

# Moorlands Infant School

Moorfield Road, Bath, BA2 2DQ

## Inspection dates

23–24 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils in Year 1 make slower progress than they should in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not expect enough of the more-able pupils in writing and mathematics. They could do more and work at a faster pace.
- Pupils do not have enough chances to write freely and independently. The sheets they are given to fill in often restrict them to short pieces of work when they could write more.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, particularly in Year 1. Some teaching is inadequate. Not enough attention is given to planning work that is pitched correctly so that all pupils learn well.
- Some leaders lack experience in driving forward improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. They talk about what they have done but are less confident in checking what has, or has not, worked well.
- Governors do not challenge the school sufficiently to make sure that weaker aspects are remedied. They have not checked that the extra money the school gets for the more disadvantaged pupils helps them to do well.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's drive and determination comes through very strongly. Some inadequate teaching has been tackled successfully. The headteacher has gained agreement among staff that the school needs to improve and they want to bring this about
- Pupils are well behaved. They enjoy learning and playing together and treat one another with respect.
- Pupils enjoy school and try their very best, even when lessons are not very interesting. They work well together and often talk about 'learning' and 'persevering'. They know that these are important things they need to do.
- Children in Reception enjoy the friendly, supportive atmosphere. They gain in confidence and soon become familiar with the expectations and routines.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors saw teaching in all classes and observed 16 lessons. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors talked informally to pupils, heard some read, and met with a group to find out their views about their school. Meetings were held with the senior leadership team and other leaders, governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 78 responses to the questionnaire on the Parent View website. They also considered several letters that parents handed in during the inspection. Nineteen questionnaires, completed by staff, were also analysed.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including senior leaders' plans for improvement, information on pupils' progress, governors' reports and records relating to pupils' safety and welfare. Inspectors looked at pupils' books to see their work from the beginning of September.

## Inspection team

Margaret Dickinson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Catherine Leahy

Seconded Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Since its last inspection, the school has been federated with Moorlands Junior School. This shares the same site, along with a children’s centre. The headteacher leads, and a single governing body serves, both schools. The junior school was not inspected as part of this inspection.
- The infant school is smaller than average when compared to primary schools nationally.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra help with their learning (school action) has reduced to below average. The proportion who need more in-depth support (school action plus) or who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. The school receives additional funding to support these pupils’ education.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club that is not managed by the governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in writing and mathematics so that more teaching is good, especially in Year 1, by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write independently and to write longer pieces of work using information about what pupils already can do to plan work that is challenging for them
  - expecting more from pupils when they are given writing tasks across different subjects
  - showing in the plans for lessons how the pupils who need to make rapid progress are going to be helped to do this
  - checking carefully how well each pupil is learning during the lesson and making adjustments if their learning slows down
  - explaining to pupils when they get things wrong in mathematics how they can put things right
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to speak in lessons to talk about their learning, offer suggestions and ask questions.
- Ensure all leaders contribute strongly and effectively to improving the school, by:
  - developing the skills of leaders who are in charge of subjects, so that they can check teaching and learning and identify exactly what needs to be put right
  - extend the deputy headteacher’s role in monitoring pupils’ performance, especially those who are not making sufficient progress
  - make sure the extra funding the school receives for pupils on free school meals is spent wisely, and correctly, and check whether it is making a difference to these pupils’ learning and progress.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children start school with skills and experiences that are broadly typical for their age. As they move through the school they make adequate progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with disabilities and those who receive extra help with their learning also make adequate progress. As a result, pupils' attainment is broadly average by the time the pupils leave Year 2.
- Not all pupils are benefiting from consistently good teaching. Progress is not good because learning slows down in Year 1 and too much catching up has to take place in Year 2. The slower progress is not widespread across the whole of Year 1; it is just too inconsistent. For some pupils in Year 1, their writing has moved on a long way since September, with spelling and handwriting coming on well and some attempts at writing longer pieces.
- The school is not giving the more able pupils enough opportunity to fulfil their potential. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write independently and have a go at longer pieces of writing. This is often the case in lessons when pupils are learning about different subjects, such as geography and science. The more able writers are often given sheets to fill in when they are capable of writing more independently.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy the variety of experiences they are given. These help them to build confidence, make choices, and consider other children when sharing things and playing. Some children who could cope with a more focused activity, led by an adult, miss out because they continue with free exploration for the whole session.
- Pupils very much enjoy looking at books and reading. Pupils in Year 2 use what they know about sounds, and how they build into words, and they have a go at reading unfamiliar words. The pupils who receive additional support in Year 1 do not know enough about the sounds that letters make to tackle their writing tasks. These are often too hard for these pupils, even with the support of a teaching assistant, and the adults have to step in and do too much for them.
- Pupils' mathematics books show adequate progress. This matches what inspectors saw in lessons. The school has introduced a new way of teaching mathematics and this is in its very early stages. It is too soon for this to be showing good results because teachers, and pupils, are still finding their way with the new approach.
- In the last two years the pupils who have been eligible for free school meals have done well. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has compared favourably with the standards these pupils reach nationally. They make adequate progress, but should be making good progress along with the other groups in the school.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Typically, teaching is too inconsistent. There is not enough good teaching to make sure pupils make good progress. Specifically, the teaching in Year 1 needs to improve.
- The headteacher's focus has been very much on improving learning. The school's motto of 'Great learning, great teaching, great fun' puts learning first and foremost for this very reason. Learning is not yet 'great', although teachers know this is what they are aiming for.
- When planning lessons, teachers do not always consider what each pupil already knows and needs to learn next. They have identified pupils who need to make rapid progress to catch up, but do not plan the right work to help them do this.
- Work is not always pitched at the right level for the pupils. In one mathematics lesson, pupils with special educational needs were slow to get going because they were unsure what to do. In another lesson, the teacher told pupils where to write their numbers when they got them wrong, rather than explaining why and helping them to understand. This did not help them learn and frustration crept in. One pupil was heard to say, 'I'm rubbish' although another was very proud to have 'persevered'.

- Teachers do not always check pupils' learning within lessons. They tend to stick to their plans and do not consider whether they need to alter their approach, change their questions, or do some fine tuning to improve pupils' learning.
- Too often, teachers do most of the talking in lessons and work harder than the pupils. This limits the chances for pupils to talk, ask questions, share their thinking, and explain what they can do. When the teachers control the lessons in this way, it often means pupils listen for too long and their natural enthusiasm and energy start to fade away.
- Teachers encourage the pupils and make sure that the atmosphere in lessons is supportive and friendly. They manage pupils who have moments of challenging behaviour extremely well. They have benefited from training in managing behaviour, led by a senior leader, and this is working well. The few occasions when pupils interrupt the learning in lessons are becoming rare.
- Teachers are good at promoting good relations. This encourages the pupils to work happily with each other. Some teaching assistants give very good support to the most vulnerable pupils. In one mathematics lesson, a pupil who received one-to-one support made very good progress and was proud that he had completed a lot of work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Children in Reception settle quickly and happily into school. They enjoy the friendly, supportive atmosphere and all the choices they have to explore and learn. They gain in confidence and soon become familiar with the expectations and routines.
- Pupils love coming to school. They are very happy and feel safe and well supported. They enjoy the different topics they cover, such as the circus, and talk enthusiastically about all the things they do in school.
- Pupils are sensible in the playground where they play well together. They know that in practical lessons, like physical education, they need to be careful so that no one gets hurt. They listened carefully to the teacher and showed consideration for others when using the equipment and climbing bars.
- Pupils' behaviour observed during the inspection was good, with evidence to suggest this is typical. Parents' views also support this. Pupils said that they do not believe other children get picked on or teased badly. If this was to happen, they were very sure it would be sorted out 'straight away'.
- When they are given interesting work, pupils show they are keen to settle down and they work very hard. These qualities set them up well for the future. Pupils were even heard to cheer during the inspection when they were about to be given some addition sums in mathematics. In the less interesting lessons though, this early enthusiasm can disappear and some become restless and distracted.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection. The school has worked successfully to improve the attendance of a number of pupils who have in the past missed quite a lot of school. They are in school more now and their learning is benefiting.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Inspectors heard words such as 'energy', 'drive' and 'relentless' when staff and governors described the headteacher's vision and aspirations for the school. Everyone knows the school is aiming for 'great learning, great teaching, great fun', including the pupils. Questionnaires show staff are entirely positive about the school and the direction it is taking.
- The headteacher has made sure that improving teaching and learning have been at the forefront of her work. She has not shied away from challenging the weaker teaching and making changes if she believes these will benefit the children. This is absolutely right because the quality of teaching needs to improve if the school is to become a good school.
- Some teaching has improved and some pupils are benefiting from good teaching. However,

there is still further to go before it is good enough. Inspectors found the teachers on higher salaries are not all providing high-quality teaching, which demonstrates that the targets set for teachers are not having enough effect.

- The headteacher has judged carefully when and how extra support should be targeted and built strong links between both schools in the federation. The deputy headteacher, for instance, is benefiting from support from the deputy headteacher in the junior school and subject leaders are also developing their roles. These are moves in the right direction, but these leaders are not having a strong enough influence on improving all pupils' progress.
- The local authority has provided considerable support for the school during the period leading up to the school's federation. It has also provided support for the school, through regular visits by consultants. Some of this has involved supporting individual teachers. This has had some impact in helping to improve the consistency and quality of teaching.
- The senior leader responsible for pupils with special educational needs has made some positive improvements since her appointment a year ago. The plans to help these pupils learn more effectively have been sharpened. Some pupils have made good progress and do not need the extra support any longer. There have also been clear improvements in the behaviour of a few pupils who sometimes find it hard to manage their own behaviour.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know there are inconsistencies remaining in the school. They are aware that the school's data are showing this and know that there are some weaknesses in teaching. Governance requires improvement because it does not provide enough challenge to see through improvements in these areas. Governors recognise that the headteacher is making a difference. They are yet to show, through their strategic role, that they are holding the school to account effectively. Governors are not keeping a close enough check on how the extra money is spent for the pupils eligible for free school meals. Some of this funding is being spent inappropriately. Governors have not monitored this funding to make sure it directly benefits this group of pupils. The arrangements for keeping pupils safe are appropriate. Regular checks are carried out by the governor responsible for this aspect.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109001
<b>Local authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	401027

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	169
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Colin Lacey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Griffin-Felton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 422556
<b>Fax number</b>	01225 463056
<b>Email address</b>	moorlands_info@bathnes.gov.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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](mailto: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 information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012