Inspection of Moor First School

School Lane, Biddulph Moor, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST8 7HR

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 July 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming school. The relationships that pupils have with each other and with staff are based firmly on values such as respect and honesty. Pupils are well mannered and polite. They show genuine care for each other.

Pupils are proud of their school, and rightly so. They understand the school rules and work hard to follow them. Pupils have strong relationships with staff and typically describe the school as a 'Moor First Family'. This makes them feel safe and well cared for.

The school is highly ambitious for pupils' achievement. This begins in the early years, where children get off to a flying start on their learning journey. Pupils study a curriculum that engages and supports them to gain deep knowledge. They attend regularly and enjoy the many opportunities and experiences the school provides for them. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the leadership responsibilities on offer at the school such as being play leaders, school counsellors and carers for the school's chickens. They benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities that develop their interests and talents competitively and for enjoyment. The range of clubs on offer include arts and crafts, athletics and gardening. These activities are accessible to all pupils.

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

The school has designed an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum that meets the needs of mixed-age classes. It has clearly identified the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should learn from the early years to the end of Year 4. For example, in geography, pupils learn about the school's woodland before the school widens its focus to the features of the local area and then further afield.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. The school has put systems in place to check pupils' understanding. These allow teachers to check what pupils know and identify what they have not understood. Teachers model pupils' learning using the school's 'I do, we do, you do' approach across most of the curriculum, which helps pupils understand what to do. However, this approach to teaching is not consistently implemented across the curriculum. This means that there is variation in the quality of work produced and how well the pupils learn the knowledge that is taught.

The school makes reading a key priority in the curriculum. Staff teach phonics with consistency. The sounds and letters pupils need to know well are introduced right from the start of the early years. When the school identifies gaps in pupils' learning, pupils are quickly and effectively supported. Books are carefully matched to the sounds that pupils know. Pupils relish reading the diverse and exciting range of texts available. They enjoy these books, and this develops a love of reading. However, the school does not support pupils as successfully in their writing skills. Handwriting and letter formation are not addressed consistently. This means that pupils' recording of the knowledge and skills that they have learned is not as accurate as it could be.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) early and accurately. Teachers adapt teaching material so that pupils can learn the same knowledge as their peers. As a result, pupils with SEND succeed in their learning.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start with their learning because staff understand their needs well. Children learn routines quickly and listen carefully to adults. Staff focus on developing children's language by weaving important vocabulary into conversations with children. Children manage their emotions well and play cooperatively with one another. Over time, children in the early years become increasingly confident and develop effective learning behaviours.

Pupils have positive attitudes and commitment to their education. During their social times, pupils access a range of equipment, they take real care of each other and are respectful of their environment. As a result, the school is a harmonious place. Attendance is a key focus. The school is relentless in its approach to quickly identify instances where attendance is not as high as it expects. Attendance rates are positive.

The school provides a range of opportunities for personal development. Pupils consider key topics such as the importance of equality and healthy relationships. They learn how to keep safe online and in the real world. Pupils learn about diversity among people and families. They understand fundamental British values. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage.

A dedicated staff team ensures a strong culture of support and teamwork at the school. Staff feel well supported by leaders. They feel valued and listened to. Leaders understand the strengths and areas for development of the school. Governors know the school well. They provide the school with a balance of support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not ensured that the shared approach to the delivery of the curriculum, including the 'I do, we do, you do' approach, is consistent. This means that there is a variation in the quality of work produced and how well some pupils learn the knowledge that is taught. The school should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills they need to ensure that the curriculum delivery is of a consistently high quality.
- The school does not ensure that teaching handwriting is consistent. Poor letter formation, orientation and accuracy impact some pupils' accurate recording of the knowledge and skills they have learned. The school should ensure that its approach to

teaching handwriting enables all pupils to write with accuracy and fluency.

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	124061
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10378238
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jeremy Garvey
Headteacher	Victoria Atherton
Website	www.moorfirstschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has Nursery provision for three-year-olds.
- The school operates after-school clubs on the site.
- The headteacher has been appointed to the role since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupil's work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects. The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Years 1 to 4 reading to staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also took into account the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed documents related to pupils' wider development, behaviour and attendance. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and during breaktime.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the school's senior leadership team, a selection of other leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also had a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including leaders' plans for improving the school and records of governor meetings.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

Inspection team

James Dean, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Su Plant	His Majesty's Inspector

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