

Moorlands Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109000
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	362804
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Mo Roberts HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Colin Lacey
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Griffin-Felton
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
School address	Chantry Mead Road Bath BA2 2DE
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Introduction

When Moorlands Junior School was inspected in July 2009, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the school was inspected on four occasions. At the last monitoring inspection the school was judged to be making good progress.

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majestys Inspectors. They observed the schools work and met with senior staff, two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They observed eight lessons and some additional parts of lessons, looked at the schools internal assessment information and tracking, individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and school policies including one on child protection.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the schools work. It looked in detail at the key issues raised at the last inspection.

The progress all groups of pupils make in mathematics and science.

The quality and consistency of teaching and assessment.

The improvement in effectiveness in leadership and management at all levels.

Information about the school

Since the 1 January 2011 Moorlands Junior School has federated with Moorlands Infant School. A substantive headteacher of the federation has taken up her post. There is an interim deputy headteacher. The school has a newly constituted federated governing body. Most pupils are White British and a small but increasing number speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and/or a statement of special educational needs are above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Before- and after-school provision is run by a private group at the infant school and has separate reports as it was not part of this inspection.

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

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The newly federated school is now providing a satisfactory education for the pupils and has made a promising start. Pupils are enthusiastic and proud of the exciting changes this has involved. They especially welcome closer contact with the infant school, enjoying the work older ones do as buddies to the younger ones. Staff have a renewed sense of purpose and commitment as well as an understandable sense of relief after the numerous, unavoidable interim arrangements over the last 18 months. Although the headteacher has only been in post since the start of term, the good preparatory work done last term has led to a smooth start to the term. Parents and carers commented that it was apparently seamless and they feel well informed of the ongoing developments and are strong partners with the school. The new governing body has held its first meeting and has recruited some additional experienced members. It has a firm sense of purpose and realistic view of the new challenges ahead.

The school is an orderly community; pupils behaviour is generally good. Their progress in mathematics and science has improved. Pupils progress overall is now at least satisfactory and those pupils who were underachieving are catching up to the expected level for their age. Indeed some have made rapid progress. In Year 6, pupils are on track to reach broadly average national standards overall with a substantially increased proportion predicted to achieve the higher levels in English and mathematics. This is a significant improvement. Pupils progress in all classes is rigorously tracked and the new data management system is regularly updated after each assessment week. As yet the data systems full capacity to spot trends and potential underachievement is underused due to a lack of staff training on the software. Pupils like school and say they feel safe and enjoy their learning. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.

Teaching in Year 6 is good and overall teaching across the school is satisfactory. It is better paced, with most, but not all, work matched accurately to pupils needs. There is still a small amount of inconsistent teaching. This is being monitored closely. Pupils are appropriately cared for and safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. They receive targeted individual support when required. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils do not report being adversely affected by the turbulence in staffing and said that the different leaders each brought exciting new ideas to the school. They also appreciated the continuity and steadfastness of the interim deputy headteacher and the teachers who have remained throughout the changes saying, The teachers are kind and cheerful and always help you if you need it. New middle managers are just getting to grips with their roles and are excited by the increased responsibility delegated to them. They are taking prompt action to deal with

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long-standing issues, especially in science, but as yet, have had limited opportunities to monitor their subjects and take a full role in initiating new school developments. The headteacher sets high standards and has clear plans and expectations for the federated schools further development, based on sound evaluation. The smooth transition and the well-paced plans for ongoing development show the school now has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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?

- Embed the new leadership and ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning remains rigorous so that teaching consistently secures good progress.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels have training to use the new pupils progress tracking system to maximum effect so they develop a clear overview of the emerging trends, enabling them to take prompt action to address the remaining pockets of underachievement and raise standards even further.
- Develop the middle managers so they fully monitor their subjects and take a stronger role in driving school improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are generally keen to learn and this is greatly assisted by the consistently good relationships between adults and pupils in the classrooms. Consequently, pupils feel safe and have absorbed the messages about how to keep fit and healthy. Older pupils are well aware of the risks posed by drugs and smoking. The pupils are keen to undertake roles and responsibilities in the school and also run the school council and the eco council with gusto. They like activities that allow them to participate in the Bath community, such as the Bath Festival, sporting events and singing for older residents. The visits they make and the visitors who come to the school enhance the pupils understanding of the wider world and the scientists from the forensic service are eagerly awaited! Science is beginning to have a better profile in the school as pupils increasingly question and test their theories and ideas. Work done on how the eye responds to light enthused Year 6 pupils who were keen to learn more. Overall, pupils reach the standard expected nationally by the end of Year 6. The results of internally marked tests last year showed the school was in line with what is expected. This year the Year 6 group is already at a more advanced stage than last years group, suggesting that they are on track to reach the higher predictions set for them. There is better challenge to extend those that learn easily. Other year groups vary in their level of achievement but the more individual and increasingly modified work is steadily driving up rates of progress. Year 3 pupils have made a good start to their junior education and in some instances their progress is above the expected rate.

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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	3
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?

While the proportion of good teaching is going up, a few inconsistencies remain, and this slows a minority of pupils' progress. In these lessons, the work is not always as well matched to pupils needs as it could be so a few pupils lose focus, slow down and occasionally misbehave. However, there are also many more exciting lessons where all pupils are highly engaged, such as the good lesson seen on how to write a short synopsis of an incident from classic fiction in this case Alice in Wonderland. A good writing model produced by the teacher and pupils resulted in them concentrating intently and producing individual, clear, succinct writing in the given time. Teachers frequently check to see if pupils have grasped ideas or if they are still puzzled and then adapt their explanations and offer further assistance. Pupils take more responsibility for their own learning and value the opportunities they are given on occasions to respond to teachers comments in their books and help, in some instances, to decide on the next step required to improve their learning. They would like more time to do this. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those new to learning English achieve as well as other pupils in their classes due to the support they are given. One-to-one support for a wider group of pupils is having a good impact on individual pupils levels of confidence, especially in Year 5 writing where a significant proportion of pupils have struggled with their learning from the time they entered the school.

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The school has a satisfactory curriculum with high points that offer some good opportunities to develop pupils' creativity and imagination. The stimulus for art work is good. Enrichment opportunities, through visits and visitors, are good and pupils particularly enjoy special events such as the MARTS week that successfully linked mathematics and art. They are keenly anticipating science week. However, the curriculum used to delivery the core skills in calculation in mathematics is ripe for review. There is also an over reliance on some centrally produced units of work in other subjects.

Good attention is given to pupils welfare and well-being and staff know their pupils well, resulting in good support to pupils whose lives make them potentially vulnerable. The school draws very effectively on a good range of external agencies to provide assistance. This includes, on some occasions, specialist support services to improve pupils behaviour and self-esteem. Attendance is satisfactory. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar, satisfactory progress to their classmates but some of their individual plans lack the level of precision required to help them reach the schools goal of good progress for all. The increased links with the infant school ensure that pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are well supported when transferring between the schools and settle quickly. The federation has increased the frequency with which pupils from both the schools work together. For example, both eco committees are working towards a shared submission for a national award. However, since a small minority of pupils are not yet fully supported to achieve their full potential this means that care, guidance and support cannot be judged better than satisfactory at present.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The federation headteacher is supported by an interim deputy headteacher and a part-time temporary head of teaching for learning who is based in the infant school but works across the two schools. The senior leadership team for the federation is currently being designed and has then to be recruited. In the meantime, the enthusiastic middle leadership team has begun work. The issues in science have been well dealt with and assessment in the subject is now in place. Staff morale is good and the headteacher is successfully continuing the drive to deal with the remaining weaknesses and ensure that the school continues to improve. Staff reported that their ideas are valued and that an across the schools team approach is beginning to develop. The aim is for better continuity of learning for pupils. The new governing body has met and set up a committee structure to make efficient use of their time. Training is booked for the new group. It knows the school as well as could be reasonably expected at this early stage and benefits from the

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ongoing support of the previous Chair of Governors. It has the expertise to provide support and to develop and challenge the school to continue improving. The school provides satisfactory value for money. However, the accommodation is very tired in places and is still awaiting refurbishment and some redevelopment.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils. Childrens safety is given a high priority. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory and all health and safety requirements met. Risk assessments are in place for example, covering the changes associated with the development of the site due to the federation. The governor who oversees safeguarding although new to this governing body is very experienced in this role. Pupils enjoy better equal opportunities because teaching is stronger and each has a chance to make better progress. There are effective procedures to tackle discrimination if any issue arises. Some pupils attainment must be raised further if all are to make the most of the next stage of schooling.

The school is strongly rooted in its community and the approach to community cohesion ensures pupils have a satisfactory opportunity to participate in local events. The international and global dimensions of community cohesion are less well developed. The schools own self-evaluation, passed from one headteacher to the next, is accurate and honest; consequently, the headteacher has a clear picture of the next steps in improvement required.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so, and the parental questionnaire table has been deleted.

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Discussion with a random sample of parents and carers attending the Year 4 assembly, together with an analysis of comments in the schools parental comment book, suggests the school has effectively communicated with most parents and carers about the federation process. Parents and carers said that: it had got off to a good start and the work on each class moorland mascot had generated pupils interest and enthusiasm. The Federation Times supplements each schools weekly newsletters and was welcomed as a means of communication. A parents forum is also being developed. Parents and carers support childrens events and those spoken to strongly support the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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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.



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorlands Junior School, Bath BA2 2DE

As you know, I have been visiting and monitoring your school each term for the last 18 months. Together, we have seen many changes and improvements! On this visit I was delighted to find your new headteacher and new governing body were already busy improving the school even more now you are in federation with the infants. I could see that they and your teachers are at a point where the school no longer needs special outside help so, on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, I have removed the school from special measures because your school now offers you a satisfactory education.

Teaching has improved and so has the amount of progress you each make. Well done on your hard work. The standards you reach in mathematics and science, by the time you leave, are better. More of you are on track to reach the higher level at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The leadership of the school is now satisfactory, but in order to improve the school even further I have asked the school to:

Make sure the new leaders remember to keep checking that teaching continues to get even better and that you are making at least satisfactory and preferably good progress.

Ensure that leaders get some training on the new software used to track your assessment scores so they get a quick warning if anyone is slipping behind again and so you can all reach as high a standard as possible.

Develop the leaders of English, mathematics and science so they check the subject carefully right across the school and can then suggest to the headteacher what the next improvements in those subjects should be and so help the school to improve even more.

Thank you for making me welcome and for sharing your opinions and views about the school with me. I like your new class names based on the moorland animals and the lovely mascots. Make sure you read and respond to your teachers comments on your work and I wish you all success in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

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