

SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

Independent professional inspection of schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust

INSPECTION REPORT

**INSPECTION CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO SECTION 162A
OF THE EDUCATION ACT 2002**

Name of school:	Northmoor Education Centre
DCSF number:	811/6007
FOCUS number:	206
Inspection team:	Reporting Inspector: Dr Martin Bradley Supporting Inspectors: Mrs Cecile Corfield Mr Mike Thirkell Lay Inspector: Mr Philip Hutchinson
Dates of inspection:	10 – 13 November 2008

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Section C: The quality of organisation and management

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school: Northmoor Education Centre

Address of the school: R/O Northmoor House
Dunswell Road
Cottingham
East Yorkshire HU16 4JS

Telephone number: 01482 840722

Fax number: 01482 840723

Proprietor: Northmoor Education Trust

Name of Chief Executive Officer: Mr Bob Hindley

Name of Senior Teacher: Mr John Shearring

DCSF number: 811/6007

FOCUS number: 206

Type of school: Independent school affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust

Age range of pupils and students: 7 – 18

Gender of pupils: Male and female

Total number on roll: (Full time) Boys: 39 Girls: 34

Number of post-16 students: Boys: 11 Girls: 9

Number of pupils with statements of special educational need:
Boys: None Girls: 1

Annual fees: No fees charged

Type of inspection: Section 162A of the Education Act 2002

Inspection Team: Reporting Inspector: Dr Martin Bradley
Supporting Inspectors: Mrs Cecile Corfield
Mr Mike Thirkell
Lay Inspector: Mr Philip Hutchinson

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 November 2008

PART A: INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Purpose and scope of the inspection:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service in accordance with Section 162(A) (1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, and it follows the inspection framework laid down by the Service and the Focus Learning Trust and agreed with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). It was conducted by independent professional inspectors who looked at all aspects of the school's provision as required by the current regulations. The professional inspectors were accompanied by a trained lay inspector who looked at agreed aspects of the school's management and ethos and reported on these to the Focus Learning Trust. His findings are summarised in Section C of this document, but this section is not a statutory part of the inspection process.

Information about the school:

Northmoor Education Centre is an independent day school for boys and girls aged between seven and eighteen in Cottingham on the outskirts of Hull. It is affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust (FLT) and follows its policies and principles. The school opened as a tutorial centre in 1996. It first admitted pupils aged nine to eleven in September 2006 and pupils aged seven to nine in September 2008. The pupils come from families of the Brethren communities in Hull, Grimsby and Lincoln. Admission is non-selective. Of the 73 pupils, 39 are boys and 34 are girls. There are twenty pupils above compulsory school age. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, and eleven others have been identified by the school as having additional learning needs and/or difficulties. Northmoor is administered and managed with Northmoor, Lincoln Campus which is separately registered with the DCSF and which was not inspected at this time.

Summary of main findings:

The quality of education is good with some outstanding features. Since the appointment of the present senior teacher in September 2008, a significant number of important innovations have been made. These are already showing signs of improving the effectiveness of the school. The curriculum provides a wide range of experiences which successfully meet the range of pupils' needs and interests. Teaching is generally good and in a significant minority of lessons is outstanding. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs and/or difficulties is outstanding. Pupils' progress is particularly good. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is their behaviour. The welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. The school meets all of the regulations.

What the school does well:

- its pupils make particularly good progress in relation to their attainment on entry and their abilities ;
- it provides an outstanding sense of community, which is acknowledged by the pupils, staff and trustees;
- its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is their behaviour; and
- it provides a wide range of educational visits to support learning across the curriculum.

Next Steps:

Although not a requirement, the school might like to consider the following points for development, as it seeks to improve its provision further:

- to seek to entrench and affirm recent innovations, including the work of the senior management team;
- to work with the Lincoln campus;
- to develop Years 3 and 4 and the provision of work experience;
- to strengthen the analysis of assessment data; and
- to support the work of the school councils.

What the school must do to comply with the regulations:

The school meets all of the regulatory requirements.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION

The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of the curriculum

Curricular provision is good throughout the school and enables pupils of all ages and abilities to make particularly good progress over time. The provision has some outstanding features. It is suitably broad and relevant, and caters effectively for pupils' academic and personal development. The school improvement plan details clearly how the curriculum will be improved further during this school year.

The school makes good use of National Curriculum programmes and policies together with the schemes of work provided by the Focus Learning Trust (FLT). These are used conscientiously by teaching staff as a basis for their planning.

The primary curriculum is good and closely follows the National Curriculum supported by commercial schemes for literacy and numeracy. Recently, the teaching of literacy has involved video links with the school in Lincoln. Medium and short-term planning is of good quality and is regularly monitored by the primary senior teacher. Morning and most afternoon sessions are preceded by pupils and staff participating fully in exercises designed to 'activate' mind and body. This provides a positive start to each session. The school intends to promote closer links between the primary and secondary departments by pupils completing joint projects. This is planned to support curriculum continuity and smooth transition between both departments.

In Key Stage 3, there is a core curriculum which consists of English, maths, science, history, geography, Bible Studies, French, food and nutrition, design and technology (D&T) and physical education (PE). All pupils in Years 7 and 8 have a weekly preparation period. In addition, pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have lessons in art, music and office skills. In Key Stage 4, the curricular provision is similar, leading to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is provided effectively through a range of subjects throughout the school, as is citizenship.

The curriculum for students in Years 12 and 13 has been planned thoroughly. In Year 12 there is a core curriculum of Bible Studies and current affairs, PSHE, office skills, PE, food and nutrition and D&T. In addition, students are able to take advanced supplementary (AS) courses in English, mathematics and accounting. Some Year 12 students take A2 mathematics. A BTec award is taken in Year 12 with a further certificate in Year 13. Food and nutrition and D&T are replaced in Year 13 with building skills for the boys and textiles for the girls. Some Year 13 students take A2 mathematics. A range of advanced level (A2) subjects is available. The Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (COPE), a modular course which encompasses work-related learning and vocational preparation, has been provided for students in Years 12 and 13.

The curriculum throughout the school is supported and enhanced by a wide range of well-planned and relevant out of school visits. These are thoroughly appreciated by the pupils and are an outstanding feature of the provision.

The school provides pupils with good support to prepare them for adult life. Within PSHE there is careers advice for all students in Years 12 and 13. There are individual interviews with the post-16 co-ordinator. The discussions are based on careers

guidance and elements of business and personal skills. All the pupils in Year 10 have one week of work experience. Recently, a group of trustees and the post-16 co-ordinator have liaised usefully to extend work experience opportunities.

The curriculum throughout the school makes excellent provision for all levels of ability and aptitude. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs and/or difficulties is outstanding. Planning for the needs of these pupils is very effectively organised and co-ordinated across the school. There is a very good communication system in place between the special needs co-ordinator and staff. Next term the school plans to provide staff with training in provision for pupils who have been identified as being gifted and talented.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching is at least good in the great majority of lessons and in a significant proportion of the lessons seen it was outstanding. The senior teacher has begun to monitor the quality of teaching and this is a positive development. Video conferencing with Year 5 between the Hull and Lincoln campuses has been introduced this term. The high quality of the teaching enables pupils to make particularly good progress throughout the school. In most lessons, pupils increase their understanding and develop their skills very effectively in relation to both their starting points and their abilities. In a Year 3/4 numeracy lesson, subtraction sums were carefully structured so that all pupils understood the method of subtraction. The more able were encouraged to find other ways of achieving correct answers as well as tackling more difficult calculations.

Lessons are generally planned thoughtfully, although planning for different levels of ability and attainment is not always sufficiently well developed. In a Year 11 history lesson, excellent planning and use of resources enabled all pupils to make particularly good progress in their understanding of secondary sources and presentation skills. It also encouraged pupils to think and learn for themselves. Time is usually managed efficiently and a good range of activities is provided. Teachers have a notably good knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Overall, resources are of good quality and quantity. They are used to good effect.

Secondary Assessment has been developed during the present term and is currently good, with outstanding features in some parts of the school. This represents a significant improvement on previous practice and provides a framework by which pupils can be evaluated against national norms. In Years 3 and 4, outstandingly supportive marking of work is linked to regular and detailed assessments of pupils' attainment. The marking gives pupils positive, supportive comments and sets challenges for future work. The use of assessment data across the whole school is being developed and identifies pupils' targets on a new database which will be fully implemented from January 2009. The initial data has been reviewed with pupils in Years 12 and 13, who have discussed their targets with staff. Records show where pupils have accepted their targets or wished them to be raised or reduced. Appropriate revisions in the light of pupils' progress are being made each half term. The new approach already demonstrates its value as a tool to support planning as well as providing accurate information on future performance for the school, its pupils and their parents.

At Secondary level, written reports are provided once a year with twice yearly grade sheets. The school is aware that the criteria for these assessments need revising and refining in order to ensure that the grades awarded match more accurately the

accompanying written statements, particularly in the secondary classes. In Key Stage 2, assessments are generally accurate and provide useful targets.

Teaching and classroom management encouraged the pupils to behave in an exemplary manner, which has a positive impact on their learning. This is a major strength of the school, and pupils are aware of their school as a social and learning community. They value the support teachers give them and the care provided by adults. This makes a significant contribution to their progress in learning.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school is outstanding. Pupils of all ages are genuinely happy to be at the school and are keen to explain what is positive about their learning experiences. This is reflected in their outstanding behaviour. Parents confirm that their children like the school. The guidance that the pupils receive supports the school's Christian ethos and is in line with its aim of *'creating an atmosphere of unity in which everyone has a sense of belonging'*. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very positive throughout the school and staff serve as good role models. The school successfully develops pupils' self-knowledge by recognising the individual needs of each pupil, by providing them with guidance as to how they can improve academically and by providing a range of opportunities for them to learn and succeed personally. Their self-awareness and self-confidence is promoted through praise for their successes and contributions, and making them feel valued as individuals. Spirituality is developed through the study of religious text, and when reflecting on the situation of others, for example, in an assembly sensitively led on the theme of Remembrance and the sacrifices made during war.

Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong through the moral teaching that they receive, through such lessons as PSHE as well as assemblies, and in citizenship where Year 10 pupils learned about the role of the jury in English courts. From the youngest classes pupils are encouraged to listen to others and to respond to their teachers' expectations. Pupils' moral and personal development and their academic progress prepare them effectively for their future well-being.

Pupils report that they value their school community and, as a result of its openness and the moral standards set, that bullying is rare. The high standards of behaviour and responsibility shown by pupils of all ages are further supported by established and developing structures within the school, for example, the mentoring system whereby post-16 students provide support for younger pupils. The school councils are at an early stage of development and are designed to ensure that all pupils have a voice in the school's development. Pupils contribute to the wider community by raising funds for the RNLI and cancer appeals. Visitors to the school enable pupils to extend their awareness of the wider world community, for example through a visit made to Year 13 by a representative of the local authority accompanied by a refugee from the Middle East. The school's very useful newsletter *'The Bridge'* provides an opportunity for pupils to make a regular and strong contribution to communication with parents and the community.

Pupils develop a notably good understanding and general knowledge of public institutions and services in England through courses such as citizenship and PSHE, and

through the wide range of school visits. Their understanding of industrial heritage, culture and democracy is extended by visits to the Ironbridge Gorge in Shropshire and to the Houses of Parliament.

The school enables pupils to develop their knowledge of other cultures and traditions through the curriculum, including geography, history, modern languages and art. Pupils have further opportunities to gain insights into different cultures, for example through links with an Indian school, charitable activities and visitors to their school. Knowledge of and respect for other cultures and traditions is developed particularly in history through the study of slavery and segregation in America and the values of the North American Indian society. Citizenship makes a strong contribution to pupils' ability to reason and form judgements on such matters supported by the effective use of questioning.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

The welfare, health and safety of pupils

The quality of welfare, health and safety is good and demonstrates a number of outstanding features. Pupils appreciate the care that they receive from teachers and trustees. Policies, and other documents relating to welfare, health and safety, are maintained meticulously. Risk assessments, including those related to fire risk, are notably thorough in their preparation and maintenance. A full range of policies based on the Focus Learning model such as those linked to anti-bullying procedures, discipline and behaviour, are appropriately modified for the school's use and have been supported by staff training. Careful planning and preparation, including careful assessment of risk, support the wide range of opportunities provided by the school for trips to places of interest to extend pupils' learning. Staff are appropriately trained to support the welfare of pupils. Child protection training for designated staff is appropriate and further training has been provided for all teachers.

The development of healthy lifestyles and attitudes to diet are firmly embedded in the curriculum and other aspects of the pupils' life at school. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily. Breakfast is available to all pupils. This ensures that children who have travelled long distances to school are provided with toast, cereal and orange juice before lessons begin. The positive approach to encouraging the development of attitudes leading to a healthy lifestyle is supported throughout the school by aspects of the PSHE programme of study and in Years 10 and 11 through Food and Nutrition classes. Regular PE and games are provided as part of the curriculum for all pupils. Primary classes have adopted a useful programme of exercises at the start of each school day and three afternoons a week.

Admission registers and records of attendance are carefully and efficiently maintained. The requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 are met fully. The school meets all regulations for welfare, health and safety and intends to review and develop further some of aspects of documentation.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

To ensure the pupils' safety, the school maintains a single central register which

provides details of all required checks of staff, trustees and volunteers. All staff are suitably qualified and maintain good levels of professional development provided by the school and FLT.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

Suitability of the premises and accommodation

The school occupies land to the rear of a domestic house and is comprised mainly of a number of demountable buildings. The premises are satisfactory for the numbers and age range of the current pupils. They provide adequate facilities which are well maintained, clean and tidy, although the accommodation constrains some learning opportunities. For example, science has one laboratory and some classes have one lesson in the laboratory and one in a classroom; art shares a room with D&T, limiting provision in both subjects. Other specialist rooms include domestic science, information and communication technology and separate boys' and girls' common rooms. The first aid room provides satisfactory accommodation for pupils who are unwell. There is ramped access to the main secondary school building but not to some other buildings. Food is prepared at breakfast and lunchtimes in the domestic science room, which has good facilities.

A local authority leisure centre is used for primary PE. This provides a large indoor space for activities. It is satisfactory, but was cold at the time of the inspection.

The school has hard and grass surfaced play areas and car parking which is well separated from the areas used by pupils. The school has planned break and lunch times so that the primary age pupils and the older students are not using areas at the same time. The Trustees are actively pursuing alternative premises which will enable the school to develop further.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

The quality of information for parents

The school provides the parents with detailed information about its work. At present, parents receive annual pupils' reports together with, at Secondary level, two grade reports during the year. The school's quarterly magazine '*The Bridge*' serves as a further channel of information on school activities. There are annual parent-teacher meetings. However, a significant minority indicated they were not kept sufficiently informed of their child's progress.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

The effectiveness of the school's complaints procedure

The school has adopted the FLT complaints procedures and practices and these are fully in place. There have been no complaints during the past year.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

PART C: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

This section is not a requirement of the Education Act 2002. The business organisation and management of the school were inspected by the Lay Inspector, who has written this section of the report.

The school includes both primary and secondary departments and is controlled by a Trust of seven trustees who meet monthly. Minutes are kept and action responsibilities noted. The Senior Teacher attends trust meetings on a regular basis. The Trust works together effectively in all areas of its responsibility, although no trustee has the 'pastoral care' responsibility. In addition, there is a Senior Management Team which meets weekly and includes the Chief Executive Officer, Senior Teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator, Primary Senior Teacher and Post-16 Co-ordinator. This Management Team produces appropriate minutes which are distributed to all the Trustees. These meetings cover the day-to-day operational requirements as well as certain policy matters. All trustees have supporting sub-committees.

The school is constrained by a shortage of space which is currently being addressed by the trustees through a plan to relocate, subject to successful negotiations. There is a development plan which is regularly updated with future implementation identified clearly as being dependant on the availability of additional space. The primary department has been incorporated into the overall school arrangements in a very acceptable manner and has a satellite establishment in Lincoln overseen by the Trust but with a separate DCFS registration number. The significant and varied innovations that have recently been introduced into the educational and practical arrangements of the school function are a strength of the organisation and these should be continued and developed.

The Focus ethos is evident and upheld in all areas with behaviour in school being well controlled. The atmosphere and organisation of the school is conducive to pupil attainment. Parent/school contact could be more frequent and improved for the benefit of all.

Could the organisation and management of the school be improved?

The relocation plan should be diligently pursued to allow the development of maximum pupil potential.

The following are areas where specific improvements could be made and which the trustees are asked to consider for implementation:

- a trustee should have responsibility for overall pastoral care and the proposals to incorporate this into the school structure should be implemented and brought forward;
- more regular parent/teacher meetings should be held to facilitate knowledge of pupil progress, attainment and school provisions by parents; and
- all policy decisions taken by the Senior Management Team should be ratified by the full Trust and ad-hoc policy agreements should be confirmed to all trustees.

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust. Further copies of the report are available from the Operations Manager of the Focus Learning Trust, Siskin House, Siskin Drive, Coventry, or from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionservice.co.uk