

Moulton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122102
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380403
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2012
Lead inspector	Mandy Snook

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gail Redmond
Headteacher	Peter Sturges
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2009
School address	Church Hill Moulton Northampton NN3 7SW
Telephone number	01604 643061
Fax number	01604 642328
Email address	Head@moulton-pri.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Mandy Snook

Additional Inspector

Ian Jones

Additional Inspector

Lindsay Hall

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 23 lessons, saw 12 teachers and spent 10 hours in lessons. The team listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, two groups of pupils and informal discussions were held with some parents and carers. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, looked at the school's improvement plan, assessment and tracking records and documents relating to safeguarding and the school's evaluation of its work. Questionnaires returned by 91 parents and carers were analysed, as well as those returned by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Moulton Primary is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils, known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportions of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or who are supported at school action plus are below the national averages. The school has two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school holds the Healthy Schools, Active Mark and Investors in People (silver) awards. There is a before-and-after-school club (MASK), managed by the governing body, on the school site.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has significant strengths in being a caring and cohesive community, which provides extensive and effective support for pupils' personal development. It is not good overall because the progress of higher ability pupils in Key Stage 2, in particular, is not yet consistently good or rapid enough and expectations of the quality of written work are not sufficiently high. In addition, children in Reception are making inconsistent progress, especially when communicating through writing, in their personal and emotional development and physical development. Schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by Ofsted before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress over time. They leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is above average but make satisfactory progress overall. They do slightly better in mathematics than in English, because there are limited opportunities for pupils to reinforce and extend their writing skills in English lessons.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Good relationships between staff and pupils promote a positive learning environment. However, planning lacks sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Pupils behave well and are eager to share their ideas. They work well in grouped activities and show a positive attitude to learning. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous to visitors. They, and their parents and carers, feel that the school is a safe place in which to learn. The school works successfully to maintain attendance at above-average levels.
- While many aspects of leadership and management are good, the leadership of teaching is not sufficiently focused to ensure consistent expectations and higher outcomes for pupils. Lessons are monitored regularly but not enough use is made of assessment data to check if teachers are pitching lessons at a suitable level.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement, especially in writing and for higher attaining pupils by:
 - ensuring that teachers set work that is sufficiently challenging for more able pupils in all lessons
 - making sure that pupils' writing skills are well developed and extended in all lessons.

- Accelerate progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that writing activities are frequent enough, have a clear learning purpose and are suitably challenging
 - establishing a systematic approach to letter formation
 - making sure that activities to promote personal and social development and physical development are challenging enough to promote children's independence and confidence.

- Increase the impact of leadership and management by using the available tracking data to evaluate classroom practice and pupils' progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children begin school with skills and knowledge that are expected for their ages but this fluctuates from year to year. Children make good progress in the development of reading but slower progress in writing skills and in some aspects of personal and social and physical development because expectations are not always high enough. They do well with problem solving, counting and they enjoy learning about letters and sounds (phonics).

Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and reach above average standards in both reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1 where they have many opportunities to write and read about interesting topics. In addition, pupils are provided with effective teaching and help to embed reading and comprehension skills, which help to accelerate learning. For example, a lively and challenging poetry lesson engaged the pupils and enabled them to have valuable discussions with their talk partners. Pupils also make good progress in mathematics and attain above average outcomes.

However, in Key Stage 2, progress slows down and is satisfactory rather than good. Higher attaining pupils make more limited progress than others due to lack of sufficiently challenging tasks at times. Some lessons still remain interesting for pupils of all abilities, providing good opportunities for learning. For example, pupils enjoyed a music lesson where they learned how to develop complicated rhythm patterns and to use sophisticated music terminology.

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Attainment in reading is above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Those who read to inspectors read fluently and with expression. Pupils showed a good ability to use their phonic knowledge to sound out more difficult words in the text but a few had limited comprehension of the content.

Progress and attainment in mathematics improved significantly in 2011, although pupils currently in Year 5 and 6 are making satisfactory progress. Progress in writing is slower because insufficient emphasis is placed on the teaching of writing skills, and opportunities for extended writing are limited.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress as a result of well planned and regular interventions. This is partly due to the impact of the well-trained support staff and effective inclusion policies.

Parents and carers feel that their children make good progress. Inspection evidence indicates, however, that pupils' achievement, while satisfactory overall, is inconsistent, particularly in Key Stage 2 and, to some extent in Reception.

Quality of teaching

The teaching of phonics in Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is supported by a good range of activities, which is accurately matched to individual needs. Phonics sessions are taught effectively and pupils learn to break down and blend sounds. The phonic puppets in Reception create a comfortable atmosphere and engage children in learning new words and helping to clear misconceptions. However, writing opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not frequent enough, or consistently purposeful and challenging, and letter formation skills are not taught systematically. These weaknesses limit children's progress in writing. A lack of challenge in some activities to encourage both personal, social and emotional development and physical development restricts progress in these areas of learning.

In lessons where teaching is good or outstanding, teachers make effective use of pace, creative resources and probing questions to encourage pupils' thinking. The enthusiasm and subject knowledge of many of the teachers engages pupils and helps them to acquire skills and understanding of the topics covered. However, in lessons where teaching is satisfactory, the work planned is not always challenging enough for higher attaining pupils. Pupils receive some detailed and accurate feedback in their books but this is neither consistent nor helpful enough to secure good progress.

The creative curriculum is beginning to support better progress in pupils' core skills and providing opportunities for extended writing across all subjects, which coincide with the focus on developing writing skills. However, this is in the early stages of development and pupils' writing skills are not yet extended enough in Key Stage 2. Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is generally effective and teaching assistants are well prepared and have a positive impact upon

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pupils' learning.

Parents and carers, and pupils, feel that the quality of teaching is good. However, inspectors found that, while much teaching was good, there was also much that was satisfactory and the impact of teaching over time has resulted in mostly satisfactory progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, and pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and this leads to good learning in many lessons. Pupils are keen to participate in lessons and many are able to work independently and to stay on task even when the pace of teaching is not brisk enough, or when they are not sufficiently challenged.

Conduct around the school is respectful, co-operative and polite with many pupils warmly greeting visitors and engaging in appropriate and friendly dialogue. The vast majority of parents and carers, and pupils believe that typical behaviour is good and incident logs show that this is true. Pupils are keen to talk about their work and speak highly of their school. They say that bullying mostly takes the form of name-calling, and is rare. Pupils say that when this does happen, members of staff deal with it both effectively and quickly.

The majority of teachers manage behaviour well, following the clear strategies of the school's behaviour policy. Almost all parents and carers said their children feel safe at school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying or harassment, such as racism. The valuable work of the school's inclusion officer has helped to reduce persistent absence so attendance has risen rapidly and is now above average.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers, at all levels, have an ambitious vision for the school and for the well-being of all pupils. Pastoral care is a strong aspect of the school, creating a caring and nurturing environment for the pupils. The breakfast- and after-school club (MASK) provides a safe and healthy environment for pupils to relax and enjoy one another's company.

Since the last inspection, the following areas of development have been addressed: more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in writing, laptops support information and communication technology lessons, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have received more targeted and effective individual education plans and interventions. This has resulted in good progress for these pupils.

Observations of teaching are regular and inform the professional development of

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staff. There is, however, some inconsistency in the regularity and detail of monitoring of whole-school aspects, including tracking the rate of pupils' progress, which has failed to identify some groups, resulting in them making less progress than others. Although assessment data is collected each term, the information is not analysed in enough depth to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning or to make teachers more accountable for pupils' rate of progress.

Leaders and managers are supportive of the headteacher's priorities and the practice of some leaders is good. The recent appointment of two senior leaders has had a positive impact on the school. Capacity for improvement is securely satisfactory.

Parents and carers are supportive of the school and pleased with the way it enhances their children's development. A few are critical of the way the school manages behaviour. Inspectors found that rare instances of poor behaviour are managed well, but actions are not always communicated effectively to parents and carers.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched with trips to places of interest, such as The Isle of Wight residential trips. The pupils are given social responsibility by being involved in fund raising for the Northants Trustee Fund's support of a school in Gambia. They also have strong links with the local area and with the parish church. These opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth.

The governing body plays an influential role in giving the school strategic direction and in asking searching questions. It knows the school well, is energetic in its support and provides a good level of challenge. The governing body has ensured that the requirements for safeguarding are met and discrimination is tackled effectively. However, the promotion of equalities is satisfactory because higher attaining pupils are not receiving the level of stimulation and challenge that would enable them to achieve their potential.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



28 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moulton Primary School, Northampton, NN3 7SW

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school. You were all well behaved and friendly and we appreciated your willingness to talk to us about your work and to share your experiences at school. We enjoyed watching you learn and play. Thank you to those who took time to complete our questionnaire.

We found that yours is a satisfactory school and it is improving steadily. You make satisfactory progress overall but your progress is faster through Year 1 and Year 2 and you reach above average attainment in reading and mathematics by Year 6. There is good support for those of you who have struggled in the past. Some teaching is good and, where this is the case, you make good progress. You enjoy the lessons which make you think hard, broaden your understanding and give you the chance to practise a lot of skills. You behave well and your attendance is above average. Well done!

To help you to do better, we have asked the school to:

- ensure that the monitoring of your progress is more thorough and that teachers have higher expectations of your writing
- make sure work for those of you who are quick learners is challenging enough
- provide children in Reception with good quality writing activities on a regular basis.

You all can help by working hard and telling your teachers what you particularly enjoy about learning and doing your best to improve your writing.

Yours sincerely

Mandy Snook
Lead inspector

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