



Moulsham Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114803
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290035
Inspection dates 28–29 September 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Princes Road
School category	Community		Chelmsford
Age range of pupils	4–7		Essex CM2 9DG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01245 352742
Number on roll (school)	270	Fax number	01245 352347
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Philip Firth
		Headteacher	Mrs A Smith
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001		

Age group 4–7	Inspection dates 28–29 September 2006	Inspection number 290035
-------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This popular infant school is a little larger than the average. While pupils are mainly of White British backgrounds, about a quarter come from a variety of different minority ethnic backgrounds. A total of 14 other languages are spoken in pupils' homes and 18 pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils starting at school have a wide spread of ability. Overall, however, attainment on entry is slightly below that expected, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school is outstanding and offers excellent value for money. It is not surprising that parents are unanimously supportive of the school because there are so many strengths in what the school does and achieves and there are no significant weaknesses. One parent wrote, 'My daughter absolutely loves school and has done since day one.' The pupils' love of the school is at the heart of its success. All the staff work very hard to help all pupils to feel included. They target and check each child's progress and make sure that pupils do their very best. Staff contribute to the very positive atmosphere and ethos in which the pupils thrive and feel safe. As a result, achievement is excellent and the pupils' personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. On a few occasions, some pupils find it difficult to meet the teachers' high expectations of their behaviour in lessons. This occasionally leads to a drop in these pupils' concentration and achievement. By the time they leave the school, standards are high with a large proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics and as a result, pupils are very well equipped for their future lives. These things happen because the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support provided are all exemplary. Teachers plan their lessons extremely well. They question pupils cleverly to move them forward in their learning and to assess pupils' understanding. In addition, teachers' subject knowledge is excellent, as in an outstanding Year 2 French lesson when the teacher spoke freely in French to immerse the class in the language and to help them to imitate her good accent. One parent wrote, 'My child has achieved greatly and this is because of the excellent schooling'. The influence that binds the school together and that has enabled it to improve significantly since its last inspection is the headteacher. She is pivotal to the school's success. She has a driving vision to provide for all the children extremely well, whether they find learning easy or have learning difficulties, whether they speak English as a first or additional language, and for both boys and girls. This vision is attained through the excellence of her leadership. She makes sure that all the staff are involved in the school's improvement and development, all views are listened to and valued, and high achievement is celebrated. The school is characterised by rigour and accountability, which help all to know their part in its success and what is expected of them. The quality of monitoring and evaluation is superb. Staff review the work of the school systematically and reflected on and consider all avenues to build on the pupils' achievements. The headteacher is very ably assisted by the excellent deputy head, senior management team and all the staff that have management responsibilities. Many parents remarked on how well their children settle into the school when they first join in the Reception year. Inspectors agree. This strong basis gives the children a flying start, and is fostered through the high quality of care, teaching and learning, and leadership and management in the Reception classes. The pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent, though in a few lessons the behaviour of some pupils dipped, and their progress, while good, was slowed because learning was interrupted by a few pupils with learning difficulties. However, such pupils are generally well managed by staff and relationships are excellent. Pupils are very willing to help each other and to contribute to the

community. Pupils respond very well to the high quality of care provided and have an excellent understanding of the need to live healthily.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve behaviour on the few occasions when in lessons, pupils lack concentration.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Although pupils enter Reception with standards that are slightly below average, they quickly settle and make rapid progress, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills which are their weakest areas at this stage. The excellent provision enables the pupils to start Year 1 with at least average capability in all areas. Their progress is particularly good in mathematical development, in which they reach above average standards. Throughout Years 1 and 2 all groups of pupils continue to progress rapidly so that overall achievement is excellent. By the end of Year 2, attainment is exceptionally high in writing and above average in reading and mathematics. Improvements introduced by the school have resulted in higher standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. Attendance is good because pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and school. At the last inspection, there were weaknesses in the pupils' personal development due to lack of opportunity for pupils to develop their independence. This is now a strength. The pupils thoroughly enjoy having responsibilities and take them seriously, whether they are playground pals, on the school council, or music helpers in assembly. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their very positive relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them reflect outstanding attitudes. They have an exceptionally good understanding of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle and there are many opportunities for them to take part in a wide range of physical activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

There has been a systematic improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. It is now outstanding in all years and this ensures that the large majority of pupils make excellent progress. Teachers assess pupils' progress very well and make very good use of this information when planning future work. This helps them to ensure that lessons are planned at different levels to make sure that all can succeed. Tasks engage pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. Consequently, they

respond readily and are keen to participate and demonstrate what they know and can do. The support staff make a strong contribution to the high quality. Whether working with individuals or small groups, both in the classes and in withdrawal groups, they support learning, keep pupils on task, and in particular help pupils that have concentration difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. There is a suitably strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils experience a rich and balanced range of experiences, which meets their needs effectively. Teachers plan lessons extremely well and make sure that the work is made relevant across groups of subjects. For example, pupils learn how to write instructions by writing up experimental work in science. In addition, there is a clear emphasis on the development of the pupils' thinking and problem solving skills, which prepares them well for the next stage of their education and for adult life. Furthermore, focus weeks, for example, on design and technology and art, enliven the curriculum and support learning very well, as do the many educational visits, visitors into the school and the very good range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils' care, support and guidance are outstanding. Procedures to ensure the protection and safety of children are robust and effective. Any inappropriate behaviour is identified and quickly dealt with. The provision to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is outstanding. The educational, social and emotional needs of all pupils are identified rigorously and high quality support is provided to meet them. Members of staff know the circumstances of the pupils well. This is much valued by the pupils who talk warmly about the support received from the teachers and teaching assistants. Tracking progress towards targets is rigorous and used exceptionally well to identify where further support is needed for pupils of all abilities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher, senior management team, teachers with responsibilities and governors all make excellent contributions. Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent and there is extremely good capacity for further improvement. Governors have a very strong understanding of the strengths of the school. They provide excellent support and challenge for the school. They make regular visits to monitor its work and to gain an understanding of provision, in order to keep themselves very well informed. In consequence they play an important role in the monitoring of progress towards the targets set out in the excellent development plan. Subject leaders also contribute strongly to the excellence of leadership and management. Monitoring and evaluation of subjects and action plans

for improvement are of high quality and contribute well to the whole school plan. The school's deep commitment to equal opportunities is seen in the care taken to ensure that all groups are included effectively in the life of the school and there are excellent processes for checking that each group achieves equally well.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

2 October 2006 Dear Pupils Moulsham Infant School, Princes Road, Chelmsford, Essex. CM2 9DG Following our visit to inspect your school, we would like to tell you how much we enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes. A special thank you to those who spent time sharing their work, talking with us and telling us their ideas. We came to see how well your school helps you to learn, and what we saw and heard, helped us to decide that yours is an excellent school. We were very impressed by how well you behave and how much you enjoy being there. We thought you were terrific in your class assembly. We particularly enjoyed seeing every one participate, speak up with confidence and look so happy. There are lots of things we like about Moulsham Infants: - You try very hard with your work, and make excellent progress. - By the time you leave to go to the junior school, most of you are very good at reading, writing and mathematics. - The staff teach you exceptionally well, and that is the reason you get such good results. - You learn to work and play well together and to look after yourselves. - Everyone at school takes very good care of you, so that you are safe and happy, and your parents are very pleased. - Mrs Smith, all the staff and the governors know what they want the school to be like, and work hard together to make it an excellent place for you to get the very best education. There is one thing that we think would make your school even better. Mrs Smith and Mrs Cannon are going to help all the staff to get even better at helping you to learn. You can help by making sure that you always listen carefully and be on your best behaviour in all lessons. We hope that you go on enjoying all the things you do to help you to learn and be happy. With best wishes
Keith Sadler Lead Inspector