

Moorhouse Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105788
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	355839
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Keith Swift
Headteacher	Mr Richard Lee
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2007
School address	Crossley Street Milnrow, Rochdale Lancashire OL16 4DR
Telephone number	01706 642742
Fax number	01706 642742
Email address	rlee@moorhouse.rochdale.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Inspection number	355839

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, managers, staff, the School Improvement Partner and groups of pupils and had informal discussions with parents. In observing the school's work, they looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment records, school policies and school development plans. In total 26 questionnaires from parents and carers were received, analysed and considered, alongside 97 questionnaires completed by the pupils and 15 by school staff.

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

- Whether leaders and school developments are effective in sustaining the recent improvements in progress and attainment.
- Whether lessons are promoting the best possible progress for all groups of pupils, especially in mathematics and for boys' writing.
- How well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are learning and if they are effectively prepared for their work in the infant classes.

Information about the school

This school is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with around 10% having Asian or European heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is more than double that seen nationally, including a high number of pupils who have complex needs. A relatively high number of pupils transfer to the school part-way through their education, especially during Key Stage 2.

The school is accredited for its work through the Healthy School status and the Activemark, Eco schools and Investors in Pupils awards. It has received national recognition for leadership work and for promoting pupils' involvement in the school and wider community. The governing body offers a breakfast club on the premises. The school shares a site with a children's centre. This is subject to a separate report.

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

This is a good school. The headteacher leads the successful drive for improvement and generates strong ambition. Senior managers regularly complete thorough reviews of performance, and the school sets itself challenging targets. This system of self-evaluation is successful in providing an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has led to many improvements. For example, learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in mathematics throughout the school has improved. The capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. However, in writing, the pace of learning slows temporarily as pupils transfer into Year 1. During Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress and it is often rapid in Years 5 and 6. Reading and mathematics are strengths. Writing has improved well but a minority of pupils experience difficulties in spelling, largely because of gaps in their understanding of 'letters and sounds'.

Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. There have been some good improvements in the provision. Key Stage 1 pupils are sometimes taught in small, focused ability groups for 'letters and sounds' where they make good progress. However, when they are taught in a large mixed-ability group, learning is slower. There are no clear, progressive expectations set for the standard of handwriting as pupils move through the school, so attainment in this aspect of writing is variable.

The school is a harmonious community where pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Behaviour is good both in lessons and leisure time, and pupils say they feel safe. Attendance is average but is adversely affected by a few families who take pupils out of school for holidays or visits during term time. Pupils play an active role in the local community but have little understanding of life in communities further afield.

The good curriculum includes intervention strategies and personalised teaching that successfully boosts learning and meets individual needs well. This provision is not extended to specifically support 'letters and sounds' work at Key Stage 2. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils. Staff seek out expert help or resources where needed, especially for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are deemed to be vulnerable.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve progress in writing by:

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

- ensuring that the assessments of pupils' progress in writing are used more effectively in providing continuity of learning between the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1
 - ensuring that the work in all 'letters and sounds' groups is focused on meeting pupils' needs and building carefully on prior learning
 - extending the 'letters and sounds' provision into Key Stage 2 for those pupils who need extra help with spelling and writing
 - developing clear, progressive expectations for handwriting as pupils move through the school.
- Improve attendance further by working with a few families to reduce the number of days lost due to pupils taking holidays or extended leave during term time.
 - Extend pupils' understanding of life beyond the immediate environment by developing links with contrasting communities nationally and globally.

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

Pupils rise to the challenges that their teachers set for them and say they enjoy learning. In one Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils solved problems relating to ratio and proportion, while those in Year 4 worked confidently to interpret pictograms and produce their own frequency tables. Those in Year 3 produced some imaginative writing, searching out powerful adjectives to create a 'creepy' atmosphere and pupils in Year 5 wrote formal letters to a good standard. All age groups have positive attitudes to learning and work hard.

When they enter the Nursery children's skills are below the range expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the end of the Reception year, their attainment is average. This marks a good improvement on previous years because historically attainment on entry to Year 1 has been below average. Progress is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Reading is a strength and more pupils are now working at the higher level in mathematics. Progress in writing is slower for some pupils in both key stages, largely because they do not have a secure understanding of 'letters and sounds' in order to help them spell words correctly. Historically, attainment in writing has been lower for the boys compared to the girls. Teachers are dealing with the issue by choosing texts and topics to fire boys' imagination and the gap is closing quickly. By the end of Year 6, attainment is average for the majority. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who enter school part-way through their education are well supported so they make good progress.

Moral, social and spiritual development is especially good; pupils are polite and care for each other. Pupils have a sound knowledge of, and good respect for, faiths and cultures that are different from their own. Their good contribution to the school and local community is recognised through a national award. School councillors ensure that pupils' views are represented in the decision-making process and the eco councillors are instrumental in promoting environmental awareness. Pupils play an active role within the local community as well, but their understanding of everyday life within contrasting cultures is limited. Pupils are keen to succeed and are soundly prepared for their future education. The majority of pupils attend regularly and most absences are due to medical

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

reasons. However, a few families do not cooperate fully with school and take children on holidays or visits during term time.

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	3
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	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?

Relationships are good and pupils trust their teachers. Lessons have clear objectives so pupils know exactly what is expected of them, and good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning. Teachers generally use assessments of pupils' progress to plan tasks that build systematically on prior learning. However, both the use of assessment information and the provision are not sufficiently dovetailed between the Reception class and Year 1, which means that, in writing, the pace of learning slows temporarily. Teaching assistants provide good, targeted support for groups of pupils who need extra help, both in class and small group sessions. Marking is good and includes helpful comments. Good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work are helping them to become more independent learners.

The curriculum is well planned and successfully extends skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subject studies. A major strength of the curriculum lies in the tailoring of tasks and support to meet specific needs and to provide a boost for learning. A range of intervention programmes and individual tuition provides very good support for personal, academic and language development. The focused group work for 'letters and sounds' is effective. However, on occasions when pupils at different levels of ability are taught

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

together, their needs are not fully met. This programme is restricted to Key Stage 1, although the school knows that some pupils in Key Stage 2 would benefit from further input. Pupils take good advantage of an interesting selection of extra-curricular clubs and competitive sport, including that provided through the secondary schools.

Pupils' welfare is at the heart of this school's work. Pupils who have highly specific needs, or emotional or behavioural difficulties are very well supported by trained staff, nurture sessions and outside agencies. New arrivals to school, many of whom have experienced major difficulties in their previous schools, have expert support so they quickly integrate into the community and settle well. An established behaviour policy encourages positive behaviour and hard work; rewards and sanctions are well understood. The implementation of a more rigorous attendance policy, the introduction of a breakfast club, together with the determined efforts of the family worker and outside agencies, has resulted in fewer absences. However, the school knows that there is more to do before it reaches its own ambitious attendance target.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong, focused leadership and clear direction. Teamwork is good and staff are focused on providing the best for the pupils. The school is well run on a day-to-day basis; procedures and policies are consistently followed and value for money is good. Staff pay good attention to ensuring that no groups of pupils are disadvantaged, so all have an equal opportunity to succeed. For example, an improved system for tracking pupils' progress means that senior managers have an accurate view of the achievements of different groups of pupils. They use the information well to provide for a complex range of pupils' needs, to target support and provide a boost to learning where needed.

Community cohesion is successful in promoting harmony in school and in providing opportunities for pupils to engage with the local community. Links with different communities nationally and around the world are not established. Safeguarding meets requirements and is satisfactory. Staff have regular updates in their child protection training and are well equipped to deal with any concerns. The governing body is supportive and includes a good range of expertise and experience. Members are currently developing a more active role in monitoring and evaluating key policies.

Parents and carers receive a good amount of information about school life, the curriculum, and their children's progress. They are becoming increasingly engaged in their children's education but a small minority are not fully supportive of the drive to improve attendance.

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

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start in the Nursery, children's levels of development varies widely. Overall, they have a range of skills that are below expectations for the age group. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly. Teaching is good. Skills of independence are promoted successfully as children are constantly encouraged to follow their own lines of enquiry and explore their world. Planning takes careful account of children's interests and their stage of learning in order to keep them well motivated and challenged. For example, some children engaged in role play with puppets to learn about sharing. Others practised their developing skills by retelling and writing about a story they had enjoyed together.

Children make good progress and are working at the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Leadership and management are good and ensure that routines, policies and procedures are consistently followed. There are good systems for sharing information with parents and carers, many of whom stay to share the first session of the day with their children. During the inspection, they enjoyed an early morning writing session together. Good links with the children's centre provide additional resources and family support.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire have positive views and all are happy with their children's experiences of school. Quotes that reflect these opinions include: 'Teachers make the lessons so interesting that my child wants to learn', and 'The staff are very good'. There are commendations for the good quality of teaching, the high standard of care and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Inspection findings endorse these views. Some parents and carers have concerns about the handling of unacceptable behaviour. The school caters for some pupils who have a range of behavioural and emotional difficulties and the inspection finds that good support strategies are in place. Leaders and governors were informed of parents and carers' views and are keen to allay any worries.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moorhouse 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	58	10	38	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	65	9	35	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	62	8	31	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	69	8	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	58	10	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	58	10	38	1	4	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)	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	50	7	27	4	15	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	54	11	42	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	62	9	35	1	4	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.



30 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorhouse Primary School, Rochdale, OL16 4DR

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us.

Moorhouse Primary is a good school. You all get on well together and take good care of each other. Well done! Thank you to the pupils who filled in their questionnaires and those who chatted with us. It is good to hear comments such as: 'Our teachers make learning fun.'

You are keen to learn, work hard and are making good progress. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy their work and play and are doing well. In Years 1 to 6 your reading and mathematics work is good. Your writing is improving but we think you could do even better. Your attendance has improved but valuable learning time is lost when a few of you take holidays or go on visits in term time. You make a good contribution to your school and local community and are keen to learn more about the wider world. To make the school even better we have asked your teachers to:

- make sure that your lessons in writing follow on smoothly from the Reception class into Year 1
- provide more small-group sessions for the older pupils and improve the sessions for the younger ones to help you all learn your 'letters and sounds'
- provide more help for you to improve your handwriting
- work with your parents and carers to reduce term-time holidays and visits
- develop links with other schools so that you can learn more about how people live in other areas of the country and overseas.

You can help by continuing to work hard.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had and for letting us share your work and play. Please accept our best wishes for the future and continue to enjoy your happy school.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Read

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.