

Moulton School

School Lane, Moulton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 8PD

Inspection dates 10–11 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and contributes strongly to their good learning. Strong relationships and a positive ethos ensure that pupils feel very safe in school.
- Attendance is above average and has improved.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and continue to make good progress across all key stages. Pupils reach standards in English and mathematics which are above national average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is now consistently good and some is outstanding. This is leading to improvements in pupils' achievement across all classes.
- The school is well led by the headteacher. Together with senior leaders and governors she has a clear view of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement further.
- Governors are highly supportive of the school and provide good challenge to ensure that the school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and activities are not always matched well enough to pupils' needs.
- Marking does not consistently give pupils clear guidance on how to improve.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solving problems.
- Teachers do not always ask pupils questions which challenge them and make them think about and explain their understanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons. In addition, they also made a number of short visits to lessons and small group sessions.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from four different year groups read, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 63 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, school questionnaires completed by staff and outcomes from the school's consultations with parents.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Bimla Kumari	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Moulton School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2012, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, there have been changes to staffing including to the senior leadership. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were not in post at the time of the last inspection.
- The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to further accelerate progress by:
 - making sure that activities set for pupils are precisely matched to their individual needs
 - ensuring that marking consistently gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work
 - consistently using challenging questions that extend pupils' thinking skills
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in solving problems.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The skills of children who start the Early Years Foundation Stage vary year on year. In literacy and personal and social development a substantial proportion of children start school with skills below those expected for their age. Children make good progress through Reception due to the good teaching and well-established routines.
- This good progress continues throughout both Key Stage 1 and 2. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average and by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils leave with standards in English and mathematics that are usually well above the national average.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 dipped last year, particularly in the numbers reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics. The most recent data shows that attainment has improved with the vast majority of current Year 6 pupils working at national expectations. The proportion of pupils working at higher levels has increased, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The teaching of reading is good and younger pupils show a good use of their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to read words. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading. New technology is used effectively to promote this. Results from the phonics check last year were above national averages and the most recent results show that this has been improved upon.
- Pupils' progress has varied between classes over time. Recent changes to staffing and current school data show that progress is now more consistent across all classes with the majority of pupils making good and in some cases outstanding progress. This has resulted in improvements in the achievement of all pupils, particularly in writing. The school has improved the quality of marking of writing and has extended opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and in different subjects.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics is above national levels at both key stages and progress is good, with the proportions making more than expected progress similar to national figures. This is because skills are taught systematically, though there are not enough opportunities to practise these to solve problems.
- The school has made very good use of its small allocation of funding for pupil premium. Last year, the attainment of the small number of pupils known to be eligible for this funding was about a term below the level of those not known to be eligible, their progress was good. This year school data shows that the attainment of most pupils eligible for free school meals is at similar levels to those not eligible and their progress is good.
- The vast majority of pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make at least good progress and some make outstanding progress, particularly in reading and writing because of the well-targeted support they receive from skilled teaching assistants.
- The intervention groups and support in class provided for all groups of pupils shows the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are actively engaged in their learning and there is a good balance between the activities which children pick for themselves and those which are led by adults. Children make good progress because of good teaching, which develops their skills well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and check on pupils' progress throughout the lesson. Although teachers regularly question pupils and give them opportunities to discuss their ideas with others, they do not always challenge pupils enough through their questioning to develop pupils' thinking skills further.
- In the best lessons teaching is very well organised and planned so that pupils make rapid gains in their learning. Pupils are keen to learn and are readily engaged in the tasks set for them. However, activities are not always matched well enough to pupils' different abilities, with some

finding them too easy or too hard, and this sometimes slows their pace of learning.

- Relationships with all members of staff are excellent and pupils are given a good range of opportunities to work cooperatively together, and to share their learning and understanding. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils used programming software to programme a 'sprite'. They worked effectively in pairs to develop their understanding. Learning was further enhanced as individual pupils taught the class how to use functions they had discovered.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs. They work well with individuals and small groups to ensure they make at least good progress.
- Advice to pupils on how to improve their work through marking has improved over time and there are some excellent examples in comments on their writing. In the best examples teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to improve and they have an opportunity to respond to this, which improves their standard of work. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes or subjects.
- Pupils develop their mathematical skills well. In a Year 2, lesson pupils were applying these to a problem-solving activity, having to estimate the size of paper and string needed to wrap a parcel and then working out the cost of this. However, there are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve problems.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in all areas of the school. They are polite and well-mannered and are very supportive of one another. For example, one older pupil tactfully reminded a younger one about using their manners in breakfast club.
- Pupils take on their responsibilities with pride, such as by becoming infant buddies and gardeners. The school council is active in making improvements in areas such as developing behaviour systems, raising awareness of bullying and raising money. The school council reports regularly to the governing body on its ideas, such as the codes for behaviour.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and describe it as a place where 'everyone is kind' and 'you have lots of friends'. They are very aware of how to keep themselves safe and of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying. For example, Year 6 pupils were interviewed by a journalist about their views on this and provided mature answers. They say that bullying is very rare and that any incidents are quickly dealt with.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their attendance is above average. They thrive on the different opportunities they have in music, art and sports, and the contribution they make to the local community. Pupils proudly showed the inspectors the school chickens and the eggs for sale, their well-tended vegetable garden and the scarecrow created for the village celebrations.
- Pupils work and play cooperatively, showing care and consideration for one another and listening attentively to each other's opinions. They have a good appreciation of different religions and cultures, which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The responses to Parent View indicate that the vast majority of parents agree that their children are very safe at school and exceptionally well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for continued school improvement, having an accurate picture of what the school needs to do to improve further. She has managed changes to staffing well, developing senior leaders and creating a highly motivated staff who share her determination to achieve the best for all pupils.
- There are regular checks on the quality of teaching by senior leaders, which have led to improvements through focused support and training. Teaching is now consistently good across all classes, resulting in more consistent and improved achievement across all classes.

Performance-management targets and salary increases are clearly linked to pupils' outcomes.

- Systems to track pupils' progress have improved, making the checks on pupils' progress more focused. This, linked with regular meetings with teachers and on-going checks on pupils' performance, ensures that any signs of underachievement are dealt with swiftly through specific additional support. The more recent training in and delivery of specific interventions has had a very positive impact on pupils' writing, for example.
- Subject leaders have a good knowledge of performance in their different areas and have action plans which are derived from a range of information, such as checking on the quality of planning and work and pupils' views.
- The local authority provides light touch support and training, for example, in developing Early Years Foundation Stage practice.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of additional opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through different visits and visitors, and pupils particularly enjoy the residential visits which occur each year from Year 2.
- The school provides parents with information through its learning platform and weekly newsletters and welcomes parents in to school for events such as the regular class assemblies and productions and as reading volunteers.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are fully in place and give no cause for concern.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly supportive of the school and use their skills and knowledge to support the school in its areas of development. They are well aware of the school's strengths and priorities for development, including how to develop their role further. Through regular reports from the headteacher they are well informed about the quality of teaching and the performance of the different groups of pupils. They have a good understanding of how staff performance is related to pay decisions and are involved in setting challenging targets for the headteacher. Governors undertake regular training, which helps them support and challenge the school's performance and make appropriate decisions on funding. Governors are fully aware of how the small amount of pupil premium is spent and the positive effect it has on the pupils who are entitled to it.

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

Unique reference number	111052
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	413207

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Daniel
Headteacher	Jane Birch
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
Telephone number	01606 288388
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@moulton.cheshire.sch.uk

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