

Moorland Waldorf School

Botton Village, Danby, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO21 2NJ

Inspection dates

4–6 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The college of teachers and trustees has not ensured that all the independent school standards have been met.
- Since the previous inspection the school has gone through a period of change and turbulence. This was reflected in the quality of some documents. For example, previous risk assessments were written but not did not always clearly identify all potential risks. Leaders are aware of this and a new system is being implemented.
- At the time of the inspection members of the college of teachers and trustees had not ensured that all entries in the school's admission register had been completed for last year.
- Outdoor provision, particularly in the early years has too few resources for children to develop the skills of curiosity and imagination.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because not all learning is planned with sufficient care or takes into account pupils' previous learning.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than it should be and is also lower than it was last year.
- Outcomes for pupils are not yet good. The curriculum in the recent past did not give pupils sufficient opportunity to develop science skills.
- Trustees do not offer the college of teachers sufficient support and challenge to bring about further improvements to the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The trustees and college of teachers work closely together and are beginning to bring about improvement.
- Pupils and their parents are very positive about the work of the school. Pupils say that they enjoy attending and feel that staff care about their needs.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that written risk assessments clearly identify all potential risks
 - ensuring that entries in the admission register are completed and include the destination of pupils leaving the school
 - increasing the capacity of trustees to challenge and support senior leaders effectively to bring about further improvement to the school
 - increasing the vigilance with which attendance is monitored by developing a more effective system which enables staff to check patterns of attendance.
- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching, learning and the use of assessment by:
 - ensuring that all staff use knowledge of pupils' previous learning to plan work which accurately matches pupils' needs
 - increase the resources available for outdoor play in order to give pupils and children more opportunities to learn and develop their skills.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The board of trustees and college of teachers has not ensured that all aspects of the independent standards have been met.
- Recent changes in leadership has resulted in a more coherent approach to improvement planning. These changes have led to improvement overall in the way in which the school is led and managed. However, some of the independent school standards are unmet and trustees and the college of teachers recognise that there is more to be done to bring about further improvement.
- At the time of the inspection the trustees and staff had not ensured that the destinations of all a small number of pupils who left the school last year had been recorded in the admissions register. The destinations were known to the school but a clerical error due to a change in administration staff meant that not all were reported on the correct register. This was rectified during the inspection and staff were clear that pupils who left without a destination should be reported to the local authority.
- Risk assessments are completed for a variety of different reasons. For example, in-school risk assessments identify possible hazards and clearly identify actions needed to minimise risk. Risk assessments are also written for trips away from the school, which also clearly identify risks. However, these risk assessments do not always identify all potential risks. Currently school leaders are working on a new pro forma for risk assessments to ensure consistency in the quality of recording potential risks for all trips which includes a bespoke checklist for the range of trips undertaken and ensures consistency from all staff.
- The trustees and college of teachers do not currently have a vision for the future of the school as they plan to close the school in the near future. However, they are currently focused on delivering a flexible education package for pupils who are home schooled. This course of action has been decided upon due to falling numbers of pupils.
- All aspects of the areas of learning required by the independent school standards are incorporated within the curriculum so that pupils experience learning in these areas.
- Since the previous inspection teachers have developed the curriculum further to include opportunities for pupils to learn about the fundamentals of the rule of law. For example, an ex-pupil of the school is due to visit in his capacity as a member of Parliament (MP). Pupils are preparing questions to ask him in order to develop further their knowledge and understanding of democracy.

Governance

- Since the last inspection the board of trustees have gone through a period of change, some of which is described in the monitoring visit reports undertaken by School Inspection Service (SIS). A new chair of trustees has recently been appointed who has both an educational background and experience in the charity sector.
- As a result of these changes the school has reduced the age limit of pupils who can attend from 11 to 9. This has reduced the numbers of pupils in school overall and is in

line with trustees' stated objective to close the school and develop the Moorland Waldorf initiative as a flexible learning centre for home-educated pupils.

- Trustees visit the school regularly. Some have children or grandchildren who attend the school. They offer staff and members of the college of teachers guidance and support. However, they do not yet offer sufficient challenge to staff to improve the school further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safeguarding policy is displayed on the school's website and meets the requirements of current legislation.
- The risk assessment policy gives staff clear guidance on how to measure and evaluate the risks to pupils when undertaking visits away from the school. In the recent past a small number of risk assessments did not follow the policy guidance sufficiently well. Current risk assessments written by members of staff follow the policy guidance consistently. The college of teachers are also revising the pro forma in order that past mistakes are not repeated.
- The college of teachers and trustees are clear about the role they play in ensuring that pupils and children are safe. Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and reflect the requirements of the school overall.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) undertakes her role efficiently and effectively. Records show that safeguarding incidents are followed up diligently and effective action is taken. An example of the effectiveness of systems was clearly seen in a recent safeguarding record which clearly showed that the DSL had persistently followed up a reported issue despite a lack of effective action from other services.
- Staff have all completed recent and relevant training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent and therefore requires improvement to be good.
- Children in the kindergarten are offered some opportunities to play and develop skills particularly inside the classroom. For example, the teacher and volunteers work with children making bread, learning how to shape the dough and cook the bread. However, there are too few opportunities to develop physical skills such as climbing and pedalling, particularly outside the classroom. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Because of the small numbers of pupils, teachers know pupils well. However, they do not always use their understanding of pupils' previous knowledge and skills to plan future learning with sufficient accuracy. For example, in line with much of the Waldorf Steiner curriculum pupils spend time outside. Science learning often takes place away from the classroom during walks across the moors and in visits to a local tarn. However, outdoor learning is not always planned as carefully as it could be and pupils do not make the progress they could.

- Where learning is best, work set for pupils closely matches their needs and they are challenged to improve their skills and knowledge.
- Teachers and support staff, most of whom are volunteers, work closely together to ensure that pupils are supported to learn.
- Pupils receive oral feedback on their work from staff in line with the school's policy and the Waldorf Steiner approach to learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement because staff do not always follow the school's risk assessment policy. Risk assessments written by some staff, particularly in the recent past, have not highlighted all potential identifiable risks.
- Pupils spoken to say that they enjoy coming to school. Parents agree that their children enjoy attending school and learning. Those spoken to commented on how their children had settled quickly and had become confident learners who were now more curious about the world around them.
- Pupils spoken to recognise the different types of bullying but feel that everyone is respected in school and bullying does not happen often.
- Pupils and staff form caring and trusting relationships. As a result, pupils are aware of what to do if they have a concern. A recent safeguarding incident demonstrated this well when pupils showed knowledgeable and mature attitudes by ensuring that they told a member of staff of their concerns.
- The required welfare standards are met in the kindergarten. Staff are aware of the importance of keeping children safe. This is reflected in the high staff-to-children ratios.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is not as good as it should be because the current system for systematically checking pupils' absences is less stringently applied than it could be. While each absence is followed up, the school's rather gentle approach does not always hold parents to account with sufficient rigour.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in the classroom and this is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils were polite and friendly to visitors. They made the inspection team feel particularly welcome at the advent assembly and behaved well outside the classroom.
- Logs kept by school demonstrate that there are very few behavioural incidents and when they do occur they are dealt with effectively.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The progress of pupils requires improvement overall because the quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good. At times, pupils are given structured activities which enable them to build on previous learning. At other times work set is not adjusted to meet pupils' specific needs. This means that pupils' progress is uneven.
- The school has a simple system for tracking pupils' progress over time. Teachers' mark books show that pupils' progress is monitored regularly in most classrooms. Those that do not make as much progress as expected are offered extra help and support. At the time of the inspection no pupils with recognised special educational needs and/or disabilities attended the school.
- Pupils at the school start the more formal aspect of their learning later than other pupils nationally. Work in older pupils' current books and books from the previous year demonstrates progress towards age-appropriate expectations, particularly in mathematics. The inspection team listened to several older pupils read, all of whom read clearly and fluently.
- Children and pupils who attend the school's kindergarten make progress against some aspects of the early years foundation stage goals. The school is exempt from the learning and development aspect. However, children start class 1 socially and emotionally ready to start learning.

School details

Unique reference number	121753
DfE registration number	815/6023
Inspection number	10085373

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Eskdale Community Trust for Education
Chair of trustees	Linda Parker
Headteacher	The College of Teachers
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,836 is charged for pupils in class 1/2. However, parents who are unable to pay the full amount due to financial difficulty may apply to the Board of Trustees for a discretionary reduction
Telephone number	01287 661206
Website	www.moorlandwaldorf.org
Email address	info@moorlandwaldorf.org
Date of previous inspection	March 2016 (SIS)

Information about this school

- The school was judged to be inadequate in March 2016 by an inspection team from School Inspection Service (SIS) due to issues relating to safeguarding practices. Subsequent monitoring visits were undertaken on 16–17 November 2016 and 30 March 2017 by SIS.

- At the first of these visits some standards remained unmet, including those relating to the school's entries on the single central record.
- All standards were said to have been met at the end of the second monitoring visit.
- The school has undergone several changes since the previous inspection. These included the reduction in the upper age limit for admission to the school from 11 years to 9 years. As a result of this change, and other changes relating to the financial outgoings of the school, several staff were made redundant and pupil numbers have been reduced to 14.
- The school follows the Steiner Waldorf curriculum for most aspects of its work. Parents feel that this curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well and allows their children to 'have the freedom to be children', which they believe is not always afforded to children in the modern world.
- At the time of the inspection the school trustees were awaiting registration on the voluntary child care register in order that they may become a 'flexi learning centre', with the objective of offering a service to home-educated children. Once the registration has been received they plan to close the school.
- The school follows a curriculum based on the Waldorf Steiner approach to education.
- The school has exemption from the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team carried out a range of activities, including an inspection of the school building to ascertain the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- Meetings and discussions were held with members of the college of teachers, members of staff, the chair of trustees and three other trustees, three parents and a group of pupils.
- The inspectors carried out an analysis of all documents required for the school to meet the independent school standards. These included the school's curriculum policy, safeguarding documentation, health and safety documents and the school's complaints policy.
- The inspectors also took into account the feedback given directly by three parents and the feedback from questionnaires received from current staff.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Drew Crawshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school—
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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