



Moorlands Infant School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 109001
Local Authority Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number 288247
Inspection dates 11–12 September 2006
Reporting inspector Lorna Brackstone

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Moorfields Road
School category	Community		Bath
Age range of pupils	4–7		BA2 2DQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01225 422556
Number on roll (school)	162	Fax number	01225 463056
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Tony Ashton
		Headteacher	B Collett
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001		

Age group 4–7	Inspection dates 11–12 September 2006	Inspection number 288247
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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This infant school is located to the south-west of the city and shares the same site with a Children's Centre and the Junior School. It serves a mixed area of privately owned and housing trust rented flats and houses.

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Attainment on entry into Reception is varied but overall it is below national expectations.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school effectively brings out the best in children personally, 'encouraging them to become quietly confident individuals.' Staff, governors, parents and inspectors unanimously agree that pupils' personal development is good. The guidance and support they are given is good and 'children are nurtured in a supportive and caring environment.' Consequently, they are happy pupils who enjoy school life and are active members of the school community.

Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future education. Reception children achieve well from starting points that are below national expectations. A high proportion of boys have poorly developed social skills and their communication, language and literacy skills are weak. The school has accurately identified that all children make good progress in the Reception classes. This is because provision is securely based on the needs of these young children. Teaching is good and the curriculum is rich and meaningful. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children have achieved well and reached the majority of what is expected of those of this age. However, a significant proportion of boys do not attain the expected level in communication, language and literacy skills.

The quality of provision in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and pupils' progress reflects this. Whilst the school judges achievement, teaching and the curriculum to be good in Key Stage 1, inspectors judge provision to be satisfactory. This is because the teaching does not always match the needs of the pupils and the curriculum does not consistently support the development of their skills. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with their teachers and interact well with them. They are well prepared to maintain healthy and safe lifestyles and know how to behave as members of a community. However, although overall standards at the end of Year 2 are average, not all the pupils are sufficiently challenged to do as well as they could. A recent whole-school focus has improved standards in mathematics, particularly for boys, but there has been a dip in reading. Standards in writing are broadly average but girls do better than boys and the school has been slow to respond to this.

The inspectors agree that the headteacher and governors provide a good, clear steer to the school and have led it well through a range of difficulties and various issues over the past year. All available resources have been efficiently managed and there has been a real commitment to improving the school environment for the benefit of the pupils. The school recognises that some aspects of its self-evaluation were generous because it was not based on up-to-date information. The newly created senior management team understands its role in rectifying this but is in the early stages of development. Consequently, leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor more closely all key areas of the curriculum so that declines in standards do not go unnoticed.
- Separately track the attainment of both boys and girls to ensure that provision fully meets all their needs in Years 1 and 2.

- Fully challenge the pupils in Year 1 and 2 lessons by ensuring that they are all actively involved in meaningful learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. When starting school, a significant number of children are immature and have weak speaking and listening skills. The good provision in the Reception classes ensures that they make good progress. They settle quickly to the new routines and start to learn rapidly, developing well as confident and independent learners. Although the majority achieve the expected level by the end of Reception, there are still some children, notably boys, who still have weak language skills.

Standards attained are average by the time pupils are ready to move to the Junior School. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The recent focus on improving standards in mathematics has been successful in enhancing pupil progress in this subject. However, despite the introduction of a range of strategies to support the girls, their attainment in mathematics is still lower than that of the boys. In reading, because less time has been given to monitoring standards, there has been a slight decline from above average to average. Standards in writing remain broadly average but boys progress at a slower rate than the girls because they are not sufficiently engaged in the planned activities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Parents are particularly pleased that their children develop good personal skills. One parent summed this up by explaining that at this school 'all children matter.' Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils are happy in their learning and gain a good sense of excitement and interest from many of the experiences in school. This is a strength of the school, and as one parent explained, 'both my children settled in happily and enjoyed the learning experience.' The children are confident because they benefit from an environment where relationships are strong and they listen to each other well. Behaviour is good and is a strong feature of the school. They know the difference between right and wrong and celebrate each other's successes. Pupils' knowledge of diversity is good because they learn to appreciate different cultures through theatre visits and links with a school in St Lucia. A particular favourite is their visit to the Welsh Folk Museum in Cardiff. Preparation for their next step in education is satisfactory but could be improved if higher standards were achieved in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

As a result of a focused approach to healthy eating and regular exercise, pupils' well-being is good and prepares them for keeping fit in the future. Pupils feel safe because they know that there is always a 'buddy' or an adult to talk through any problems. The older children make a positive contribution to their own school community by willingly taking turns as assembly monitors and helpers for the younger

children. Pupils collaborate well in the adventure playground and confidently exercise their democratic rights when voting for their school council representatives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good relationships and secure routines are key features throughout the school. This ensures that pupils feel happy and are well prepared for learning. The few incidents of disruptive behaviour are managed consistently throughout the school and this means that pupils' learning is not interrupted. Teachers and teaching staff interact well with the pupils and target their questions well to include all individuals. However, pupils do not always learn fast enough in Years 1 and 2 because there is insufficient challenge and the rate of learning is too slow. This is particularly evident when they are required to sit for long periods of time listening to the teacher or are required to complete unexciting worksheets. Teachers do not check the pupils' individual progress sufficiently well in all key subject areas and this has resulted in a recent decline in reading standards. Teaching is good in the Reception classes because activities are practically based and make learning interesting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is good for children in Reception, where a wide range of activities is planned. In Years 1 and 2, pupils receive a broad curriculum, which takes appropriate account of school's priorities to raise standards in English and mathematics. However, the many worksheets used restrict pupils' opportunities to write for themselves and this limits their use of skills across the curriculum. There is a good programme for pupils' personal development, which is pitched at an appropriate level for their age, and includes education about sex and relationships and the safe use of medicines. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in the classroom and targets on their individual education plans are sharply focused on how pupils can improve. The school makes work relevant for the pupils by incorporating visits and visitors into the topics planned. A good range of clubs out of school time is enjoyed by the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good because, as one parent explained, 'the teachers are expert in bringing out the best in the children and encouraging them to be confident individuals.' This view is clearly shared by many others. The safe, secure and child-friendly environment is valued by pupils and parents. Pastoral guidance is a strong feature of the school, notably at the start of each new school year when, as

another parent explained, it is 'exceptionally well thought out and executed with such enthusiasm and expertise by all staff involved.'

Pupils and their families are well supported by the breakfast club, which provides a nutritious start to the school day. The close links established with parents have enabled outside agencies, such as the school nurse, to provide advice to families which enrich the children's experiences at school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported through a good range of support systems. Most parents feel well informed by school reports and consider communication to be of good quality. Targets set by the teachers ensure that the children know what to do to improve their work but these could be more challenging and used to check pupils' progress. Monitoring is not sharp enough to track the specific differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear direction and she has a strong vision, which is firmly focused on raising standards. The members of the newly formed senior management team have clearly devolved responsibilities but it is too soon to judge the impact of this initiative on school improvement and pupils' learning. Subject leaders fulfil their roles satisfactorily, but their involvement in checking standards is not yet sufficiently developed and has led to unexpected dips in some key skills. Management of the Foundation Stage is good and shows a good understanding of the needs of young children.

The governors know the school well and are very supportive. They monitor effectively and have a good picture of how well the school is performing. The leadership and management of the school have the capacity to ensure that the improvements necessary to raise standards further are carried out.

There is now a sound range of monitoring and self-evaluation systems to help the school identify strengths and areas for improvement. However, monitoring has not always been used effectively enough to identify where weaknesses might be developing. For example, although the school has successfully identified and remedied the weaknesses identified in mathematics last year, standards in reading fell partly because it was not monitored as rigorously as usual. This is one of the reasons why the inspectors judge leadership and management to be satisfactory where the school considers them to be good. The headteacher carries out regular lesson observations. Comprehensive feedback is provided and this has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. However, planning is not checked rigorously enough to ensure sufficient challenge for all pupils. Pupils, parents and the wider community are consulted successfully and involved in the school's process of self-evaluation.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, visiting your classrooms and looking at some of your work. We think your school brings out your best personal skills and prepares you adequately for the next stage of your education.

- Good things about your school:
- You settle well into Reception and make good progress during your first year in school because teachers plan exciting activities and make learning interesting.
- You get on well with each other and you are happy at school. You behave well in lessons and in the playground.
- You keep healthy and fit because the school makes a good job of taking care of you and keeping you safe.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school and are glad that you come here.

What we have suggested the school can do to be even better:

- Check more closely that you are always making the best possible progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Make sure that activities in Years 1 and 2 are better planned so that both boys and girls are kept interested and can learn from them.
- Make sure that you are not sat listening for too long and plan activities that help you better develop your skills.

You can help by thinking of ways in which you could use your writing skills in different lessons and by always trying your hardest with your work. Thank you again and keep on enjoying school.