

Yeoman Park School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122952
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	340240
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	21
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Bridget Daines
Headteacher	Mr Paul Betts
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons, and held meetings with staff and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at development planning, detailed records of the progress made by individuals, at policies and other documentation including the responses to 32 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well assessment is used to enable each individual to achieve as well as possible
- the impact of middle managers on the drive for continuous improvement
- partnerships with the community and their impact on pupils' preparation for the future.

Information about the school

All Yeoman Park pupils have statements of special educational needs for a range of severe, complex and profound learning difficulties and/or autistic spectrum disorders. A number of pupils also have complex medical needs. The oldest pupils are educated in an adjacent sixth form centre shared with mainstream students. The school draws its pupils from a wide area of north Nottinghamshire, which is predominantly White British. Nearly all pupils are transported to school by the local authority. After-school care is provided and run by the governing body. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a single class covering Nursery and Reception and includes older pupils. The school has a wide range of awards including Quality in Study Support - Established, and Quality in Extended Services - Established. At the time of the inspection, a major outdoor development project was just being completed. The headteacher has been in post at Yeoman Park for 18 years and a few weeks ago, he took on the role of acting executive headteacher of this and another special school in the area.

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

This is an outstanding school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Leaders at all levels have forged ahead with further improvements to refine the learning environment and all-round experience for pupils. The headteacher's clarity of vision and ambition for the school is exceptional. As a result, the staff are united and successful in their mission to provide the highest quality of education for each individual.

The local authority regards the school as a centre of best practice in the area. It has developed some strong partnerships with other providers and shares and demonstrates how best to help its profoundly needy pupils to achieve, in excellent preparation for the next stage of their lives. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They thrive in the warm, supportive, expert care they are given throughout the day, by all adults in the school. They feel exceptionally safe. They clearly love coming to school, take great care to keep themselves and others free from harm and pay attention to their personal care and health to the full extent of their capabilities.

Pupils' cognitive abilities are exceptionally low as a result of their severe and complex needs, yet their achievement is outstanding, from the Early Years Foundation Stage right through to the sixth form. This is because of first-rate and often inspirational teaching, and lessons carefully designed to stimulate pupils' interests and meet their individual needs. Support staff do an excellent job, whether medical, therapeutic, or educational, because they are extremely well briefed and directed. Assessment is used especially well in the classroom. Excellent systems introduced since the last inspection have improved the way pupils' starting points are measured, as well as the minute details of their progress. All pupils have individual targets that are carefully tracked. Progress is efficiently recorded, analysed and used to adjust planning.

The curriculum has many strengths, which are contributing to pupils' learning. In all age groups, pupils experience relevant, meaningful activities. These activities encourage the pupils' understanding, skills, personal development and fun, despite the constant profound challenges to the pupils' learning. Martial arts sessions and Sikh drumming are just two of a variety of popular after-school activities that further enhance pupils' learning experiences and develop their cultural awareness.

The school has made a good start on challenging work to help pupils understand the wider local and national communities, and is assessing the impact of this work. Some local links in the community are very well developed, but not all. For instance, sixth form students share accommodation with mainstream students but links with these other users of the centre are not fully developed, so that some opportunities are missed to enrich students' learning.

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There are several factors that demonstrate the school's excellent value for money and capacity to improve further. The school knows itself in fine detail. The improvements achieved since the last inspection in evaluation and sharpening the assessment processes have been considerable. Other major developments, such as the completion of a new extensive outdoor learning environment, underpin the school's commitment to continuous improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Broaden pupils' understanding of a greater diversity of backgrounds and circumstances within the wider local and national area
- Strengthen the links with the local sixth form provision so that students gain as much as they can from the provision in preparation for the next stage in their lives.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Although pupils' successes are often in very small steps, taking account of individual starting points, their progress is striking. Analysis of pupils' achievements shows there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls, or of different ethnic groups. Equally, pupils who have life-limiting conditions are helped to maintain and further their skills. Pupils show remarkable concentration and determination. They persevere, endeavouring to overcome difficulties. For instance, pupils with significant communication difficulties showed great determination to express their needs orally during an activity involving drawing and writing. Pupils do exceptionally well in their personal development and they develop communication skills to the very best of their ability, whatever the barriers to their learning. As a result of adults' very high expectations and the very strong partnership with parents and carers, pupils are increasingly independent, making strides in managing their personal care and when working as part of a group.

Pupils relish their time in school. From the moment they enter the classroom, they beam and hug themselves with delight and expectation. Pupils' behaviour is admirable. They care about each other and try to give of their best at all times. As a result of very good behaviour plans, pupils with complex behavioural needs are more aware of the consequences of behaviour and respond exceptionally well to the expectations of and role models provided by adults. Through daily routines and an extensive personal development programme, they make excellent gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's Healthy Schools gold award and Sportsmark award are an indication of pupils' understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Pupils contribute in many ways to their school community so that there is a strong and palpably warm and tolerant atmosphere. The pupils are a known and intrinsic part of their immediate local community. Attendance is high, with almost all absences due to illness.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

The staff have a very good understanding of how pupils with severe, profound and complex needs learn, and they have expertise in the best ways of communicating learning in the subjects they teach. Lessons are planned in minute detail, not only for the teacher but for each and every assistant, carer, medical and physical therapist. Resources and activities are carefully matched to individual needs and abilities. For example, in an atmospheric session on poetry for lower-school pupils, pupils 'experienced' travelling through water by means of a water mist sprayed into the air, or exploring fingers undulating water in a paddling pool, while a surrounding video close-up of water rippled across all four walls of the learning space. Support assistants are deployed exceptionally well so that, during group work, every pupil is challenged. An extensive range of assessment methods is used to great effect to record pupils' learning and plan further work. Pupils understand how well they are doing because they have supportive feedback on all their successes and are given much praise, so that their pride in their achievements is a joy to behold.

The school's awards, including Quality in Study and Quality in Extended Services, confirm it provides a curriculum that is fully flexible and extremely well matched to the range of pupils' needs. From the youngest to the oldest, pupils are offered an imaginative and exciting range of learning experiences precisely tailored to their

¹ 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.

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individual needs. After-school activities are provided every day and visits and visitors further enhance learning.

Adults provide exceptional care, support and guidance for all pupils. Highly trained staff provide expert support for the pupils' wide range of medical and physical conditions, allowing all to take a full and happy part in school life. Very strong links have been established with other agencies and professionals. The staff conscientiously carry out programmes devised, for example, by speech and language therapists and physiotherapists. Pupils' personal care is undertaken sensitively.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Robust management systems ensure the smooth running of the school, maintain high-quality teaching, and rigorously check and analyse pupils' progress. The recent deployment of the headteacher as acting executive head of this and another local special school has had no negative effect on the quality of leadership at Yeoman Park, because experienced senior leaders fully promulgate the drive and ambition of the headteacher during his deployment to the second school. Astute planning for development has led to an excellent system of succession planning and training so that middle managers' skills are now considerably enhanced. The school seeks and responds very well to the views of parents and all interested parties. Links beneficial to pupils' social development and educational experience have been developed with other schools and well-established partnerships with the community contribute considerably to pupils' enjoyment, achievement and well-being. At the time of the inspection, procedures to safeguard pupils were outstanding. Leaders and managers are assiduous in their work to make sure the best measures are in place to protect pupils. They ensure that policies are thorough and statutory duties are fully met, and that all school procedures are reviewed regularly. Governors are strongly supportive and their links and understanding of the school have improved since the last inspection. Some aspects of governance are not fully developed or understood by governors, such as the promotion of community cohesion. However, the school community itself is a strongly cohesive body in which all adults work together very successfully to promote equality and celebrate diversity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy an outstanding learning experience in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of expert leadership and management. Although they enter school with exceptionally low levels of cognitive ability, children make excellent progress, measured through specially adapted, local authority approved systems, which are perfectly suited to individual needs. Children make this progress because of highly skilled, committed teaching, a wonderfully vibrant, flexible and well-adapted curriculum that uses resources imaginatively to increase children's understanding, and the same high degree of care that is found throughout the whole school. Usually, the signs of progress are very small but teachers are very skilled in identifying them. In one lesson, for instance, a child's response to reflected light was identified by the teacher as a form of progress in this child's communication skills. The staff team is very well managed and forms a close-knit and fully co-ordinated group. Children's welfare is kept central and all possible aspects of the Early Years framework are incorporated into their daily experience.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Sixth form

Sixth form students make excellent progress and they are very well-prepared for moving on to further forms of education or training. Students follow a range of courses providing opportunities for external accreditation. There is a good emphasis on work-related learning and experience. Community links are well developed and contribute well to securing students' smooth transition into future placements, but the links with the other users of the shared sixth form centre are currently not quite as well developed. All teaching observed was outstanding, stimulating students to work hard and very well matched to individual abilities within each class. All aspects of leadership and management are excellent and contribute fully to students' exceptional learning and progress.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
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

Parents and carers are very strongly supportive of the school, especially its leadership, teaching, the attention given to their children's individual needs and the way the school ensures they are safe and happy. 'A truly outstanding school' was typical of the comments made. Very little dissention was registered at all. Very few parents questioned whether the school prepared their children well enough for the future and inspectors found that the school makes exceptionally good arrangements for this, for instance, in terms of helping pupils to settle into a new class and, as they become older, by arranging for them to experience life in the workplace.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yeoman Park 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 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	84	5	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	81	5	16	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	75	6	19	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	77	5	16	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	88	4	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	63	10	31	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	66	10	31	1	3	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)	20	63	8	25	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	78	7	22	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	66	9	28	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	63	10	31	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	72	9	28	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	81	6	19	0	0	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



10 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yeoman Park School, Mansfield Woodhouse, NG19 8PS

As you may remember, two colleagues and I spent a short time looking at your school recently. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us. We enjoyed talking to some of you and visiting your lessons. It was clear from what you said and from the questionnaire responses from your parents that you enjoy school immensely, and think that you are exceptionally safe and extremely well cared for.

We found that your school is providing you with an outstanding education. As well as working hard, you have a lot of fun at school and the staff care extremely well for all your needs. You are very well behaved and work very hard. This means that though your progress is in small steps, it is excellent, given your starting points. All this happens because you have first-rate leaders and almost all the teaching is the very best it can be.

There are just a couple of things that would make it even better. We have asked your governors and leaders to take steps to help you get to know the way of life children experience in the rest of the country a bit better, and for leaders to help the sixth form students to link a bit more with the others in the sixth form centre. This would help these students to prepare themselves even more for the world outside school.

You can help by continuing to do your best for your teachers. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead Inspector

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