

Moorlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103908
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	355487
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Windmill
Headteacher	Haydn Moss
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2008
School address	Winchester Road West Bromwich B71 2NZ
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Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2011
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by nine teachers. They held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors, staff and representatives of some of the school's partner organisations. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, planning and monitoring files, samples of pupils' work and considered responses to questionnaires from 98 parents and carers.

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

- Is teaching equally effective in each key stage so that pupils make steady progress through the school?
- What impact does the school's creative curriculum have on pupils' progress?
- How does the school check the effect of its community cohesion policy on pupils' knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity?

Information about the school

The school is of below-average size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average and the proportion from minority ethnic groups is average. An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language but none is at the early stages of learning English. The school identifies about one in five pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is an average proportion. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school holds the Gold Artsmark. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed since the last 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Moorlands Primary School provides an exciting and varied curriculum that the pupils really enjoy. Progress is consistently good across the school and standards are broadly average in English and mathematics in Year 6. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and highly motivated to improve their work, especially their writing. This enthusiasm is reflected in strongly improving attendance, although the attendance rate is still broadly average. A wide range of interventions helps pupils with learning difficulties, resulting in outstanding progress for some pupils. The school also does a lot to enrich learning and secure good progress for those pupils it identifies as gifted and talented. Behaviour is good and pupils know how to stay safe and keep healthy. Pupils get on well together and confidently talk about their views and feelings. They know different religions are represented in the school but have scant knowledge of the beliefs associated with each religion or the connections between them.

Teaching is good and lessons are well-planned on the basis of accurate assessments. Good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils are usually supported well in class. Occasionally whole-class teaching goes on for too long, leaving insufficient time for full use to be made of staff to support active learning and challenge pupils at an individual level. Thematic studies link subjects together and develop literacy and numeracy skills well but activities do not always stretch pupils of all abilities. Provision is good in the Reception class, helping children to make good progress in all the areas of learning.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead a new 'drive team' that provides dynamic, purposeful leadership and management. This has resulted in marked improvements in most areas of the school's work and a good capacity to continue improving. Since the last inspection the quality of provision and outcomes have been brought up to good from satisfactory. The impact of the team's work is evident in the pupils' enthusiasm for school and in the quality of writing and presentation in their books and in the attractive displays of their work around the school.

The school is highly regarded in the area and takes a lead within the local Learning Community Trust in aspects of the creative curriculum and in assessment for learning. The governing body knows the school well through visits and feedback from staff. Procedures to promote community cohesion are secure but are not evaluated rigorously enough to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the ethnic and religious diversity that is present in the locality and wider world.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve outcomes for pupils by:

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- ensuring that pupils spend as much lesson time as possible working on tasks that challenge them at their own level
- incorporating more challenging and extended tasks into thematic studies
- always making full use of available adults to question, support and challenge pupils as they work.
- Improve the pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity by:
 - implementing the community cohesion action plan more effectively
 - checking the impact of the policy on pupils' understanding of different religions within the local and wider communities.

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

Attainment on entry to the Reception class is well-below-average and by the end of Year 6 pupils reach broadly average standards. Attainment has risen over the past two years in each year group following significant improvements to assessment procedures. The pupils know their targets in English and mathematics and identify for themselves what they need to do to improve. Their books show good progress in grammar, punctuation and spelling in each year group, and increasing quality in the content of their writing. The work is always well presented, regardless of the attainment level of the pupils, with neat joined handwriting a noticeable feature. The pupils' good behaviour and high levels of interest enhance their learning. When tasks are demanding they sustain effort and concentration for long periods, and when inspired by creative teaching they show great enthusiasm. This was seen in Year 3 when pupils were bursting with ideas about the mysterious box that had suddenly appeared in the classroom as if the story they were reading was 'real'. The spoken and written language that emerged was rich and creative. They work well individually and cooperate well with their peers when required.

Displays around the school reflect good progress in a range of subjects, including mathematics and science. In occasional lessons where class teaching goes on too long, pupils do their best to behave well but restlessness occurs and has to be managed. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties learn well because the work they have is at the correct level and they know that expert adult support is on hand if needed. Tracking records show that those taken out of the class for individual support, for example to catch up in reading, make exceptionally good progress.

Many pupils say they take part in activities that keep them active such as sports, gardening and dancing. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, including serving on the school council, and are proud of their contribution to the school. Through the eco-club they are also involved in local community projects such as an anti-litter campaign. The pupils feel well supported in school and older ones are confident about moving up to the secondary school because of the good preparation they receive. The enrichment of the curriculum and recently introduced rewards and incentives have had a positive impact on attendance. Absences have reduced sharply over the past two years and school data indicate that attendance is now significantly higher than the average for schools in similar contexts.

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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	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	2
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?

Teaching has improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. Teachers make increasingly effective use of good assessment information to plan lessons that cater for all abilities. Teachers and teaching assistants often use questioning well to challenge pupils individually during introductions and when groups are working. On occasions introductions to lessons last too long and cover ground that is too easy for some pupils or too hard for others. When this occurs, teaching assistants play a limited role and the pace of learning slows. Tasks are usually planned for all levels of attainment in the class but are sometimes too easily accomplished by higher-attaining pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties are provided with well-thought-out individual programmes to address specific needs.

The school's curriculum provides a wide range of rich experiences for the pupils, including growing vegetables and raising chickens. Music and drama productions also feature prominently in the calendar and the school serves as a model for creative opportunities within the area. These activities support the pupils' personal development well and encourage positive attitudes to learning, but are not yet fully exploited to challenge pupils to improve their knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Parents and carers are very appreciative of the good quality of care and guidance provided by the school. They know that their children are well looked after. Pupils know how well they are doing and are increasingly involved in making choices about their learning. The

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school is actively seeking ways of providing more information to parents and carers about what their children are learning and how they can help.

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?

Leadership and management have improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. Good progress has been made on addressing the key issues and all members of staff share the sense of ambition generated by the leadership team. There is wide involvement of teaching staff in leadership and management roles and a strong feeling of mutual challenge and support in improving the school. Teaching and learning are consistently monitored and teachers are fully accountable for the progress their pupils make each year.

The governing body works well. It has strengthened its monitoring role and acts effectively as a critical friend, challenging the headteacher to account for the standards achieved. Safeguarding procedures are good, with very well-organised routines, high-quality staff training and rigorous health and safety checks. Equality of opportunity is strongly embedded in the school at all levels. Boys and girls, and pupils from all backgrounds and from different ethnic groups are encouraged to participate in all activities. The school's success in eliminating discrimination is reflected in the comment by a pupil from a minority ethnic group that he had been called racist names in the past but there were no racist comments at all now. The school actively promotes community cohesion and celebrates ethnic and religious diversity through multi-cultural events. It also ensures that children learn about different religions in religious education lessons. The impact of these measures on pupils' understanding of religious beliefs and how they are related to each other is not evaluated rigorously enough, however, so some misconceptions persist.

Partnerships are used well to enrich the pupils' learning experience, for example through specialist sports coaching. Parents and carers express confidence in the school's leadership and appreciate the way the school makes learning enjoyable for their children.

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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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children join the Reception class their skills are lower than expected for their age. Their communication, language and literacy skills are particularly low, especially those relating to writing. Good provision ensures that they make rapid progress across the areas of learning. Their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills are particularly well provided for. Clear routines ensure that the children know what happens during the day. Good safeguarding procedures underpin arrangements and the children confidently discuss hygiene and safety measures that they need to take. They develop a good degree of independence and self-confidence because the staff encourage them to make their own decisions and look after themselves to the greatest extent they can. The staff talk with the children as they play, helping them to develop their vocabulary and to communicate clearly. Reading and writing skills are developed well through regular lessons in linking sounds to letters and plenty of opportunities during the day for children to practice writing as they play.

The children learn well because their play is often linked to a topic they enjoy. They are confident to explain what they are doing and why. For example, some children said they were painting the floor to make it slippery for the wolf having listened to the story of Little Red Riding Hood earlier. The staff keep detailed records of the children's progress and adjust their planning to fill any gaps that emerge in knowledge and skills. The setting is well led and managed, with good teamwork between the teachers and teaching assistants and good monitoring procedures. Children were observed playing in the outdoor area for much of the time during the inspection but this is not covered so of limited use in inclement weather. The school has plans to address this issue.

By the end of the Reception year children's attainment is still slightly below average, despite good progress. because of the low starting points. Transition into Year 1 is handled well, with provision for child-initiated activities during the first term. The school is

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aware that this does not always provide sufficient time for the youngest children to achieve all the early learning goals and is considering how best to extend learning through play further into Key Stage 1.

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 response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was above the national average for primary schools. Those who responded expressed overwhelmingly positive views of the school. Many expressed approval of the school's varied curriculum. As one comment put it: 'Moorlands is a fantastic school. The teaching is innovative and my child is always buzzing about their latest topic'. Others expressed appreciation of the individual support given to their children, as exemplified by the comment: 'they have shown excellent support and deal with any of my concerns quickly and efficiently'. Only one or two negative comments were received. These related to individual incidents and were brought to the headteacher's attention.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moorlands 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 98 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	63	34	35	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	68	69	30	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	56	57	41	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	51	47	48	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	53	44	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	48	47	48	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	45	52	53	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	40	52	53	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	50	46	47	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	43	46	47	4	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	40	50	51	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	54	44	45	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	58	40	41	1	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



26 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorlands Primary School, West Bromwich B71 2NZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to my colleagues and me when we visited your school. It is a good school. You told us that the best thing about the school was all the different things you get to do and we agree. We liked the wildlife areas and your vegetable garden and chickens. You feel safe in school, behave well and do your best to stay healthy. You told us the names of the different religions represented in your school, but you did not know very much about them and we have asked your teachers to help you learn more about that.

You do well at school and reach the standards expected of you. We were particularly impressed with the quality of your writing and with how you try to improve your work. Your lessons are interesting and sometimes exciting. You find some of the work hard, but we think your teachers could make you work even harder some of the time. Your headteacher and the other staff work together well as a team and your parents and carers like the school. We have asked the teachers to do just two things to make your school even better and these are:

- help you to tackle even harder tasks some of the time so that you reach higher standards in your work
- help you to learn more about the different religions and how they connect together.

You can help by being willing to do even harder work and by trying to find out things for yourself about different religions and cultures.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr

Lead inspector

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