

Moorfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111188
Local Authority	Halton
Inspection number	356876
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Garry Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Jones
Headteacher	Mr A Williams
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 11 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils, representatives of the governing body and an officer of the local authority. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at: pupils' assessment records; the school improvement plan; and a range of policies, in particular those with regard to safeguarding. The questionnaires from 74 parents and carers and 100 pupils were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which teaching and assessment are contributing consistently to the achievement of pupils and particularly that of lower ability pupils in mathematics.
- The extent to which the curriculum is organised to ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress.
- The extent to which leaders and managers, at all levels, have driven improvement with sufficient pace.

Information about the school

The school is slightly larger in size than the average primary school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below that found nationally. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below that found nationally, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average. The school has been recognised by a number of awards including Healthy School status, the Basic Skills quality mark, Artsmark Gold, Activemark and the intermediate International Schools award. Since the last inspection the school has experienced unusually high levels of staff mobility.

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

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. This is because pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points to attain standards that are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, there are aspects of provision that contribute effectively to the good personal development and well-being of the pupils. The very large majority of pupils enjoy school and, as a result, attendance is above average. Most pupils feel safe within school and behave well. A very small minority of pupils feel that behaviour is not as good as it should be, but correctly believe that incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with effectively. Pupils are proud of their school and willingly take on positions of responsibility such as play leaders and prefects to make a good contribution to the development of the school.

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are in line with those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school in English and mathematics due to the satisfactory teaching delivered. Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress. There is a small minority of good and outstanding teaching within the school, and in these lessons pupils are effectively engaged through a range of well-planned, challenging activities. This good quality planning uses assessment data to identify the next steps in learning for pupils. However, this practice is not consistent across the school. The sharing of the best practice in teaching has commenced, but it is not sufficiently widespread. In part this is due to the high levels of staff changes over the last four years. Teachers assess work regularly, but the provision of clear and detailed advice to pupils on how to improve their work and reach targets is not consistent.

The curriculum is good. It has been reviewed recently and is now well planned to meet the needs of all pupils effectively. This is starting to contribute to improved rates of progress. The range of provision, opportunities for enrichment and a broad range of extra-curricular activities make a good contribution to the personal development of the pupils. The quality of care, guidance and support is effective and there is a clear focus on meeting the individual needs of all pupils well.

The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children are looked after well and make sound progress due to the satisfactory teaching and planned provision. The review and development of provision has been hindered by the instability of staffing. The provision is managed from elsewhere in the school which limits the scope for direct evaluation of provision and planning for improvement. The quality of the leadership and management is satisfactory and the environment has recently been upgraded, but the external facilities are not as well developed as the internal base.

The headteacher and his senior colleagues have a clear vision for the school. They have established effective processes to monitor and evaluate provision. Self-evaluation is

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accurate and the school is well aware of the areas for development. Planning to bring about improvement is good and this is particularly evident in the recent initiatives to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics. Initiatives have not yet been in place for a long enough time to produce the full intended impact. Nevertheless, the emerging signs of improvement in rates of progress and teaching together with the rigorous systems for evaluation show that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by increasing the proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - extending the use of current approaches to share best practice
 - ensuring that planning consistently identifies appropriately challenging and engaging activities.
- Improve the effectiveness of assessment by ensuring that:
 - all pupils receive regular advice on how to reach their targets in all subjects
 - assessment data is used to inform planning.
- Improve the quality of provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving the quality of the outdoor learning area
 - providing more direct leadership and management of the provision to strengthen daily evaluation and planning for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy learning are satisfactory. In lessons, pupils generally behave well and show interest in their work. The relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils work steadily, whether independently or in groups, and apply themselves to the tasks that are set. They are keen to respond to questions and are willing to risk an answer even when not certain they are correct. When the activities are challenging and engage their interest pupils show real enthusiasm for learning and their determination to do well is clear. For example, in a lesson on tigers, seen during the inspection, pupils were keen to share their knowledge and to extend their understanding.

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress and this continues through Key Stages 1 and 2 with the result that for the last three years pupils have attained standards that are broadly average in the national tests in Year 6. The progress pupils make has improved steadily over the last three years. Progress in English is better than that in mathematics, although both are satisfactory. There is no variation in the progress made by pupils of different abilities. The progress of pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities is the same as that nationally.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school at breaks and lunchtime. Their pride in the school is reflected in their willingness to contribute to its development through the

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school council and by taking on responsibilities. They make a good contribution to the community through sports and music and eagerly raise money for local and national charities. The overwhelming majority have a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy. They are keen to eat healthy meals and eagerly participate in exercise. The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils know right from wrong and are well aware of the importance of respect for all peoples. The preparation of pupils' skills for their future life is satisfactory, as although interpersonal skills and skills in information and communication technology are well-developed, basic skills remain satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, but a small number of examples of good and outstanding teaching were observed. When teaching is satisfactory the planned activities enable pupils to make satisfactory progress, but are not always sufficiently challenging to encourage pupils to make good progress. Some of the planned activities fail to engage the full interest of the pupils and the pace of learning becomes slow. In a few lessons the teacher spends too long introducing the topic and pupils lose concentration and have insufficient time to engage with the planned activities. In contrast, in the better lessons a good range of activities are planned that build on what the pupils have already achieved and there are precise learning objectives. The activities capture the interest of the pupils

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and they work with determination to achieve their best work. Teachers use questions well to assess learning and to refocus the attention of the pupils when required and to address any misconceptions.

Assessment is satisfactory. Pupils are assessed regularly, their progress is monitored and they are set targets for improvement. The provision of detailed advice on how to improve their work is sometimes included in comments on marked work, but this is not consistent. Assessment data are not used consistently to inform planning of the next stages of learning.

The curriculum is well designed to meet the needs of the pupils. It is being revised to focus on the development of skills and this has increased its effectiveness. This is bringing about improvement in achievement, but the revised approach has not had sufficient time to show major change. There is a clear strategy in place to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities through individual or small group work. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop skills and knowledge that support all aspects of their personal development. These aspects are also contributed to through a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities that are valued greatly by the pupils.

Care, guidance and support are good. There is a great emphasis upon meeting the needs of individual pupils. School makes particularly effective use of visitors to act as role models for the pupils, for example, high achievers in sport, including a Para-Olympian. Pupils who are facing particular difficulties are very well supported with effective links to the full range of external agencies. Arrangements for transition are well developed and focus on the needs of individual pupils to ensure their continued development. Effective monitoring of attendance ensures that attendance is consistently above average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a strong commitment on the part of the senior leadership team and the governing body to drive improvement in the school and to raise the achievement of pupils. Rigorous self-evaluation has informed well-developed planning for improvement. However, efforts to improve the quality of teaching have been delayed by significant staffing instability over a number of years. This has resulted in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement remaining satisfactory. However, there are signs that recent developments to share good practice are beginning to have an impact. Effective use is made of links with local schools and organisations to enhance provision. There is a good governing body. Members are well informed and fully involved in evaluating effectiveness and planning for improvement.

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The governing body is strongly committed to safeguarding and has established a dedicated committee to oversee provision. Arrangements for safeguarding are good with clear policies that are monitored carefully and fully comply with current government advice. There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and meeting the needs of all pupils. There is a strong commitment to the development of community cohesion and an action plan is currently being implemented. The result is that the school community is harmonious and that there are effective links with the local community groups and organisations. International links with schools in Finland, China, Germany and Pakistan develop pupils' awareness of global issues. Efforts to establish links with other schools in the region with a more diverse population are in the process of being implemented.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are in line with those expected of children of their age, although some children's communication skills are less well-developed. Children settle in to a safe and secure environment in which relationships are good. They are well cared for and encouraged to behave well and to cooperate with each other. All the welfare requirements are fully met. The planned range of activities is satisfactory and allows children to make satisfactory progress, but there is not sufficient emphasis on building on children's prior learning. On occasions adults do not provide children with sufficient opportunities to ask questions or reflect on their learning. The external learning environment is adequate, but is not as well-developed as the internal space. Provision indoors has been considerably improved as a result of evaluations of the children's learning. Adults use a reasonable range of teaching approaches and resources to meet the needs of all groups of children. This means that the children are sufficiently engaged in their learning and mostly enjoy the activities provided. Leadership and management are satisfactory and there is a satisfactory development plan. However, the

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provision is managed from within Key Stage 1 and this limits the effectiveness of monitoring and planning for improvement on a daily basis.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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

The proportion of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire is in line with that found nationally. Most parents and carers are happy with the experience that their children receive at the school and almost all believe that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. Most also believe that the school is well managed, although a few believe that the school does not take account of their concerns. Inspectors found that the school takes parental concerns seriously. Most are content that they are well informed of the progress that their children make, are helped to support their children's learning, are happy with the teaching and the progress their children make. Inspectors found that teaching could be better and that children could make more progress. A small minority of parents expressed concerns over the effectiveness with which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors investigated this issue and found that behaviour overall is good and that incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moorfield Primary 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	51	34	46	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	58	28	38	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	30	43	58	6	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	36	42	57	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	29	39	36	49	6	8	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	31	37	50	9	12	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	36	40	54	3	4	2	3
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)	24	32	37	50	8	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	34	40	54	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	24	37	50	12	16	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	22	39	53	7	9	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	24	32	37	50	4	5	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	49	29	39	6	8	2	3

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorfield Primary School, Widnes, WA8 3HJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when my colleagues and I inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and listening to your views on the school.

Moorfield is a satisfactory school. You make satisfactory progress to reach standards at the end of Year 6 that are similar to those achieved by most pupils. This is because the teaching overall is satisfactory, although there is some good and outstanding teaching in some classes. You study subjects and topics that are carefully organised to meet your needs and there is a good range of enrichment and after-school activities for you to enjoy.

You are well looked after in the school and most of you told us that you enjoy school and feel safe. Your behaviour is good and you know to keep yourselves healthy. You are proud of your school and told us how you are eager to take on responsibilities to help the school to develop. You also take the opportunity to make a good contribution to the local community and to help those less fortunate than yourselves.

The headteacher, his colleagues and the governing body are all committed to improving the school. We have agreed with them that they should help you to reach higher standards by increasing the number of good lessons in the school. We have asked them to plan lessons that are challenging and build on what you can already do. You can help by telling them the sort of lessons that help you to learn best. We have also asked them to give you regular advice on how to improve your work in all subjects. Finally we have asked them to improve the quality of the provision for the youngest children in the Reception class.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Garry Jones

Lead inspector

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