

# Moor First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124061
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359574
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr John Upton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Mayes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Biddulph Moor, Stoke-on-Trent ST8 7HR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 512350
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed eight lessons taught by four different teachers. They also met with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, assessment data and safeguarding policies and procedures. The responses from the pupil and staff questionnaires were analysed, as were the responses from the 61 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- How well pupils do in mathematics, and the effectiveness of teaching in sustaining the recent improvements in attainment in the subject.
- Pupils' current progress in writing, given that pupils in Year 2 did less well in writing than in mathematics this year.
- The effectiveness of what leaders and managers are doing to improve teaching and learning so that pupils can reach higher standards.

## Information about the school

This small school has an Early Years Foundation Stage Unit, which caters for children of Nursery and Reception age. Nursery children attend part time. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average, as is the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. All pupils are from White British backgrounds.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

This satisfactory school ensures that achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, from the least to the most able. The school is at the start of a new era in its development, with several changes in staffing and a new curriculum in place at the start of this year. It is too soon to assess the impact of all of this on pupils' learning. Lesson observations and data held by the school show that the rate of pupils' progress is satisfactory but varies between classes. This mirrors the quality of teaching. Pupils are not always pushed to make the best possible progress in lessons. In all age groups, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning is sometimes over-directed, leaving pupils with too few opportunities to find things out for themselves or to use and apply the skills they have learned in different contexts. This is particularly evident in mathematics, where, after completing a number of calculations correctly, pupils too often get more of the same calculations to do, instead of being encouraged to use their knowledge to solve real-life problems.

Pupils' attainment is broadly at the levels expected for their age when they leave at the end of Year 4. Their progress is tracked systematically in reading, writing and mathematics, but staff are not making full use of the information gained to ensure all pupils do as well as they possibly can at all times. Teachers' marking is also inconsistent, and does not always show pupils how to improve their work. Pupils enjoy school and they are adequately cared for, guided and supported in their learning and personal development. They generally behave well and they work and play, free of harassment, in a safe and secure learning environment. Attendance is good. Pupils feel safe, know how to keep themselves safe, and have a good understanding of why it is important to follow a healthy lifestyle. They willingly participate in and contribute to the school and local community, but their understanding of the range and diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom is underdeveloped.

The school's leaders want to improve teaching and learning. However, the systems and procedures in place to help them do this are limited in their effectiveness. They are not always well enough focused on school priorities, and areas for development identified in lesson observations are not followed up rigorously enough. The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate, identified weaknesses are beginning to be tackled more robustly, and staff support the senior leaders' ambition to raise pupils' attainment. Taken together, all of these factors mean that the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so it is more consistently good by ensuring that:

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- better use is made of assessment information to match pupils' learning more closely to their individual needs
- pupils have more opportunities to find things out for themselves, and to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems
- marking always shows pupils how to improve their work and pupils are given time to respond to it
- the checks made on teaching and learning are more rigorously focused on school improvement priorities, and areas for development are followed up.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - developing the outdoor area into a vibrant learning environment
  - achieving a better balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, both indoors and out.
  - Raise pupils' awareness of the range and diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Children's attainment when they join the school is broadly at the level expected for their age. Between joining and leaving, their progress varies from good to inadequate in different classes and subjects at different times. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and in writing. In mathematics, attainment improved in all year groups in 2010, reflecting the actions taken to address the issue from the previous inspection. Pupils successfully learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide but they do not have enough opportunities to use those skills in problem solving activities that deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. In literacy, pupils develop a good understanding of letters and sounds in phonics sessions, but they do not use this knowledge well enough when trying to spell even simple words. Nevertheless, they learn to write for different audiences and purposes, and they have a good knowledge of a wide range of punctuation, which they used well in one lesson to make sense of a passage that had none.

Pupils are happy and settled in school. They understand what might constitute an unsafe situation and how to avoid it. They are confident that their concerns will be dealt with promptly and effectively, and that they can turn to any adult for help. Most parents and carers also feel their children are safe and well cared for in school. Pupils readily accept responsibility, for example as school and eco councillors, playground leaders and class monitors, and they raise a good amount of money for different charities throughout the year. They willingly take part in a range of activities in school and in the local community, where they are well regarded. They appreciate the many sporting activities the school provides for them from time to time, and understand the important part exercise plays in keeping them healthy. Their good personal development and satisfactory basic skills ensure they are adequately prepared for the future.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Staff do involve pupils in assessing their own learning, for example by asking them to show how well they think they have done by putting thumbs up, down or horizontal. However, while pupils spoken to knew their targets, they did not know how to check whether they were on course to meet them, because 'the teacher just tells us and puts a stamp in our books'. There are some examples of good marking, where development points are clearly stated, but this is not consistent and pupils are not always given time to respond to comments made. In class, pupils' work is sometimes constrained by too much adult intervention or the use of too many worksheets. This limits the opportunities they have to write freely, find things out for themselves, and show what they really know and can do. For example, in a lesson linking history and literacy, pupils copied from pictures printed for them, or researched information in books provided for them, while computers remained covered and underused as learning tools.

In the best lessons, staff build well on pupils' responses, extending their knowledge and vocabulary, and adjusting their learning accordingly. This happened, for example, in a numeracy lesson where pupils were working on different combinations of numbers to reach a given total. They were pushed hard by searching questions that required them to explain their thought processes and consolidate their learning.

The school launched a new curriculum at the start of this term. It is too soon to assess its impact on pupils' learning, but the plans give due emphasis to basic skills and promote

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pupils' health, safety and well-being satisfactorily. A satisfactory range of enrichment activities, visits, visitors and out-of-school clubs adds to pupils' learning and personal development. Pastoral care is effective in supporting pupils' needs, and good links with the middle school to which pupils transfer ease transition into the next stage of their learning. Transition between classes within the school is satisfactory, but insufficient use is made of assessment information at these times to ensure consistently good progress throughout the school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are satisfactorily embedding in all staff the ambition to raise pupils' attainment. The drive for improvement has led to opportunities for staff to observe and learn from each other. This is developing in them a shared understanding of their individual and collective responsibility for the school's outcomes. Mechanisms are in place to check the quality of teaching and learning. However, the checks do not relate sufficiently well to the school's priorities, and points for improvement are not always followed up.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It supports the school well but does not yet fully hold it to account for its performance, and the school does not make the best use of pupil progress data to set really challenging targets. The school development plan shows that the school knows what it needs to do to improve, but the actions are not yet prioritised sufficiently, and it is not clear how progress in them is to be measured.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are in line with current government requirements. Training, including that for child protection and safer recruitment, is up to date and the school involves pupils in carrying out risk assessments. The school has a good understanding of its own context and that of the community it serves. It introduces pupils to different cultures through, for example, specially themed weeks, and it is working with other schools to extend this further. Overall, however, this aspect of its work is underdeveloped, particularly in relation to the different cultures that exist in the United Kingdom today. The school has due regard for equality of opportunity and ensures that all pupils can participate in everything it has to offer. Nevertheless, pupils' progress remains uneven because the quality of teaching is not consistently good.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Provision, leadership and management are satisfactory for this age group. Children are eager to learn. They settle quickly into school routines, aided by good induction procedures and good relationships with parents and carers. They are well looked after, and good attention is paid to developing their personal, social and emotional skills. Consequently, they play and learn together or on their own, taking turns and sharing equipment. They persevere in their tasks and make satisfactory progress in acquiring early literacy and numeracy skills. However, adults often guide learning too much, limiting opportunities for children to choose and explore by themselves, or to select whether to learn indoors or outdoors. Conversely, children are occasionally left on their own for too long without any adult intervention, and opportunities are missed to foster counting, speaking and listening skills, or to record children's learning and move it on as it occurs.

Children's reading records provide valuable opportunities for communication between home and school and include some early assessments of children's learning and development in a range of activities. Children very much enjoy role play activities, for example learning how to deal with emergencies and make appointments in the 'hospital', or make and serve food in the 'cafe'. The recently refurbished outdoor area is underused as an extension to the indoor classroom and children do not have spontaneous access to it.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

There was a high return rate from the questionnaire sent to parents and carers. The school has a generally positive relationship with parents and carers, and it keeps them informed about how well their children are doing. The majority are satisfied with most aspects of the school's work, and several echoed a comment which stated that the school is 'friendly and children are well looked after'. However, in the comments accompanying the inspection questionnaires, a small minority raised concerns about behaviour, leadership and management, and some aspects of safeguarding. Inspectors considered all of these concerns thoroughly and found that behaviour is mostly good, and that leadership and management are satisfactory, as are safeguarding policies and procedures.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moor First 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 61 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 100 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	70	17	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	52	23	38	3	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	44	28	46	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	43	26	43	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	46	27	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	48	28	46	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	51	26	43	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)	23	38	25	42	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	48	27	44	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	23	28	46	5	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	25	34	56	5	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	18	30	28	46	6	10	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	46	30	49	1	2	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are 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 and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.**



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Moor First School, Biddulph Moor, ST8 7HR**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. It was good to hear that you enjoy school. This is clearly reflected in your good attendance. You told us you feel safe in school and that adults are always ready to help you, and we found that you have a good understanding of why it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle. You mostly behave well and are clearly very eager to take responsibility, for example as school or eco councillors, and as play leaders.

We also found that you reach the standards expected for your age by Year 4, and that you work equally well on your own or as part of a team. These skills ensure you are adequately prepared for the future. At this point in time, your school is satisfactory. We looked closely at what it could do to help you make better progress and have asked the school leaders to ensure that:

- you are always taught well, shown how to improve your work, given opportunities to find things out for yourselves and, in mathematics, encouraged more often to solve real-life problems

Nursery and Reception children have exciting things to do indoors and out, and that they can choose what they want to do more often

- you learn more about the different cultures that exist in the United Kingdom.

You can help by continuing to listen carefully to your teachers, and by working hard at all times. We hope that you will continue to enjoy learning in the future as much as you do now and we wish you well. Thank you once again for giving us your views.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector

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