

# Beaumont Hill School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114348
<b>Local Authority</b>	Darlington
<b>Inspection number</b>	338344
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Brian Blake HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	23
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr James O'Neill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dame Dela Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Salters Lane South Darlington County Durham DL1 2AN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 254000
<b>Fax number</b>	01325 254222
<b>Email address</b>	admin@educationvillage.org.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	2–19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	338344

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 17 part lessons, which involved a total of 14 teachers. A range of documents was scrutinised and meetings held with members of the senior leadership team, a member of the governing body, nominated staff, and a group of students. Other informal discussions were held with staff and a significant number of students during lessons and around the school. Inspectors also read the 53 inspection questionnaires returned by parents and carers, in addition to considering the views of those staff and students who completed separate questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress profiles for pupils throughout the school
- the effectiveness of transitional arrangements
- the improvements since the previous inspection
- the effectiveness and impact of federation leadership and management on student outcomes and quality of provision at Beaumont Hill School.

## Information about the school

Beaumont Hill School caters for children who present a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including some with complex learning needs, others who have an autistic spectrum disorder, and others with identified behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All students on roll have a statement of special educational needs. A large majority of students is of White British heritage. The school has specialist status in technology, applied learning, training for special educational needs, and is a designated a leading edge school. It is part of the Darlington Education Village, within which the school is federated with a primary school and secondary school on the same site. The school holds a number of national and local awards, including the Healthy School Award, ArtsMark Gold, Inclusive Village award, Comenius and a National Autistic Society award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Beaumont Hill School provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. A number of the pupils start at the school with low and very low standards because of their personal difficulties, which has adversely affected their regular attendance at school. For many other pupils in the school, their complex learning needs mean that they are also starting from a very low base line in terms of the skills, attributes and personal qualities expected for their age. However, over the course of their time at the school, the overwhelming majority make good progress in their learning, achieving well relative to their capabilities. The progress for those pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties applies, in particular, to improved attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning, including the personal attitudes shown towards staff and other pupils in the school. The extent to which the pupils' personal attributes improve is impressive and owes much to the focused work of staff at the school and the quality of provision across all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and some are very skilful at combining the academic, personal, social, emotional and physical needs of every pupil in their lessons. Some planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is occasionally overly demanding, expecting too many assessment areas to be observed in lessons, which detracts from the teacher's ability to assess accurately all target outcomes. Teachers and other adults have excellent relationships with the pupils and provide support and care with great sensitivity. The combination of these factors leads to high levels of enjoyment and outstanding behaviour. The outstanding curriculum is varied and matched very well to the needs of the pupils. Good use is made of the school's various specialisms and each makes a significant contribution to the enjoyment and progress of the pupils.

The school has a very effective, combined senior leadership team from the three federated schools that make up Darlington Education Village, which is helping the school to make informed choices about future improvements. The school receives good support from governors and external partners, which helps it to know accurately what has been achieved and where it needs to make improvements. Evaluation and monitoring of provision is robust, especially in the assessment of the quality of teaching and learning. Overall, the school has an excellent track record of tackling weaknesses and seeking improvement and it spends wisely to ensure that it achieves the best possible value for money. Accordingly, its capacity to improve is outstanding.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review and evaluate the lesson planning for the Early Years Foundation Stage in

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

order to streamline it for more effective use by teachers.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils make good progress overall in their learning. Pupils acquire a good range of knowledge and skills across all areas of learning and particularly in aspects related to the development of their key literacy, numeracy and communication skills. As a result, the pupils are well prepared for each new stage of their education. Pupils enjoy their learning, which not only contributes significantly to their good progress, but also makes a positive difference to their attitudes to staff and other pupils and, for a targeted number, to their improved attendance at school. The school makes good use of its pupil performance data to set realistic and challenging targets for future learning, both academically and in areas of personal development. The accuracy of these data is helping the pupils to make good progress in their learning. The vast majority of pupils show good levels of concentration in lessons and are attentive in class. They are generally keen to respond to teachers' questions and are able to show independence in some aspects of their learning.

Pupils feel safe and secure in school and know that they are supported well by all the adults with whom they work. Behaviour is outstanding and, for some pupils, this reflects excellent progress because of their prior difficulties at school. Older pupils show an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and the youngest pupils are establishing routines which will support their health and well-being in the future. The school is very responsive to any health issues that have been identified in individual pupils.

The pupils contribute well to the school community and this is particularly so with the sixth-form social enterprise. The school council are proud of the role they play in school. The number of persistent absentees has risen since the previous inspection and is currently above the national average, although attendance overall is broadly average. The extent to which the pupils develop their workplace skills is good because they understand the importance of qualifications and how the learning of key English and mathematics skills contributes to future work prospects.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and culture development is outstanding. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and show good social skills when working in lessons. Activities such as the 'forest school' and 'African week' contribute to pupils' appreciation and greater understanding of life outside of school, particularly on the lives of people from other cultures, faiths and ethnic backgrounds.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

---

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Staff are excellent role models for their pupils, which ensures that, in all lessons, they show a sensitivity and appreciation of the pupils' varying emotional, social and behavioural needs. This positive approach to working with the pupils helps to maintain good quality classroom control and creates a positive work ethic for the overwhelming majority of the pupils. Teachers, skilfully, use different learning resources to consolidate and enhance the pupils' learning. The school makes good use of the range of teacher expertise available within the federation of three schools. As a result, pupils' progress in lessons is good and, for those in the sixth form, it is, more often, outstanding. The focused support of classroom teaching assistants makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Teachers' planning is very thorough and detailed. In the best examples seen by inspectors, lesson plans included a range of information about the varied learning and personal needs of the pupils, which is used very skilfully by the teachers to target pupils' learning in ways that take account of how the pupils can make the best possible progress, relative to their capabilities. Teachers, readily, use praise to help motivate and engage the pupils in their work. This has the beneficial effect of encouraging the pupils to respond positively in question and answer sessions, which is helping to develop their self-esteem, personal confidence and attitudes to learning. There is regular and ongoing assessment of pupils' progress, which is making a positive contribution to their achievement in school.

The curricular provision is well organised and makes excellent use of the extended learning opportunities within the federation of schools. The cross-curricular promotion and application of key literacy, numeracy, communication and technology skills is very

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

effective. Time allocations for the different areas of learning are good and the school's effective use of external partnership links is helping the pupils to learn away from the school and add to their enjoyment of learning. There is a very good range of accredited courses available at Key Stage 4 and post-16, which takes account of the developing personal needs and interests of the pupils. The range and take-up of additional activities is excellent, particularly physical activities, and is much enjoyed by the pupils.

School staff provide a sensitive and welcoming learning environment characterised by excellent relationships and support, which is focused on the identified needs of every pupil. The very detailed knowledge that the staff have about each pupil is used very effectively to guide and motivate the pupils to achieve the very best that they can in all areas of their lives at school. The transitional arrangements as the pupils move from the Early Years Foundation Stage through the school and, for some, into the post-16 provision are excellent and ensure continuity and progressive challenge in pupils' learning and personal development. The school works very well with external agencies and partners to provide targeted support to pupils to help them to tackle and overcome any difficulties they may have that affect their progress in school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The quality of leadership and management is good; some aspects of this work are outstanding. Senior leaders have a well-thought-out rationale and clear ambition to develop the integration of the three schools within the federation so that the quality of provision for all pupils' learning is extended to embrace all that the three schools can offer. Senior leaders have a systematic and methodical approach to monitoring teaching and, where issues are raised, effective action is taken to make the necessary improvements. Good-quality mentoring of new teachers, by partnering them with experienced colleagues, is working well. The effectiveness with which the governing body challenges and supports the school provides senior leaders with good quality progress updates about the provision within and across the federation, including Beaumont Hill School. Governor expertise is generally good and has been enhanced by the recent recruitment of a link SEN governor, who is headteacher of a special school in a neighbouring authority. Financial procedures are well managed and they are closely monitored by the governing body.

The school takes effective action to engage with parents and carers on a regular basis,

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

which helps to foster and develop positive links and involves them actively in their children's learning. The school also works extremely well with external partners to enhance provision for the pupils. For example, the staff work alongside colleagues from other similar schools in the region and with visiting specialists from different fields of education.

The integrated nature of Beaumont Hill pupils working with other pupils from within the federation of schools makes a positive contribution to their progress. Successful inclusion is also achieved through the use of external accreditation, through which the pupils are encouraged to gain recognised national awards.

The school is a highly cohesive community, which is based on an ethos of independence, care and guidance. As a result, pupils have an excellent sense of belonging and are proud to be part of the federation community. School-based initiatives, which use themes from local, national and international contexts, provide excellent opportunities for the pupils to understand where they fit in to the wider community outside of school. The school is very robust in the way it tackles discrimination and promotes equality.

The school has good safeguarding procedures in place. The single central record complies fully with all requirements. Risk assessments for the use of the school building, and in meeting statutory health and safety requirements for activities taught are very good.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The provision varies according to need, with an appropriate learning environment for the children. All areas of learning are taught, with the school developing its outdoor provision to meet more accurately the specific needs of those children with complex learning requirements. Overall, progress is good and the children are learning to follow routines and pathways through focused learning activities, including structured play. Planning for the children's learning varies in quality and, although always at least satisfactory, it is not always focused sufficiently well on a reasonable number of expected learning outcomes that can be assessed by the staff. All statutory welfare regulations are met. The children enjoy their learning and their progress is monitored closely through regular assessments that link to intended outcomes identified in planning. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, with provision monitored closely. There are good working relationships between staff and children, which contribute positively to good quality care and support. Priorities for improvement have been established and all staff share a common sense of purpose in trying to achieve these.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is outstanding. The learning environment is vibrant and inclusive and promotes an ethos of independence through active participation in learning. This is a result of outstanding leadership and management, which assures high quality teaching. The students respond very positively to this teaching, which results in them making outstanding progress overall and enjoying what they do. Staff are motivated to improve the quality of provision continually because they, collectively, share and agree on how the students' learning can be improved. For example, a new accreditation in art was introduced because staff saw the need to bring an additional learning challenge to some of the more-able students. The students present a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, but they are encouraged to participate equally in all learning activities by dedicated support staff, which they do enthusiastically. Behaviour is outstanding, which enables the students to develop into polite, confident and caring young people, who help each other. The curriculum emphasises independence and personal development, which gives the students the opportunity to be included and to feel valued around the Educational

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Village. The catering company run by students is an excellent example of them experiencing real-life situations and developing work-based skills, such as budgeting and decision making. Students are given a very high level of care, guidance and support by staff who are sensitive to their needs.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very positive about the quality of education provided for their children. A very small number took the opportunity to write some additional comments on the questionnaire, all of which praised the school and its staff for the quality of support and care provided, and the ongoing benefit that this was having for their children.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Beaumont Hill School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 215 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	66	14	26	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	58	21	40	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	58	20	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	53	20	38	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	58	19	36	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	53	19	36	4	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	47	24	45	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	49	23	43	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	58	18	34	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	47	23	43	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	53	21	40	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	29	55	18	34	3	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	58	17	32	2	4	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



08 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Beaumont Hill School, Darlington, DL1 2AN

You will know that I visited Beaumont Hill School recently, with two colleagues, to find out how well you are doing at school. The inspectors, thoroughly, enjoyed their two days, particularly when we watched you and your teachers in lessons and chatted to as many of you as possible about your work or what you liked about being at the school. We also enjoyed reading the responses from those of you and your parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire. Thank you for this.

I should like to briefly tell you about of the important things we saw in school. These include:

- The school provides you with an outstanding quality of education.
- You make good progress overall during your time at school and for some pupils, especially in the sixth form, this is outstanding.
- Your behaviour is outstanding.
- You said you feel safe in school.
- There are some very good activities in school that help you to make progress and enjoy your learning.
- The staff provide you with outstanding care, guidance and support throughout your time in school.
- Teaching is good and, although the teachers plan what they do in lessons very thoroughly, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, I feel that this could be streamlined to make it more manageable and helpful to the teachers.
- The principal, teachers, governors and support staff are working hard to help the school improve further. They know what they want to achieve and you can help them to achieve this by continuing to work hard and to attend school regularly.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Blake

Her Majesty's Inspector

On behalf of the inspection team

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**