

Moordown St John's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113838
Local Authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	289740
Inspection date	17 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Beckingham
Headteacher	Peter Herbert
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2002
School address	Vicarage Road Moordown Bournemouth BH9 2SA
Telephone number	01202 527683
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Moordown St John's CE Primary School is an above average sized primary school. Most pupils come from a White British background. The remainder come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils speak English as an additional language but very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is just above average. The proportion eligible for free school meals is about average. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception classes is in line with national expectations.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Moordown St John's CE Primary School is a good school with outstanding aspects to its work. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is outstanding. Parents hold very positive views about the school. They are extremely happy with the care and education provided and give the school strong support. Parental comments include, 'We are very pleased with the school and how our children are progressing', 'I am very happy with Moordown St John's in all areas', and 'MSJ is a fantastic and well led school'.

Effective leadership and management are the key to the school's success. The headteacher provides strong leadership and direction. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other leaders. The school has an accurate view of its performance and has taken effective action to bring about improvements in most areas. A positive atmosphere pervades the school and there is a clear commitment from staff to high standards and providing high quality provision.

Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps children in Reception to get off to a good start. They make good gains in all areas of learning. Effective teaching and learning enable pupils to make good progress as they move through the school. By Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils tend to make better progress in Years 3 to 6, particularly in mathematics and science. The school has successfully increased the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in these subjects by focusing on the needs of the more able and by increasing investigative and problem solving work. By contrast, not enough pupils in Year 2 attain the higher Level 3, particularly in writing. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement and is taking positive action to tackle this. The range of writing opportunities is being increased and stimulating topics are introduced to inspire writing. However, tasks are not always sufficiently challenging for the more able in Years 1 and 2. A good curriculum is enriched by a wide range of additional activities.

Excellent care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development. In this positive school community, all pupils are valued. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected by the well above average attendance. Clear expectations, outstanding relationships and positive rewards lead to good behaviour. Pupils show an exceptionally good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. Assessment is used well to set individual learning targets in English and mathematics so pupils know what they are working on in order to improve. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in Years 1 and 2, particularly for the more able in writing, and ensure that activities are always sufficiently challenging for the more able.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children in Reception make good progress and reach above expected standards. Children at an early stage of learning English are well provided for and make good gains in acquiring language skills. Standards in Year 2 in 2006 were broadly average but a lower than average proportion of pupils attained the higher standards especially in writing. Action is being taken to rectify this by providing a wider range of stimulating writing

opportunities. National test results for Year 6 in 2006 were above average in mathematics and science but closer to average in English. National data show that Year 6 pupils achieved extremely well in mathematics and science. A strong emphasis on investigative, thinking and problem solving skills contributes to this impressive progress. Pupils made good progress in English. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the effective support provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are enthusiastic and participate very well in all aspects of school life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. High expectations, outstanding relationships and a positive system of rewards lead to pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles. They possess an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy diets and take regular exercise. Older pupils thrive on additional responsibilities. They take on a range of tasks to help the smooth running of the school. Those on the school council serve their fellow pupils well and have contributed to improvement to playtime and sports equipment. Pupils contribute to the wider community by raising funds for a range of charities. At Moordown St John's, pupils are very well prepared for their future economic well-being because, by the time they leave, they possess good skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). In addition to this, their personal and social skills are extremely well developed. A Year 6 pupil commented, 'You are taught to learn independently here'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Effective teaching and learning contribute significantly to pupils' good achievement. Teaching in the Foundation Stage provides a good blend of direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. A parent wrote, 'My child always enjoys school and the stimulating and challenging activities in Reception'. Across the school, teachers share learning intentions with their classes so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers promote new vocabulary and provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. Consequently, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed. Skilful questioning by teachers challenges pupils' thinking and checks their understanding. Assessment is usually used effectively to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged well, their interest is maintained and they make good progress. However, occasionally, work is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs, particularly for the more able in Years 1 and 2, and this hinders their progress. The marking of pupils' work is positive and constructive. Written comments help pupils to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' achievement and exceptionally well to their personal development. Recent developments have been particularly effective in raising achievement in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. The school's participation in the Primary Learning Network, a partnership between local schools, has contributed to this success. The curriculum has been less successful in promoting good achievement for higher attainers in Years 1 and 2

but this issue is being tackled. Good links between subjects add meaning and relevance to learning. For example, science work in Year 3 on plant life was enhanced through art and design. Inspired by the work of Georgia O'Keefe, pupils used different media such as watercolour, pastel and chalk to create still-life drawings and paintings of flowers. Visits to places of educational interest support pupils' learning. A successful residential visit for Year 6 early in the academic year provides challenging outdoor activities and effectively builds teamworking skills. Modern foreign languages add an interesting dimension to pupils' learning and to their cultural development. The many additional activities contribute to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety receive very good attention. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a range of stimulating activities which promotes good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding pastoral care and support contribute exceptionally well to pupils' personal development. Effective induction arrangements mean that new children settle quickly into school. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective so pupils are safe and secure at school. Staff know the pupils well and have established outstanding relationships with them and their parents. As a parent commented, 'All my children have settled well into school, making friends and being supported by caring teachers and teaching assistants. Any problems or concerns have been quickly dealt with and resolved'. Assessment information is used well to set suitably challenging individual learning targets in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils know what they are working towards in order to improve their performance in these subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are successfully promoting good pupil achievement and outstanding personal development. The experienced headteacher provides strong leadership. A positive 'learning culture' has been created for pupils and staff. Expectations are high and there is a clear commitment to high standards and providing good quality educational provision. Teamwork among the staff is strong. Leadership responsibilities are effectively shared among the teaching force. Evaluation skills are being developed so that all leaders are effectively monitoring and developing their areas of responsibility. School self-evaluation is good and the school has a clear overview of its strengths and areas in need of improvement. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and developed by senior staff and the local authority. The school shows a good capacity to improve by raising achievement, particularly for the more able in Years 3 to 6. Leaders are aware that there is more to be done to raise achievement in Years 1 and 2 for the more able.

Administrative staff are very efficient and this enables senior leaders to focus on raising pupils' achievement and improving educational provision. The governors are committed, supportive and have a clear understanding of the school's performance.

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Annex A

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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

18 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Moordown St John's CE Primary School, Bournemouth, BH9 2SA.

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I found out. Moordown St John's is a good school and one you can be proud of.

These things are strengths of the school:

- You clearly enjoy school and this is shown by your very good attendance and your keen involvement in school activities.
- Those of you in Reception get off to a good start.
- Teaching is mainly good, which is why you learn so much.
- You are making good progress in most subjects.
- Progress is particularly good in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on very well with others.
- The school offers interesting learning activities and a good range of additional clubs and visits.
- You show an excellent understanding of the importance of keeping healthy.
- The staff know you well and you receive outstanding care and support from them.
- The school is well led by your headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

There is one thing the school has been asked to improve:

- Some of you, particularly the more able, could make more progress in Years 1 and 2, especially in writing. The school is working hard to make this happen.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts

Lead inspector