

Moorpark Junior School

Park Road, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 1EL

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a good and improving school. Clear improvements have been made since the last inspection and a tangible drive to continually improve exists within the school. Leaders, including governors, and all staff have a sense of ambition for the pupils and for the community the school serves.
- Increasing proportions of pupils are making good progress because teaching, learning and assessment, over time, are at least good.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics have risen steadily and standards are at least in line with national averages.
- The headteacher is the driving force behind the improvements. Her leadership is outstanding. She has successfully built a team of effective senior leaders. As a result, capacity to secure further improvements in the school is good.
- Assessment is accurate and is helping teachers to plan the next steps in learning. Pupils respond very well to the constructive verbal and written feedback they receive and this helps them to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants work well in partnership with teachers. They provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils because they have good subject knowledge and are well briefed by teachers.
- Pupils are valued as individuals and have opportunities to voice their opinions about school life. They are confident, friendly and sensible. They feel safe at school and trust the adults.
- Teaching is characterised by activities that have a real-life purpose, and often includes practical activities and trips. Pupils respond well to this. They work hard in lessons, enjoy their learning and take pride in their successes. As a result, they enjoy school and attendance is good.
- The curriculum is well thought out. It is effective in supporting pupils' personal development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide a good level of support and challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their mathematical skills outside of mathematics lessons. In addition, the teaching of logic and reasoning is not yet fully developed.
- Sometimes, the tasks that are designed to provide extension and challenge to pupils are not demanding enough, particularly in mathematics.
- Some pupils are not expected to take responsibility for improving their spelling and are over-reliant on adults.
- A small number of pupils with special educational needs or disability are not making good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve teaching, learning and assessment, especially in mathematics, by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning and logic skills
 - providing pupils with opportunities to practise and apply their mathematics learning in other subjects
 - ensuring that tasks that are designed to provide extension and challenge to pupils are demanding enough
 - reducing pupils' reliance on adults to correct misspelled words.

- Accelerate the progress of pupils with all types of special educational needs or disability so that gaps between their outcomes and those of their peers reduce.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders, including governors, have been successful in bringing about improvements since the last inspection. There is a tangible drive in the school to continually improve. Adults have high expectations of the pupils and themselves. They are self-critical and reflective and as a result there is no complacency. The school's motto 'Reach, Believe, Explore, Achieve' underpins all the work they do.
- The headteacher is the driving force behind the school's improvements. Her leadership is highly effective and was described to inspectors by more than one member of staff as 'inspirational'. She is calmly determined. She has a clear and uncompromising vision for the school based on excellence for all staff and pupils. She has effectively built a team of senior leaders and employed staff at all levels of the school that share this vision. The systems that she and the senior leaders have implemented are systematic and methodical and have led to a high level of consistency throughout the school.
- Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and other aspects of school life. As a result, they have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and where further improvements are needed. They provide helpful advice after their checks and follow up swiftly to check improvements have been made.
- Leaders have secure systems in place to ensure their area of responsibility is of good quality. For example, behaviour is managed effectively. Leaders know individual pupils, especially those who demonstrate particularly challenging behaviour, very well. They provide effective and bespoke support for these pupils. Systems for following up absences are robust and methodical.
- The assistant headteachers provide a high level of expertise both in classroom practice and in coaching and mentoring skills. They have effectively supported the development of the subject leaders, which was identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection. Teachers with additional responsibilities are knowledgeable about their subject areas and make checks to identify where further improvements are required.
- The curriculum has been developed to broaden pupils' horizons and increase their aspirations. It is broad and balanced and supports the development of British values well. Pupils value their half termly trips linked to their topics, for example to Jodrell Bank, Chester Zoo and local theatres. Personal development is given a high priority. Pupils are involved in making decisions about aspects of school life, for example improving the playground, and are encouraged to take on responsibilities around school, for example librarian, display monitor or assembly assistant. Pupils have to apply for these roles and supply references. Together, these opportunities support their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- A small number of parents expressed concerns, through the online survey Parent View, about the way the school is led and managed. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns. Leaders have been effective in bringing about substantial improvements since the last inspection.
- The performance of all staff is regularly reviewed and a good level of training and support provided where necessary. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment are now at least good and staff are able to take on higher levels of responsibility. This means that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.
- Additional funding, for example pupil premium and primary school sport funding, is used effectively to improve outcomes for pupils. Money is targeted appropriately and based on the needs of the pupils at the school.
- Leadership and management is not yet outstanding because teaching, learning and assessment are not leading to rapid progress for all groups of pupils, for example pupils with special educational needs or disability, and there is still work to do to ensure improvements are sustained over time.
- The local authority has brokered effective support for the school since the last inspection. The national leader of education provided additional capacity for improvement and high-quality support. This support has rightly reduced as the school's capacity improved. The local authority reviews have been timely and the subsequent report helpful in identifying the next steps.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are committed to the school. They know and understand it very well. They have formed an accurate impression of the school's performance and are justifiably concerned to ensure that every pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed.
 - Governors have a good range of expertise, such as in finance and human resources, which they use to

good effect. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses and how the latter are being tackled. They are kept well informed by the comprehensive and clear information provided by the headteacher for them. They undertake regular visits and conduct their own scrutiny of books and assessment information to provide them with an independent view of standards.

- Governors ensure that finances are managed carefully and prudently. The funds for disadvantaged pupils and the sport premium are tracked closely and the impact of their use is evaluated. For example, governors make checks on pupils' fitness by receiving regular updates on the outcomes of the 'bleep tests' that pupils undertake regularly. They oversee the appraisal processes of staff and the headteacher effectively and ensure that movement up the pay scale is warranted.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's nurturing ethos means that there is a full commitment to ensuring the safety of all pupils at all times. Senior leaders ensure that all adults working with children are suitably checked and have appropriate training to enable them to identify pupils who are at risk of harm. When concerns about a pupil's welfare or safety are raised, they are followed up swiftly. Parents and other agencies are involved when necessary. Leaders provide regular advice to parents on how to help pupils to stay safe on the internet. They also offer workshops for parents, for instance about drug abuse; however, these are not well attended.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Together, leaders, teachers and teaching assistants have been successful in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the last inspection. It is consistently good with some that, over time, is outstanding. This is as a result of high-quality leadership, a clear vision, effective training and hard work. Adults conscientiously implement school policies and practices consistently and are keen to continually improve their teaching.
- Teachers use questioning well and assess pupils' learning accurately to identify any gaps in understanding so that they and the teaching assistants can plan next steps in teaching more effectively. They use time well and have high expectations of pupils' learning and presentation. Pupils present their work neatly in all their workbooks.
- Pupils benefit from classrooms that are well organised and are full of resources to support learning. Classroom displays support learning well. For example, words are displayed so that pupils can use them to strengthen the quality of their writing. Number lines and counting squares are available so that pupils can get quick reminders of things they have learned already.
- Teachers plan their teaching carefully based on the new national curriculum expectations. They organise activities to match pupils' different starting points and abilities. Leaders encourage the use of real-life contexts and practical activities to interest pupils. This is effective. Teaching is often lively and engages pupils' interest and attention. It is characterised by energy, enthusiasm and good subject knowledge. This was evident in the high levels of motivation and enjoyment in Year 6 pupils, who proudly reported that they 'love algebra – especially when it's hard'.
- Classrooms are positive places where a 'can do' attitude exists. Relationships are positive and teachers manage behaviour subtly and effectively. Lessons run smoothly. Routines are well known and understood by pupils and little time is wasted when pupils move from one task or lesson to the next. Pupils at Moorpark Junior School want to learn because they enjoy it.
- Pupils receive high-quality verbal and written feedback which helps them to make improvements to their work. Teachers and teaching assistants intervene in pupils' learning in lessons to check their understanding, talk through errors and move pupils on to something more challenging when they are ready.
- Teachers have an accurate view of what pupils know and are able to do. They use this knowledge well to plan activities that build on pupils' existing skills and knowledge.
- The system of 'no limits learning' using the bronze, silver, gold and platinum levels of challenge is effective in encouraging pupils to strive to improve. Pupils thrive on moving to the next level of challenge and work hard to do so. Occasionally the platinum challenge, which is designed to broaden and deepen pupils' understanding, is not challenging enough.
- Teachers mark pupils' work assiduously following the school's policy. Some of the marking, for example in Year 4, is exemplary. Adults expect pupils to improve their work as a result of their comments. This is effective and subsequent pieces of work demonstrate improvement, for example in sentence construction and use of grammar. However, many pupils are lazy in their spelling as they know that if they spell

something incorrectly the teacher will 'sort it out'.

- Pupils have many and varied opportunities to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects, for example in science and history. This is supporting their good progress. Opportunities to practise and apply their mathematical skills are less well developed. In addition, pupils' logic and reasoning skills are underdeveloped.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. This is high on the school's list of priorities.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities and have a voice in aspects of the running of the school. As a result pupils are proud of their achievements and their school.
- Pupils develop debating skills and are taught to express their view in a measured and sensible way and to listen respectfully to opposing points of view. They speak confidently to visitors.
- Pupils feel safe in school and articulate a number of ways they are taught about safety. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils speak knowledgeably about creating secure passwords and changing them regularly, email etiquette and protecting personal information. This is as a result of the well-planned digital literacy and citizenship programme.
- Leaders have good and improving links with the feeder infant school and secondary schools to ensure pupils make a smooth transition to their next stage of education.
- The sports funding has been spent wisely and has resulted in pupils being more active and involved in a broad range of sporting activities. Their fitness is measured regularly through the 'bleep test'. This increases pupils' awareness of the importance of exercise. In addition, school policies about snacks coupled with teaching in physical education and science have resulted in pupils having a good knowledge of how to eat healthily.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils are clear about this. Pupils are also able to describe what they would do if it occurred. Pupils told inspectors that the school has taught them about some forms of behaviour or names they call each other that are unacceptable. Pupils told inspectors that they had written a child friendly anti-bullying policy and this helped them to better understand what to do and how to help if it occurred. A small number of parents raised concerns about bullying. Inspection evidence, including that from pupils and from school records, did not correspond with parents' concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils follow the school rules, most of them because they want to rather than because they have to. They move sensibly and quietly around the school, demonstrating good manners to adults and their friends. Pupils respond to adults' instructions straight away. This means that typically lessons run smoothly without interruption.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are busy and active times of the day. The 'zones' in the playground support successful play and enable a wide range of games and activities to take place.
- Pupils are very clear in their explanation of how behaviour is managed in the school. They understand the system of green, red and yellow cards and the consequences of less than acceptable behaviour. Pupils trust the adults to deal with difficult situations that arise and value the work of the family support worker in helping to sort out any disputes or falling out.
- The school is effective in the support it provides for the small number of pupils who display challenging behaviour. Support for these pupils is tailored well to their individual needs and exclusion is used appropriately as a last resort.
- Attendance has been sustained at around the national average, or just above, for the past few years. There are relatively few pupils whose attendance is a concern and they are followed up swiftly. The school reacts promptly and communicates well with parents to encourage good attendance.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because, although pupils understand very well how to treat one another with respect and most pupils do, there is a small degree of teasing occurring in Year 6 which despite being addressed by adults has not yet been fully resolved.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection. At the end of Year 6 in 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in reading and writing was above the national average. In mathematics the proportion was in line with this measure.
- The published information from 2015 indicates that not enough pupils made good progress from their starting points. However, assessment information and evidence from current pupils' workbooks shows that this is better for current cohorts. Almost all pupils are making the progress that is expected and a substantially increasing number are making good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have been successful in plugging the gaps in knowledge and skills in writing and mathematics which have arisen as a result of the introduction of the new and more demanding curriculum. As a result, an increasing proportion of pupils in each year group are on track to meet the age-related expectations by the end of the school year.
- Published data in 2015 shows that disadvantaged pupils did not make as much progress as their classmates. Senior leaders responded robustly to this and implemented a range of specifically targeted measures to accelerate pupils' progress. As a result, pupils eligible for pupil premium funding currently in the school are making better progress than in the past. This can be seen in pupils' workbooks and in the school's very thorough tracking information. They make as much progress as, and in some cases more than, their peers in Year 3, 5 and 6. Leaders are aware that there are some inconsistencies in the current Year 4 classes and are addressing this appropriately.
- The combination of improved teaching and the school's approach of 'no limits' learning has resulted in the most able pupils making faster progress than in the past.
- There is a strong culture of reading in Moorpark Junior School. Pupils have access to a good range of books and each classroom contains an attractive, well-stocked and inviting book corner. In addition, pupils are encouraged to read at home regularly. As a result, pupils make good progress in reading and develop an enthusiasm for and an enjoyment of books.
- Pupils make good progress in their art work. This is as a result of effective, specialist teaching which develops skills and knowledge in a progressive way. The enquiry-based approach to teaching science is proving to be successful and pupils make good gains in this subject.
- Progress for pupils with special educational needs or disability is not yet consistent between year groups and subjects. Many pupils are making good progress; however, this is not yet the case for all pupils, particularly those pupils with more complex and multiple needs. The leader for this area is acutely aware of this and appropriate measures are being put in place to address it. The school has a good track record of ensuring pupils receive an education, health and care plan when needed and in some instances transfer to special schools.

School details

Unique reference number	123985
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10009260

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joy Garner
Headteacher	Karen Peters
Telephone number	01782 234 440
Website	www.moorpark.stoke.sch.uk
Email address	moorpark@moorparkjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2014

Information about this school

- This school is slightly smaller than the average junior school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average, as is the proportion who are eligible for pupil premium funding. The pupil premium funding is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection the school has received support, brokered by the local authority, from a national leader of education who is the executive headteacher at St Wilfrid's and St Peter's Primary Academies.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons; some of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher and assistant headteachers.
- Both inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and their attitudes to and opinions about school. Inspectors observed pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes and as they moved around the school. One inspector heard pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoy.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks from all year groups. A wide range of documents were also scrutinised, including information relating to attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, pupils' progress and the checks made on the quality of teaching.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff with specific leadership responsibilities.
- Discussions were held with four governors. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and spoke with 36 parents and carers at the beginning and the end of the school day. The results of a recent parental survey conducted by the school, with 30 responses, were also considered. In addition the lead inspector received a phone call from a parent.

Inspection team

Rachel Howie, lead inspector
Susan Parker

Her Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted Inspector

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