

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MOORFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Newport

LEA area: The Wrekin

Unique reference number: 123435

Headteacher: Mr Stuart Sanderson

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Baxter  
25217

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> July 2000

Inspection number: 194421

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wellington Road Newport Shropshire
Postcode:	TF10 7QU
Telephone number:	01952 813019
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Frith
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a Foundation Primary School, serving the relatively advantaged community of Newport, where most of the housing is privately owned and which is located in the county of Shropshire. It is larger than average in size and at the time of this inspection 292 pupils attend the school, of whom 138 are boys and 154 are girls. There are 40 pupils on the register for special educational needs, a number which is below that found nationally. Almost one per cent of the pupils is of a minority ethnic background but no pupils need specialist support for English as an additional language and this is low compared to most schools. Approximately six per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well below the national average. Most children are admitted to the school at the age of four, but about a third of each years intake of pupils enter from a local infant school at the age of eight. Taken together, the children's attainment on entry is generally above that found nationally, particularly in their speaking and listening and their personal and social skills.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Moorfield is a very good school with significant strengths which greatly outweigh any weaknesses. In particular, in response to high expectations and good teaching within a stimulating learning environment, the pupils attain very high standards overall. The pupils' very good attitudes to learning are enriched further by the very good relationships between all those who work and learn in the school. Consequently, in relation to their prior attainment, most pupils make very good progress over time. The school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- In response to successful teaching and learning, pupils achieve very high standards in English, mathematics and science and use their skills to achieve well in other subjects.
- The headteacher and staff, with the support of governors and parents, create an ethos that promotes the pupils' very positive attitudes, develops supportive relationships and strongly establishes high expectations of effective learning.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher, senior managers and governors ensures that the funds made available to the school are used to promote and maintain a high standard of teaching and learning.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have been particularly successful in developing a stimulating environment where pupils acquire a love of learning and of learning together.

#### **What could be improved**

- Whilst much of the teaching for children under five matches their prior attainment, they are presented with insufficient opportunities to learn by making choices and to develop their physical and creative skills further through structured and independent activity.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The last inspection in July 1996 identified very good leadership and management. Since then, under the clear direction of the dedicated headteacher and with full support from governors and staff, strong leadership has enabled the school to make very good improvement overall. The results achieved by the pupils in the national tests at the age of 11 have risen year on year. Inspection shows that over half of the pupils have achieved a level above the national average in English, mathematics and science this year: very high standards which are significantly greater than the above average standards found

at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is now good overall, again substantially better than the sound standards identified by that inspection. The current high level of good and very good teaching is having a powerful impact on the pupils' attainment, which continues to rise. All the issues for improvement identified by the last inspection team have been addressed effectively and the school is very well placed to continue to raise standards in the future.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A*	A	B
Mathematics	A	A*	A*	A
Science	A	A	A	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

This is an impressive set of results. Evidence from this inspection confirms these high standards for the 11-year-olds and for the 7-year-olds. Inspection shows that most pupils aged 11 are now on course to attain standards which are very high in English, mathematics and science. There are strengths in the pupils' attainments in information technology and in history, where their well-developed literacy and numeracy skills significantly aid their learning. Standards in religious education and geography have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Children under five attain well in literacy, numeracy, science and information technology, but other areas of learning are less well developed. In response to the teachers' high expectations, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and potentially higher attaining pupils, make very good progress as they move through the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good attitudes to school and to their learning. Pupils appreciate each other's efforts and learn well together.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, both in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils. Pupils enjoy offering and exchanging ideas, take responsibility willingly and show very good personal development.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall, reduced by the significant number of parents taking their children on holidays during school time. Punctuality is good,

	lessons start promptly and no time is wasted.
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The teachers make learning interesting and understand the pupils' needs well. Consequently the pupils feel valued, enjoy their work and respond very positively in lessons.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Overall, the teaching is good. In 75 per cent of the lessons observed, the teaching ranged between good and very good. Of the majority of lessons observed, 60 per cent were good and all the other lessons observed were never less than satisfactory. Very effective management of pupils' behaviour, focused questioning and strengths in the teaching of literacy and numeracy are consistent features of most lessons. The teachers are very knowledgeable and interest and challenge all pupils, including higher attainers and lower-attaining pupils, equally successfully. In the best lessons, teachers' questions are penetrating and demand the right amount of thinking from the pupils. As a result the pupils know what is expected of them, build very well on what they have learned before and complete a significant amount of work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall with a successful focus on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is well supported by a very good range of extracurricular activities. The provision for children under five places insufficient emphasis on the recommended areas and ways of learning for children of this age.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good teaching and support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All pupils are supported equally and receive full access to learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, excellent provision for the pupils' social development and satisfactory spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides effective procedures for child protection and ensures the pupils' welfare. The teachers know the pupils well and meet their needs successfully on a day-to-day basis. The pupils respond positively to the warm and secure learning environment.



The staff work well as a team to provide consistent support. This is known and appreciated by the pupils and their parents; consequently the pupils feel valued, concentrate on their work and achieve very well. The school promotes a successful partnership with parents.

### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead by example and enable all staff and governors to play a full and effective part in the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors meet their statutory obligations well. Through their strong support of the headteacher and staff they ensure that there is a consistent and successful ethos of high achievement across the school. Together with the headteacher and staff they share a very good commitment to improvement and an equally strong capacity to succeed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors closely and very effectively the performance of the pupils in the national tests and teachers' assessments at the end of each key stage. It monitors and supports the pupils' personal and social development equally successfully. All pupils are encouraged to achieve their best.
The strategic use of resources	The school manages and utilises the funds available very effectively to achieve high standards. Resources are used to best effect in ensuring that pupils make very good progress. Consequently the school provides very good value for money.

The school applies the principles of best value successfully to ensure that all resources are used to maximum effect in helping the pupils to achieve their best. Under the dynamic leadership of the headteacher pupils are encouraged and expected to achieve high standards and to enjoy their learning. Staff and governors are united and effective in their efforts to provide a stimulating place where pupils will succeed.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school, behave well and make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• They would feel confident about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The school is well led and is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of work given to the pupils to do at home.</li> <li>• The information given about how pupils are getting on.</li> <li>• The degree to which the school works closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views and finds that the pupils are making even better progress in response to good teaching. Homework, though given in accordance with the

school's procedures and with government guidelines, requires further clarification to be given to parents. Inspection shows that parents receive good verbal information about their children's progress. However, the inspection team agrees with the parents concerns about the written reports which often provide insufficient information about the children's attainment and progress and do not do justice to the teachers' detailed knowledge of their pupils. The school promotes a good partnership with parents in support of the pupils' learning. However, lines of communication should be reviewed on a regular basis to encourage greater understanding.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**In response to successful teaching and learning, pupils achieve very high standards in English, mathematics and science and use their skills to achieve well in other subjects.**

- 1 The results of the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments for 11-year-olds from 1996 to 1999 in English, mathematics and science clearly show the high achievement of the pupils in relation to their prior attainment and in relation to the standards found nationally. The performance of the pupils in these subjects at the age of 7 in these tests and assessments is equally impressive, with a significant number of pupils achieving the higher levels. Inspection evidence shows that standards continue to rise in response to the challenging and motivating teaching and an increased proportion of pupils at the end of each key stage are on course to attain the higher levels in all these subjects. Indeed inspection now shows that the pupils' attainment across the breadth of English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 is very high in relation to the standards found nationally.
- 2 The school has developed excellent strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Teachers have assimilated the recommended National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies most effectively into their planning and teaching and have maintained a steady rise in standards in recent years. In conjunction with the strategies followed in literacy hour lessons, reading skills are targeted and promoted successfully through well-focused and assessed group reading sessions. In addition, the school has introduced the 'whole-school paired reading system' whereby all the pupils in the school meet with partners from other classes to read, share and enjoy books once each week. In these sessions, older pupils support younger pupils; relationships are enriched, speaking and listening skills are extended and a love of books is promoted for all pupils. These strategies have a significant impact on the pupils' reading skills and also promote very positive attitudes towards learning with and from each other. In consequence, most pupils develop high level reading skills and these enable them to research their topics in science, history and geography, for example, by using books and computers. Religious education lessons are also significantly enriched by the pupils' ability to read fluently from extracts from the Bible. In English lessons, the teachers encourage the pupils from an early age to read loudly, clearly and with expression from a range of shared texts presented in 'Big Book' form; for example in Year 2 the story of 'Big Bad Bill'. The pupils learn to do this effectively and the skills developed enable them to increase their vocabulary and widen their understanding as they read.
- 3 The pupils' writing skills are strongly supported by the teachers' consistently high expectation that pupils should develop and write in a neat, legible style. Cursive writing is taught successfully from an early age. The pupils are encouraged to express their thoughts in most lessons during lively discussions. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher prompted a discussion about what forms of conversation should be recorded in a comic story involving a robot. Following discussions such as these, pupils are taught how to plan and structure their writing and are given additional time later in the week, if necessary, to ensure that work is completed to a standard that is valued and recognised as worthy of merit. With prompting from the headteacher, all teachers maintain these high expectations warmly but rigorously, and encourage the pupils to evaluate and to appreciate their own and each other's work. The vast majority of pupils observed writing during the inspection did so comfortably and skilfully, finished their work neatly in the available time and achieved a high standard. Poems, stories

and descriptions adorn the classroom walls and the wide range of writing scrutinised during the inspection was of a high standard, particularly, for example, a debate about fox hunting conducted in the style of the Ancient Greeks. The pupils' writing skills are utilised to full effect in other subjects, for example, in science to record actions taken and to evaluate results observed when testing how sound travels along a vibrating string.

- 4 Observations of mathematics lessons showed that the teachers place a strong and consistent emphasis on developing the pupils' mental skills, particularly in number. Most mathematics lessons start with a session which promotes mental work effectively. For example in Year 5, the teacher discussed how pupils might find the numbers missing from various calculations and was very effective in encouraging the pupils to use and develop their own strategies to solve such problems. Most pupils acquire a good facility in number and calculate with accuracy and confidence. These skills enable them to reach high standards in mathematics generally, but also enable them to use and apply number in their measurement of the results of investigations in science; for example by measuring the rate of plant growth, the rate at which solids dissolve or the speeds by which objects travel along surfaces. These skills significantly enhance the pupils' ability to learn from practical investigation and problem solving.
- 5 Throughout the school the teachers are successful in encouraging the pupils to look and observe closely during their studies. All classrooms provide a rich source of interesting displays, artefacts and plants and animals, and from an early age the pupils are taught to look, to handle and to investigate a variety of objects. Much of the teaching and learning in subjects such as science, art and design and technology successfully challenges the pupils to examine objects in detail; consequently the pupils develop a high level of skill in investigation. These skills enable most pupils to achieve high standards across the breadth of science. In conjunction with the pupils' high level communication skills, their well-developed ability to take notes effectively and their significantly above average skills in measurement, the pupils learn to record and evaluate their investigations successfully. During the inspection, pupils from a range of classes were observed hunting mini-beasts, evaluating habitats, fair-testing how sound travels and investigating evaporation and condensation. In all situations the pupils showed substantial strengths in their ability to learn together through practical investigations. These are skills which also bear fruit when listening and appraising music and which are illustrated by the good quality observational drawings, painting and papier-mâché models displayed around the school.

**The headteacher and staff, with the support of governors and parents, creates an ethos that promotes the pupils' very positive attitudes, develops supportive relationships and strongly establishes high expectations of effective learning.**

- 6 The headteacher, staff and governors have given much consideration to the purpose and function of the school. Deliberations about grant maintained status and more recently about foundation status have led to a careful and effective review of the school's aims. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well constructed documents, clearly outlining the strong emphasis placed on enabling pupils to function effectively in a numerate and literate society, having a sense of individual responsibility to the community and demonstrating positive attitudes to others and to their learning. The importance of the school's partnership with parents is highlighted and the need to promote good relationships between all members of the school community is stressed positively.
- 7 These aims are clearly evident in the day-to-day life of the school. Initially under the direction of a strong but caring headteacher and additionally through specific advice in documents such

as the school's handbook for teachers, all staff of the school receive clear guidance of the need to establish and maintain high expectations of pupils' achievement, both academically and socially. Through their consistent commitment and full agreement, the teachers give body to these aspirations in their daily interaction with the pupils. They challenge the pupils positively but rigorously and effectively, through well-targeted questions which illustrate their understanding of the pupils' stages of development. In the many classroom discussions, the pupils' responses are valued, are addressed purposefully and are used to further the learning process. All pupils are taught well to appreciate and to learn from each other's contributions, for example in a religious education lesson in Year 4, the pupils were asked to evaluate each other's ideas about how to combat loneliness and this enriched their understanding of the needs of others.

- 8 All adults who visit and work in the school provide very good role models for the pupils. They treat the pupils with respect and this is reciprocated willingly by the pupils. The school's promotion of the pupils' social development is excellent. The teachers plan their lessons with care and they provide many opportunities for the pupils to learn with and from each other, for example when using encyclopaedia software on the computers to research their science and topic work. English and mathematics lessons follow the national strategies closely, whole class discussions are followed by specific group activities and all members of the group share the responsibility of presenting their findings to the class. When questioned by the inspectors the pupils willingly discussed their work and specifically mentioned their intention to discuss and evaluate their observations with other pupils in the class. It is this shared responsibility that underpins the strong maintenance of high expectations. It is the expected norm to achieve at Moorfield, but following the personal examples of the teachers, especially the headteacher and his deputy, pupils are expected to use their own success to help their peers and to care about each other demonstrably. The vast majority of pupils do this willingly and impressively. The parents fully support this approach; consequently the pupils understand the expectations and give their full commitment.
- 9 The headteacher and governors visit classrooms on a regular basis and monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision and the standard of the pupils' achievement effectively. Teachers and subject co-ordinators plan together to ensure that shared and consistent teaching is effective. The pupils' work is generally well marked and, in English in particular, the teachers identify clear steps for improvement to the pupils. Work is scrutinised at staff meetings to check and evaluate the standard of work. In addition, the headteacher, staff and governors monitor the pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments very closely and target additional funds successfully to raise standards. For example, the school provides a very good range of books to support the paired and group reading activities. As a result the pupils' reading skills have been significantly improved. These activities also support the school's ethos that learning should be successful and enjoyable.

**The very good leadership of the headteacher, senior managers and governors, ensures that the funds made available to the school are used to promote and maintain a high standard of teaching and learning.**

- 10 The previous inspection in July 1996 stated that, 'The leadership shown by the headteacher, in co-operation with the governing body and school staff, is very good. There is a clear and confident educational vision which is guiding the school effectively through a period of planned improvement to its curriculum and resources.' This is precisely what has happened and the leadership and management remains a significant strength, as it was four years ago.

Despite substantial uncertainty and delays regarding the budget available which has resulted from the school's changes from local authority control to grant maintained then to foundation status, the school has retained its strong and effective commitment to managing and using funds as efficiently as possible to promote the pupils' high achievement. Current reserves are now being spent effectively to improve accommodation and resources and to enrich learning.

- 11 Led by a headteacher who is committed to achieving high standards through teamwork and partnership, the staff and governors have improved their evaluation of the school's performance, targeted the raising of standards, and have addressed the issues identified by the last inspection effectively. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and the taking of effective action are now very good and have a beneficial impact on the pupils' achievement.
- 12 The school has retained its 'Investors in People Award' for a second term, clear evidence of its effective involvement and commitment to utilising the strengths of all who work in the school. The change to grant maintained status required the school to take a responsibility for its own budget and to account for its use of funds to the National Funding Agency. To achieve this, the governing body set in place a strong mechanism for the management and control of finance, in the belief that control of their own funds would enable the school to better achieve its stated aims. Even though, under its foundation status, the school is accountable once more to the local education authority for its actions, this effective management structure and shared philosophy continues to be implemented strongly by the headteacher and governing body. The headteacher states, and demonstrates in a detailed school improvement plan 'Foundation status means no loss of independent thought, motivation or action.' Financial control continues to be very good.
- 13 The financial management of the school is very good and it is now enriched by a more detailed analysis of the school's performance and application of the principles of achieving 'best value'. To achieve this the school has given subject co-ordinators more authority to target subject development needs and to account for the funds required in order to raise standards in their subjects. As specialists in their subjects they consult and plan effectively with colleagues and provide the headteacher with detailed information upon which he can plan the future direction of the school. For their part, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have improved the way they monitor the performance of the school in terms of the quality of teaching, the quality of the planning and the use of resources. Informal classroom visits are now supported by good mentoring procedures and by focused classroom evaluations. There is still scope, however, to strengthen the monitoring of teaching and to raise standards even more by regular classroom observations by senior staff and subject co-ordinators. Gaps in the provision for children under five, for example, may have been addressed had they been identified by regular assessments of the learning environment by senior staff.
- 14 Through its well-established sub-committees and working parties the governing body ensures that issues identified by the headteacher and colleagues in the school improvement plan are addressed very effectively. The curriculum, particularly literacy and numeracy, and problem solving and mental strategies in mathematics and information technology, have all been developed well by staff training, additional resources and improved facilities, and these have helped to raise standards across the school. The school has retained a very good commitment to continued improvement. Expenditure is evaluated particularly well in terms of its impact on the pupils' attainment. For example, additional computers have been obtained with the clear intention to improve the pupils' skills; evaluation of use of these resources is proving that this aim has been achieved well. The headteacher and governors have much expertise in analysing

the effectiveness of spending decisions and use this systematically to maintain strong financial strategies and controls to ensure 'best value'. Money is well spent, teaching is good, the pupils make very good progress, and consequently the school continues to provide very good value for money.

**The headteacher, staff and governors have been particularly successful in developing a stimulating environment where pupils acquire a love of learning and of learning together.**

- 15 Much thought has been given to creating an effective learning environment. With the exception of one class, which is located in temporary accommodation, most classrooms are based on an open plan arrangement whereby two adjoining classes share a practical area. This form of accommodation is organised to maximum effect to encourage and promote practical approaches to learning. For example, shared areas are furnished to support group activities, and worktops have been created to accommodate information technology and design and technology equipment. The library and book corners have been designed and resourced so that the pupils can pursue independent and group approaches to their learning without disturbing other classes or pupils. History and geography are often taught within a topic-based approach and teachers organise studies successfully so that whilst one group of pupils continues research using the computers, other groups may use books, examine artefacts or can be supported by the teacher or learning support assistant. During the inspection pupils were observed examining and discussing objects which could be found on a holiday to the seaside and used computers well to extend their vocabulary.
- 16 With significant encouragement from the headteacher, teachers ensure that classrooms and shared areas are enriched by informative and thought-provoking displays of the pupils' work. Paper and card 'artefacts' from Ancient Egypt, maps of the local area and of the world and many and varied forms of writing, from descriptions of major world faiths to the pupils' own ideas of prejudice, adorn the display surfaces and boards. These stimulate the pupils' ideas and create an environment which encourages the pupils to express themselves freely, to offer their own suggestions and to value the contributions of others. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teacher used a display of 'Pyramid Puzzles' successfully by challenging the pupils to develop their own strategies for solving problems.
- 17 Many of the displays give instructions productively and offer alternative ways of considering issues. They also include agreed rewards and sanctions which promote good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils took great pride, on several occasions in showing the inspectors their drawings and paintings of Viking Longships, for example, or their poetry writing and the charts showing the stars or merit points they had collected for their work. The teachers promote these strategies well to involve the pupils effectively in their own learning and to offer concrete ways by which the pupils can show and take responsibility. They have a beneficial impact on their progress. All staff place a strong and consistent emphasis on neat presentation and the overwhelming message transmitted by these high quality displays is one of high expectations and of giving of ones very best. The pupils respond willingly and complete work of high quality.
- 18 The headteacher and governors ensure that the funds made available to the school are utilised well so that they have a clear impact on the pupils' learning. Significant expenditure has been allocated to developing information technology to support teaching and learning across the curriculum, and all shared areas are equipped with several computers. These were well used during the inspection to support work in science and mathematics through data handling and to extend and enrich the pupils' literacy skills by word processing. Many of the displays of the

pupils' writing are enhanced by carefully varied forms of presentation involving different font sizes and styles and a range of colours and designs, all created by the pupils' themselves using information technology. This imaginative recognition of the pupils' efforts promotes the notion that their efforts are valued and this in turn stimulates the pupils to achieve high standards.

- 19 Outdoor areas have also been planned and developed well. Wild and cultivated areas are used extensively by the teachers to develop the pupils' observational and investigative skills in science and as a result the pupils are very knowledgeable about plants and animals. Largely due to the headteacher's personal interest, most classrooms and shared areas abound with artefacts and living creatures from the natural world. Colleagues and parents support this aspect and mammals, insects, molluscs, birds, fishes and plants are well kept in appropriate habitats around the school and enrich the pupils' learning experiences. Every trip to the library brings the added interest of viewing an 'under-water world'. Little wonder that many of the children in the reception class used the word 'habitat' readily and knowledgeably during a science lesson! Even a trip to the office brings you a sight of Giant African Land Snails; as a result, delivering the class register is a popular responsibility! Everyday at Moorfield School is an interesting learning experience; consequently most pupils build significantly on their previous learning on a day-to-day basis and enjoy coming to school.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**Whilst much of the teaching for children under five matches their prior attainment, they are presented with insufficient opportunities to learn by making choices and to develop their physical and creative skills further through structured and independent play.**

- 20 The school has developed a careful strategy which ensures the smooth admission of children into full-time school. Children usually start full-time schooling at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. Prior to this, the school enables most children to join the reception class for five mornings each week. At the time of the inspection, of this term's intake, one child was still aged under five years. The children's attainment on entry to school is above that found nationally, particularly in their speaking and listening skills and in their personal and social development.
- 21 By the age of five, the children's overall level of attainment continues to be above that expected of pupils of similar ages. Due to the teachers' consistent and effective emphasis on literacy and numeracy, science and on using computers to aid their learning, the pupils' attainment in these aspects is developed well and is above the standard shown by others of this age. Most children have made good progress in these aspects. The teachers promote warm relationships and nurture the children's positive attitudes to school; as a result their personal and social skills, although not targeted directly as one of the recommended areas of learning, are above average.
- 22 The teachers base the taught curriculum on the National Curriculum provision for Year 1 pupils. This has been modified in some respects to cater for the above average skills of the majority of the pupils in the class, but in several areas it is not fully appropriate for the needs of very young children. For example, the teachers' planning does not indicate how structured or spontaneous play can be used to support learning or how activities can be used to enable children to learn progressively by making choices or by following their own lines of enquiry. Most of the lessons observed, whilst effective and often good in the main, were strongly teacher directed. These were successful in developing the children's observational skills, for example when hunting for mini-beasts as part of a study of habitats. English and mathematics



lessons followed the national strategies well and involved appropriate discussion or mental work and the teachers utilised questioning productively to draw responses from the pupils. Whilst these lessons are beneficial for all pupils, younger children under five are not provided with sufficient opportunities to explore their own ideas or to play in a planned environment where their understanding can be developed to the full. A few such activities were provided; for example, during an art/geography lesson, the pupils made sand castles connected with their beach studies, whilst others played with telephones. However, these lacked structure and purpose, they did not promote the value of children making their own choices and following their own lines of enquiry, nor were they supported sufficiently by adult prompting to enrich learning.

- 23 Due to the planning being based on National Curriculum subjects, insufficient evidence is placed on the way that young children learn. There are imaginative role-play areas in the class, for example the 'Garden Centre'. However these were rarely open or used during the inspection and there was little evidence in the teachers' planning to show how role-play could be used purposefully to offer children opportunities to make choices or to follow their own lines of enquiry in support of their learning. A limited amount of constructional and sand and water play equipment is provided, but during the inspection, partially due to the refurbishment of administrative areas, much of this equipment was stored inaccessibly for the children. As a result it was not seen in regular use to support the children's learning.
- 24 Resources to meet the physical development of children under five are also inadequate; for example there are no large pedalled toys or trolleys for children to support social and physical play. Children do not have access to both an indoor and outdoor curriculum which provides opportunities for independent, robust play, as currently recommended by the National Framework for children under five and from September 2000, the Foundation Curriculum.
- 25 Despite these shortcomings, children are taught sensitively and appropriately in terms of the National Curriculum and make satisfactory progress overall. However, the school lacks a specific policy and approach to the teaching of children under five and does not place sufficient emphasis on the recommended areas of learning for these young children. Consequently the children's learning lacks the enrichment that planned play opportunities provide.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- 26 Improve the activity and progress for children under five by:
- basing the planned curriculum more precisely on all the nationally recommended areas of learning;
  - increasing the range of resources so that they more purposely support children's learning and physical development through structured and independent activity;
  - focusing the teaching on all the areas of learning, including developing the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative and physical development thereby enabling children to enrich their learning and make good progress;
  - providing appropriate opportunities for the children to have access to independent indoor and outdoor play, so that they can learn by making their own choices.
- (Paragraphs 20-25)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15	60	25	0	0	0

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	292
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	17

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	40

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

*Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	28	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	100	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	16
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97	93	97
	National	82	86	87

*Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	30	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	30	27	30
	Total	43	41	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93	89	100
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	25	26	29
	Total	39	40	43
Percentage of pupils	School	85	87	93

at NC level 4 or above	National	68	69	75
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**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	287
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.2
Average class size	32.4

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	478 851
Total expenditure	454 068
Expenditure per pupil	1 550
Balance brought forward from previous year	54 654
Balance carried forward to next year	79 437

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	292
Number of questionnaires returned	102

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	45	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	57	2	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	54	17	5	0
The teaching is good.	50	46	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	61	10	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	44	5	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	53	17	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	49	44	6	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	47	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	38	7	1	3

### Other issues raised by parents

The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire, or who attended the meeting with the inspectors, expressed their strong support for the school and appreciated the good quality of the provision.