

Moss Hall Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101294
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	354975
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Howard

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shriley Bilgora
Headteacher	Robin Warren
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 22 lessons, or parts of lessons, taught by 16 teachers. They held meetings with pupils, representatives of the governing body and various members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including its self-evaluation, policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children and data about pupils' progress. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils, staff and 233 parents and carers.

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 pupils' progress is improving in science.
- The effectiveness of teaching in accelerating progress for all pupils.
- The impact of changes in leadership in accelerating progress for all pupils.

Information about the school

Moss Hall Junior is a larger than other schools of its kind. One in three pupils is of White British heritage and the remainder are from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. Many of these speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. These include pupils with moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and a range of physical disabilities. More have statements of special educational need than is the case in most schools. There have been a number of changes to the leadership of the school since the previous inspection. Following the departure of the previous headteacher, the governors have appointed an acting executive headteacher on a temporary basis. In addition to the substantive deputy headteacher, there are also two acting deputy headteachers. A new substantive headteacher has been appointed and will take up post after Easter. The school holds the Healthy Schools award and the intermediate level of the International Schools award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Moss Hall Junior School is a good, highly inclusive school which is continuing to improve under the strong leadership of the acting executive headteacher. He is supported well by the whole staff and the effective governing body. The school has a very caring and supportive ethos, so that pupils develop clear values, confidence, maturity and enjoyment of learning. The school looks after its pupils exceptionally well, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Safeguarding arrangements are robust. As a result, pupils feel very safe and enjoy coming to school. They behave well in lessons and around the school. The school is prepared to go the extra mile to support pupils and the care, guidance and support it provides is outstanding. As one pupil said, 'If you don't understand something at this school, teachers will not give up on you.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

The rigorous systems in place for evaluating how well pupils are doing are playing their part in improving performance. Consequently, they achieve well. Information about pupils' progress is regularly collected by teachers and monitored by the leadership team. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress relative to their starting points. Achievement in science, which has been weaker than that in English and mathematics,, has improved because of improved teaching. The majority of teaching engages and motivates pupils well and teachers' strong subject knowledge helps to enthuse them. Accurate assessment enables teachers to plan activities that match the needs of learners and provides good feedback on how pupils can improve. In a few lessons the effective use of information on pupils is not fully embedded, and as a consequence, activities are not always matched to the needs of all learners, especially those of higher ability. Marking is regular and relates well to the purpose of the lesson although it does not always give clear indications of what the pupils need to do next to improve.

The school responds quickly to areas for development and works outstandingly well with a range of partners to enhance the curriculum and the welfare of individual pupils. The curriculum provides wide-ranging opportunities for learning and is extended well to meet the needs of pupils who have highly specific needs. For example, sporting opportunities are adapted to cater for the needs of pupils who have a physical disability. The opportunities for music- making are exceptional and as a result, music performance is of a very high standard. Pupils in Year 3 have responded very well to the recently introduced creative aspects of the curriculum. This aspect has not yet been developed extensively in other year groups. As a result, there are some missed opportunities for linking subjects, particularly in providing opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across a wide range of subjects. This sometimes prevents pupils from seeing how their learning fits together.

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School leaders and the governing body have been effective in sharing their expectations for the school and there are robust systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of its work. Most middle leaders make good use of these to improve teaching and learning but leadership at this level is not yet consistently effective. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and plans effectively to address them. As a result, the previous good performance identified in the previous inspection has been consolidated and built on. This, together with the improvements made, for example in science, demonstrates that there is good capacity to sustain further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that by January 2012, teaching is consistently good and that the proportion of outstanding lessons is increased by:
 - more consistent use of marking to help pupils see what their next steps in learning should be
 - providing a range of activities that match the needs of all learners, especially the most able
 - making learning more creative and enjoyable through developing more effective links between subjects throughout the school.
- Develop the impact of leadership at all levels by ensuring that all middle level leaders contribute to school improvement by enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils start school with skills and abilities that are broadly average. By the end of Year 6 their attainment is above average and they make good progress overall. They acquire a good level of basic skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology and apply these in some activities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are very well supported by a talented team of support staff, who plan activities with teachers to meet the specific needs of individual pupils. They enjoy their learning and are encouraged to practise their skills so that they can apply them in lessons. The effective specialist teaching in small groups and informed planning by teachers mean that progress for pupils who speak English as an additional language matches that of other groups.

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and particularly enjoy researching and generating their own ideas. This was demonstrated in an outstanding Year 4 science lesson where pupils were finding out ways to separate mixtures of solids and liquids. They were very well motivated by the teacher's excellent use of questioning and the range of activities that helped to promote the pupils' independence and enquiry skills. There has been marked improvement in pupils' progress in science and elsewhere when there has been a specific focus and drive by the school.. Any differences in the rate of progress between groups and classes are slight but the most able do not always make as much progress as they could.

Pupils have an excellent sense of how to keep themselves safe and are confident about the role that adults play in looking after them. Most pupils attend regularly and are punctual. Pupils' behaviour is good and this is reflected in lessons, in conduct about the

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school and at break and lunchtimes. Pupils get on very well together. On a few occasions when teaching was not very stimulating, some pupils were seen to go 'off task'. A small number of pupils have emotional and behavioral difficulties and staff are extremely skilful in managing their needs so that their learning and that of others is not disrupted. Pupils are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle as reflected in the school's national award. They participate in many sporting activities and have a good understanding of factors that may affect their health.

Pupils respond well to the opportunity to make a contribution to the school community and their maturity means that they accept the challenge readily. They are highly reflective on the world around them and music making is a significant factor in their spiritual and cultural development. They have a very strong understanding of right and wrong and are highly sensitive to the diversity within their community. This contributes to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Teaching is good overall and, occasionally, outstanding. Relationships between pupils and teachers are generally strong and activities are planned to help pupils make good progress. Assessment is often used very effectively to identify next steps and this is shared with pupils. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson about applying decimal and fraction calculations to money, pupils assessed their own learning very effectively.

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Teaching is uniformly strong in Year 6 but not quite as consistent elsewhere. This is because in a few lessons, teachers do not plan activities that match the needs of all learners, especially those who are more able, and there are fewer opportunities for pupils to work independently. Sometimes, teachers make insufficient use of assessment to inform pupils about what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is considerably enhanced by the exceptional music provision, which permeates the life of the school and gives evident enjoyment to a large number of pupils. Physical education is also strong and provides a wide range of sports activities for pupils of all abilities. There are good opportunities for enrichment through visits, trips and the excellent partnerships fostered with a number of schools and other organisations. The introduction of a more creative approach to curriculum planning in Year 3 is having a positive effect on the development of independent learning and helping pupils to see how different aspects of their learning fit together. This has not yet been fully extended to other year groups.

The school knows all of its pupils exceptionally well and ensures that they receive the help they need. It provides a very welcoming environment for everybody whatever their background or needs. Pupils are effectively prepared for moving on to the next year group or to secondary school. Pupils and their parents and carers place great trust and confidence in the advice and guidance that they receive. Carefully targeted, personalised support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable ensures that all pupils are included and can enjoy the same experiences as their peers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting executive headteacher has shown ambition and drive in embedding his vision and creating a shared understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. He is well supported by the governing body and senior leadership team, who monitor and evaluate the school's work effectively. Tracking of achievement is thorough and the rigour of analysis has resulted in notable improvements in outcomes. Governors are very ambitious for the school and have managed the changes in leadership astutely to ensure that it continues to improve. Although much has been accomplished, there is not consistently rigorous monitoring at middle leadership level to secure good teaching and learning in all lessons.

The school promotes equal opportunities well and has been very successful in ensuring that there is no discrimination. The school celebrates its diversity and pupils' talents very effectively. This is reflected in the high levels of respect that pupils show for each other.

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Outcomes for different groups of pupils are consistently good, although in some lessons, progress for pupils with higher ability is not accelerated quickly enough. The protection of pupils is a high priority for everybody at the school and there are robust procedures in place to ensure they are properly safeguarded.

The school promotes community cohesion well. As a very harmonious community, it has a good awareness of the religious, socio-economic and ethnic characteristics of its community and the school. The school effectively evaluates the impact of its engagement with other communities and has received recognition for its global awareness through the International Schools award.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
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	2

Views of parents and carers

Just over two thirds of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a response which is well above the average. The responses show that almost all think that their child is happy and are confident that their child is safe. One summed it up by writing, 'I just want say how happy my child is at school.' The school regularly seeks the views of parents and carers and uses this information to support developments. The very large majority feel that the school is well led and managed. One parent, for example, wrote about the 'dynamic leadership of the executive headteacher'. Most parents and carers also feel that the school helps them to support their child's learning and helps their child to lead a healthy lifestyle. A few parents and carers indicated that they do not feel that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that during the inspection most pupils behaved very well and that where pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties, staff managed their needs skilfully. A few parents and carers expressed the view that their child is not making enough progress. Inspectors found that pupils make

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good progress but that, sometimes, pupils who are more able could be challenged more. The school is working on this issue.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moss Hall Junior 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 233 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 357 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	127	55	99	42	3	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	134	58	93	40	2	1	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	74	31	139	60	17	7	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	26	132	57	36	15	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	80	34	134	58	17	7	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	27	128	55	31	13	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	72	31	143	61	10	4	1	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)	71	30	113	48	24	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	63	27	134	58	21	9	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	24	126	54	31	13	5	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	79	21	146	63	23	10	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	81	35	127	55	15	6	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	105	45	118	51	7	3	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	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.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moss Hall Junior School, London, N3 1NR

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We could see how proud you are of it and enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. You are right to be proud because it is a good school that helps you to make good progress in your work.

You told us that you enjoy your lessons, especially when they have creative activities that are fun and interesting. We saw how much you enjoy making music and we were very impressed with how many of you play a musical instrument or sing. Teachers help you to do well and by the time you leave the school you are reaching standards that are above average in English and mathematics.

You told us how safe you feel in school and how much you trust the adults around you. We found that the school cares for you very well and teaches you how to be healthy and to respect and care for others. We saw how well you behave in lessons and at playtimes and how well you get on with each other.

We have asked the school to do two things that will make your school even better.

- Most of the teaching is good but we have asked teachers to make some lessons even more interesting by including activities that are at the right level for all of you and that are more creative. Some of you are not clear about how to make your work better and so we have asked teachers to make sure that marking helps you to improve.
- The school leaders have done a lot to improve teaching and we have asked all of them to help teachers to make even more lessons good or better.

We hope you will continue to work hard and help your teachers to help you so that you do as well as possible.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard

Lead inspector

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