing all doors and patrolling the grounds during breaks or other times they are outside. They were familiar with fire and other emergency evacuation procedures and are able to explain a number of ways they stay safe if they are on school premises. They understand the need for and implementation of rules such as, why they can climb some trees in school grounds but not others. The medical provision of the school is good with a number of relevant first aid trained staff in key roles within the school.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has established suitable procedures for ensuring that, prior to taking up their responsibilities, all teaching, non-teaching staff, volunteers, and the proprietorial body are checked for their suitability to work with children and young people.

## School's premises and accommodation

There are extensive grounds and a very secluded, safe environment around the buildings but there is no hard area on which the children can play when the grass areas are unsuitable. There is no facility to separate the older and younger children during break times outside. The school has plans to redevelop the gymnasium and with it the changing rooms. The disabilities access is limited to parts of the ground floor area via ramps, although no classrooms are located on the ground floor. The school has a plan to try to improve this.

Accommodation is generally suitable and maintained sufficiently for the needs of the children and staff, although because there are no classrooms on the ground floor access to the outside for the reception age children is limited. The nursery provision is good although there are issues relating to loose paving slabs at one of the access points. The school has not fully considered whether the needs of both the nursery

and reception children and those in Year 1 might be better met elsewhere in the school.

The school has a long term commitment to the repair and on-going maintenance and decoration of the school and recognises that there is a need for work in the upstairs library area and some classrooms. The pupils raised the issue of the changing facilities, which whilst acceptable do not provide a pleasant environment in which to change. This is especially so for the older pupils of both sexes who complained about having to change with younger children. The school is aware of this problem and has a plan to address this.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

Information to parents is detailed and can be accessed through the school web site or prospectus. Most of the relevant information is available and parents are made aware of the complaints procedures and other documentation as required. The school provides parents with information regarding their individual child's progress and standards, but a few parents commented that they did not now how well their children were doing. The school currently does not comply with providing information of the school's progress against national expectations. There are at least termly meetings with parents regarding pupil progress and parents can have more regular contact if they want. The school does not currently provide all the appropriate information about pupils with statement of special needs to the placing authorities.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has full procedures in place for dealing with complaints. These are available on request. A few parents said they did not know about the procedures but these are explained fully on the web site and in the prospectus.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. It is good for the nursery children, and half of the reception children, where they are provided with all the areas of learning in an inviting and well resourced environment which allows them to make their own choices about what and how they learn through play. The provision for the reception age children is satisfactory overall. This is because the three older reception children currently share an upstairs classroom and although teaching allows for their different maturity levels it does not give them the opportunity to make choices about whether they want to work outside.

Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and all achieve at least in line with expectations for their age. Some achieve better than this. Teaching is good and knowledgeable about Early Years Foundation Stage, in the nursery, where the curriculum is relevant and appropriate for the age of the children. However, the curriculum is too formal for the reception age children because their access to the

outside is limited and the classroom is small and unable to incorporate all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactorily managed by the nursery teacher who liaises with the teacher with the Reception group. Teaching assistants work closely in both classes and pupils are well supported in their learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage profile is used to assess children's development as an on-going set of records. However, systems for passing on this profile are not efficiently managed as some teachers are not sure about their existence or how to interpret them and use them for future planning. This means that assessment information is not used sufficiently well to plan tasks which are fully challenging for all pupils particularly those that are more able.

Currently the accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage is unsuitable for the needs of all the pupils. The nursery and younger reception children are housed in building which is separate from the main school. It is purpose built and has access to outside areas. The older reception children are taught alongside Year 1 in an upstairs room which has no immediate access to the outside facilities. Both classrooms are appropriately resourced with equipment suitable for the age profile.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations"), with the exception of those listed below:

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- establish a framework to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and gain information from such assessment to assess pupils against national norms and to plan teaching so that it matches pupils ability more closely (paragraph 1(3)(g) and 1(4)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide appropriate size classes to allow for effective teaching of the age and number of the youngest children in the school (paragraph 5(j))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:



- provide particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations, termly tests and assessment (paragraph 6(2)(i))
- provide an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of pupils in receipt of local authority funding (paragraph 6(7))

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that all children currently in nursery and reception years have full and complete access to outside learning areas at all times

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that the paving slabs currently situated between the classroom and the secure outside area are level.

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- develop a strategic plan which states more clearly what the school's priorities and aims are and sets out its view for further development based on these principles.

## EYFS

- develop an Early Years Foundation Stage plan which is inclusive for children in the nursery and reception years. In particular consider how the school can provide access to suitable and safe space outside and the equality of opportunity for all children to work in this space when they choose to.
- develop staff expertise and opportunities by working more closely together to make better use of the Early Years Foundation Stage profile and to improve the provision overall.

## Inspection Judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		✓		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		✓		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?			✓	
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?			✓	
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?			✓	
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?			✓	

## School details

Name of school	Moon Hall College - Burys Court		
DCSF number	936/6251		
Unique reference number	125385		
Type of school	Day school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	2005		
Age range of pupils	3–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 60	Girls: 23	Total: 83
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 8	Girls: 7	Total: 15
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 3	Girls: 2	Total: 5
Annual fees (day pupils)	£11550		
Address of school	Leigh Reigate Surrey RH2 8RE		
Telephone number	01306 611372		
Fax number	01306 611037		
Email address	bakerb@buryscourtschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs B Baker		
Proprietor	Moon Hall School Education Trust		
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI		
Dates of inspection	3–4 March 2009		