

Inspection of Moss Hall Infant School

Moss Hall Grove, Finchley, London N12 8PE

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming and nurturing school. Staff know pupils well, and pupils said that adults listen to them. As a result, pupils are happy and feel safe. Pupils are keen to talk about all the exciting things that they learn about and the educational visits that they go on.

Pupils follow the school's routines and expectations. This creates a calm atmosphere throughout the school. Typically, pupils are attentive in lessons and want to do well.

Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well overall. The school has considered the curriculum carefully. Pupils have the strong foundations that they need in their learning to be well prepared for their move to the neighbouring junior school. However, on some occasions, choices of activities and books are unhelpful in ensuring that all pupils can access the expected learning.

Developing a love of reading is central to the school's curriculum. Children in Reception are given many opportunities to 'bump into books'. During activities, books are used purposefully to help develop children's learning.

Pupils learn about tolerance and respect through their regular assemblies and in class. Through the school's motto, 'Be kind, work hard, make a difference', pupils learn about being part of wider society. They raise money for charities that they have chosen, carry out litter picks and sing at a local care home.

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

The school has worked hard to create a curriculum that is ambitious for all. Subject leaders and subject champions work across the infant and junior schools in the federation to ensure that what is being learned in a subject builds seamlessly over time.

Before children join Reception, the school finds out lots of information about their interests and needs. Adults focus well on ensuring that children develop their language and communication skills. The curriculum creates rich opportunities to get children talking about their learning. Adults work skilfully with children to expand their interests and knowledge. For example, children were excited to make envelopes, write letters and post these in a nearby postbox. This supported further learning about the local area and people who help them in their day-to-day lives. Parents and carers described how staff regularly let them know what their children are learning and ways in which they can help at home.

Reading is prioritised. The school has adopted a well-planned and sequenced early reading curriculum. As pupils become more confident in their reading, they read a wider variety of stories, non-fiction texts and poems, learning about how language is used in a range of ways. Staff have been well trained in using the school's approach

to teaching phonics. Leaders regularly check to ensure there is a consistent approach among staff. The school is ambitious for all pupils to know their sounds, and most books are well matched to pupils' stage of learning phonics. However, there are times when some reading books are too hard for pupils to practise their phonics with.

The needs of pupils with SEND are identified effectively. They have additional support to help them to learn well. In phonics, for example, pupils receive extra sessions and one-to-one support. In mathematics, teachers are also adept at adapting learning to meet pupils' needs. The school uses regular assessments effectively to identify gaps in pupils' learning and provide appropriate support.

In other subjects, the school's curriculum is also well organised. For example, the school has constructed a carefully planned history curriculum. Subject champions support staff to have a good understanding of what is being taught and what pupils are expected to know and by when. Similarly, in Reception, children are supported to learn in a well-planned and sequenced way. Children are helped to recall their learning from earlier lessons, and this understanding is then built on and developed further. In Years 1 and 2, however, there are occasions when tasks and resources are not building well on what pupils know and have learned previously. While behaviour is calm throughout the school, pupils can become distracted in lessons when the planned learning does not follow on well from their existing knowledge.

The school expects high levels of pupil attendance and has rigorous procedures in place to monitor and reduce any absence. Consequently, attendance at the school is high.

The school's personal development offer is rich and broad. This aspect of school life has been as meticulously planned as the academic curriculum, with opportunities and experiences provided in a well-sequenced manner. Pupils learn about how to become active and responsible citizens. They also learn in depth about the wide range of beliefs and cultures that make up modern Britain, with parents invited into the school to share their experiences. Pupils visit the nearby Dollis Brook woods to learn about the changes in nature across the seasons. They also benefit from a range of trips, for example to the National Portrait Gallery, Kew Gardens and the Natural History Museum for cultural enrichment. Pupils take pride in their school, and this is evident in their books and how they speak about what they learn.

Governors know the school well and share the school's vision. They use their frequent visits to the school to pose effective challenges. Staff feel well supported and value the training opportunities that working across the federation of schools has provided them with.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school has not fully checked on how effectively the curriculum is being implemented in Years 1 and 2. As a result, there are times when the planned learning is not consistently helping pupils to develop and extend their knowledge. This includes in phonics, where books used for practising reading are, in a few instances, unsuitable. The school should systematically check and strengthen how well the curriculum is being implemented so that it has the maximum impact on the quality of pupils' learning.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	101295
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10242331
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Dunn and Mohammed Choonara (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Laura Wynne (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.mosshall.school
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Moss Hall Infant School federated with Moss Hall Junior School on 1 January 2020. Together they form the Moss Hall Schools Federation.
- The executive headteacher took up post in January 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and head of school. They also met with members of the governing body, including the co-chairs of governors, and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, design and technology, geography and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers. They also spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors also spoke to some parents and considered the responses to the Ofsted online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to the Ofsted online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma O'Connor	Ofsted Inspector
Allan McLean	Ofsted Inspector

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