

# Inspection of a good school: Moorlands Junior School

Temple Road, Sale, Cheshire M33 2LP

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Inspection dates:

16 and 17 May 2023

## Outcome

Moorlands Junior School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well academically and to become well-rounded individuals. Pupils embody the school value of making the most of every opportunity. Many pupils work hard and achieve well during their time at the school.

Pupils benefit from the positive relationships that they enjoy with each other and with staff. They told the inspector that their strong friendships help to make them feel happy and safe in school. Pupils trust that staff will listen to their concerns and help them.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Many pupils are keen to live up to these expectations. Pupils who need extra help in managing their emotions are well supported by staff. There are effective systems in place to identify bullying. On the rare occasions that bullying occurs, leaders deal with it quickly.

Pupils benefit from taking on additional responsibilities within school. Pupils in the different school ministries play an active role in helping to inform decisions about school life. Pupils appreciate the importance of giving back to their community through activities such as fundraising for a local homeless charity.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. They have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Leaders have identified the essential knowledge that pupils should learn and when they should learn it.

Pupils achieve well overall. However, by the end of Year 6, in 2022, pupils did not attain as well as other pupils nationally in writing. This was mostly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which left some older pupils with gaps in their writing knowledge. Leaders have reflected on the 2022 outcomes and made improvements to the writing curriculum. As a result, teachers are more alert to gaps in pupils' writing knowledge now

and spend more time revisiting prior learning to make sure that pupils' knowledge is secure.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have recently revised the curriculum. These curriculums are well thought out and order learning in a way that helps pupils to know more and remember more over time. However, teachers lack the subject knowledge that they need to teach some specific concepts in these curriculums effectively. As a result, the learning activities that teachers provide do not help pupils deepen their knowledge in these specific areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils' understanding of these concepts is insecure.

In most subjects, teachers check on what pupils know and remember over time. When needed, teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to revisit previous learning. In the main, many pupils, including pupils with SEND, build a deep body of knowledge over time and achieve well.

Leaders promote reading well across all year groups. Pupils read a broad range of books that include novels and poetry. Many pupils read with fluency and achieve well. Leaders have implemented a whole-school approach to teaching phonics for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. This includes new arrivals to the school, including those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Leaders ensure that staff have the training and support to teach reading well. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that they have learned. This enables pupils to experience success when reading.

Pupils attending the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) follow a curriculum that is tailored to meet their individual needs. Staff prioritise the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, but they ensure that pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff support pupils effectively in accessing some lessons alongside their peers in the mainstream classes. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy these opportunities. Pupils are ably supported by skilled staff to develop their independence and resilience. Leaders work effectively with a range of external professionals in supporting these pupils to achieve well.

Across the school, leaders ensure that there are effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders make sure that staff adapt their teaching well so that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils, including those in the specially resourced provision, behave well and are attentive in lessons. There are clear routines and expectations. This allows pupils to focus on the learning activities that the teachers provide.

Pupils experience a wide range of opportunities that enhance their personal development. Pupils enjoy a variety of trips. These include visits to museums, the theatre and places of historical significance. Pupils benefit from opportunities to develop their talents and interests through clubs such as fencing, choir and netball. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils access the same wealth of experiences as others in the school.

Governors focus on achieving the best possible outcomes for all pupils. They support and challenge leaders well. Leaders and governors are considerate of staff's workload and well-being when making decisions about policies and procedures. Staff are positive about working at the school and value the support that they receive from leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have regular safeguarding training. This helps staff to understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff follow clear procedures to report any concerns that they have about a pupil. Leaders respond to concerns in a timely manner. They work well with other professionals and external organisations to help pupils and their families access any additional support that they may need.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the dangers that they may face. For example, pupils recognise the potential hazards of the local tramlines and the risks associated with fire. They learn how to protect themselves from harm when working and playing online.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some areas of the curriculum, teachers do not design activities that enable pupils to deepen their understanding of key concepts. This means pupils' learning is not fully secure. Leaders should ensure that staff have the subject knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum and help pupils to know and remember more.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106308
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10283652
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	288
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Larry Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Kelly
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.moorlandsjuniorschool.com">www.moorlandsjuniorschool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There is a specially resourced provision at this school. This caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 with moderate learning difficulties; speech, language and communication difficulties; and autism spectrum disorder. The specially resourced provision caters for up to 10 pupils. At the time of the inspection, there were 10 pupils on roll at the specially resourced provision.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. As part of the deep dives, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, met with teachers and looked at children's and pupils' work. He also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects. He observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector visited the specially resourced provision.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents and spoke to leaders and staff. He also spoke to pupils about whether they felt safe in school.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons. He spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. He also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's pupils' survey.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. He also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

David Robinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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