

Moorlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116127
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	290426
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Thrusell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Cook
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret White
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001
School address	Kesteven Way Bitterne Southampton SO18 5RJ
Telephone number	023 8046 4404
Fax number	023 8047 4439

Age group	4–8
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Moorlands is a small, evolving primary school, currently catering for pupils up to Year 3. Present building work is preparing the school for its full age 4 to 11 primary status. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. Fewer pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals than in most schools. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is just above average. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Gold Arts Mark, Healthy Schools and Active Mark awards, in recognition of its work.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Moorlands is a good school. It has several outstanding features. One parent commented, 'I wouldn't change anything about the school. It's brilliant!' The headteacher provides extremely enthusiastic leadership, ever looking for ways to further improve the school, shown by the many different awards it has gained. She is extremely well supported by her staff, who between them provide excellent subject and curriculum management. The school has recently appointed key stage managers to take account of the growing school and to ensure that good levels of achievement and standards continue to be maintained. There is an outstanding curriculum that promotes excellent personal development, which, along with outstanding care, guidance and support and good teaching, ensures that pupils achieve well and reach standards that are consistently above average.

The curriculum meets the personal and learning needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who show particular gifts and talents extremely well. Its breadth has been recognised by a number of national awards. Curriculum panels, that include parents and governors, meet regularly to evaluate and review different areas of the curriculum. Active membership of several local groups helps the school to consider and develop its curriculum further. As part of the local Network Learning Community, the school sends pupils to different schools to find out how 'they do things', and to report back. Curricular enrichment is excellent. A wide range of clubs includes different sports and orienteering, which encourage physical activity. Pupils particularly enjoy educational visits and visitors to the school, which brings learning to life. They also love music and singing and perform regularly both in and out of school.

Throughout the school, pupils are known very well by staff and they are fully respected as individuals. The school works extremely closely with parents and agencies to promote pupils' education, well-being and safety. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. 'We have teachers and lots of people to look after us', said one. A key to pupils' good progress is the very good assessment procedures. These are used to check that all are doing as well as expected, and to identify where additional support is needed. Assessment information is also used to set individual targets for pupils to work towards. Pupils have a hand in setting these. They understand that these are designed to help them improve their work, and are keen to meet them.

Teachers also use this information well to plan different lesson activities that challenge pupils in their learning. The good provision in Reception ensures that the gradual steps children take in the different areas of learning are carefully recorded. Well planned opportunities are provided to ensure that these are built upon. Very good provision for personal and social development in Reception encourages children to develop outstanding patterns of behaviour. They become very confident and independent in their approach to school and learning. Throughout the school teachers plan well together, sharing their expertise and experience to provide good lessons. A weakness in the opportunities pupils have for speaking and listening was identified by the school. Teachers now provide more opportunities, through questioning, discussion and role play, for pupils to develop their vocabulary and ideas. This has already helped them to improve their writing and to gain a better understanding of mathematical processes. Although pupils are good speakers, their listening skills are not as strong. In their enthusiasm to speak, they sometimes forget that others also need to have their say, and that they can learn from this. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Along with recent improvements this shows that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that pupils understand the importance of listening carefully, so that all have the opportunity to contribute and learn more from each other and make even better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards overall are above average and achievement is good. Children generally enter the school with a nationally expected level of skills, but this varies from year to year. They make good progress in Reception. When they start in Year 1, a high proportion are well on the way to achieving the learning goals expected at this age. Good progress continues in Years 1, 2 and 3. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Action taken on speaking and listening has started to enhance the progress pupils make. The school identified that boys were not doing as well as girls, particularly in reading and writing. Opportunities for non-fiction writing, often through very good cross curricular links, 'boy friendly' books and the use of visual stimuli, have addressed this and boys now make similar progress to girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are outstanding. They respond very well when asked to reflect during quiet times in assembly. Opportunities through art, music and religious education help to develop pupils' very good awareness of different peoples and cultures. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Attendance is average. Whilst most pupils come to school regularly, the school is making every effort to improve the attendance of the few who do not. Classes vie weekly with each other to win 'Sam the dog' (school attendance matters). Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. The very active school council carried out a survey of lunchboxes to try and encourage more healthy eating. Behaviour is excellent and pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are encouraged to be extra sensible at lunchtimes to have the chance to sit on the top table with the headteacher. One pupil said, 'It's like a restaurant table with flowers on it'. Pupils agree that school is a very safe place and know that if they have any concerns these are quickly sorted out. They are regularly involved in charitable fund raising and different community events. Good progress in developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills means they are well prepared for their later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Outstanding relationships encourage pupils and they are eager to learn. In Reception, the warm relationships ensure that children develop the confidence to socialise and play independently. However, in order to encourage pupils to try different things, the tracking of activities that children choose could be improved. Lessons are planned and prepared well, taking good account of pupils' previous learning. Throughout the school, teachers

and teaching assistants work well as a team and with great enthusiasm. They encourage pupils in their learning and use a range of techniques to make lessons enjoyable, such as role play and practical activities. Opportunities for speaking and listening, for example through talking partners, role play and open questioning, are helping to develop pupils' ideas and understanding. However, pupils' speaking is not always managed well to ensure that all can have their say. Teachers refer to pupils' targets throughout lessons and in their marking, so that pupils themselves are aware of how well they are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is regularly reviewed and work is very well planned for different abilities. Interesting topics enable pupils to use and develop their different subject skills, including ICT, in purposeful situations. Opportunities offered through excellent enrichment activities add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning and promote their personal and social development. Work in the Foundation Stage is well planned to provide a good balance between structured sessions and activities chosen by children. The school's comprehensive programme of personal and social development includes very useful life skills that help pupils to become healthy, safe and responsible people.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. The school has a very strong commitment to caring, which is reflected in the very good arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils. One parent commented, 'I know that when my daughter walks into school in the morning, she is cared for, nurtured and loved by the staff'. There are very good arrangements for children starting school. They become acquainted with the staff and surroundings by spending time in school. Families receive a DVD of school life to watch with their children. Children are therefore keen to start school and settle very quickly. Teachers and assistants support pupils' personal needs very well. Two assistants, trained in emotional literacy, give particular support to those with emotional or social needs. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is good, enabling them to achieve as well as their classmates. Pupil's progress is assessed and tracked very well and targets set for them to work towards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school very carefully monitors and accurately evaluates its work, although modest in some of its judgements. A good level of teaching has been maintained that has enabled pupils to make good progress in their learning. The school identifies appropriate areas for action. Using its very good assessment procedures, it is extremely careful to ensure all pupils achieve well. Regular classroom observations are helping to improve teaching and learning still further although a few inconsistencies remain, for example in the development of speaking and listening. Through good performance management procedures and many opportunities for professional development, staff successfully improve their performance in line with actions that the school is taking. Teachers take every opportunity to develop their subject expertise and teaching practice. Their professional influence extends beyond the school. Governors are well involved in the life and work of the school and have a

good understanding of its performance. They are starting to gain the confidence to ask more searching questions. The school has excellent links with parents, who are extremely positive about the school and are encouraged to take a full part in their children's learning. The school has very carefully planned its building alterations in readiness for its Key Stage 2 classes, and has reviewed its current management structure in preparation for this growth.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	2

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?	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.

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	1
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	1
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

13 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Moorlands Primary School, Southampton, SO18 5RJ

I am writing to let you know what I found when I visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. I spoke to some of you during my visit and you were interesting to talk to, extremely polite and helpful. You spoke very enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. Moorlands Primary is a good school. It has several outstanding features.

I liked these things the most:

- You do well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get a good start to school in Reception.
- You behave extremely well, work hard and enjoy your lessons and playtimes.
- The school is extremely caring; pupils who need extra help are well supported.
- The school provides you with very many interesting things to do.
- You understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise.
- The school listens to you when you suggest how things could get even better. I hope you get your gazebo and I like the thought of having flowers on the dinner table.
- Your parents are keen to help you and give very good support to all that the school does.
- Your headteacher does an exceptional job and is very well supported by the staff and governors.

I have asked the school to work on these things now.

Teachers give you many opportunities to talk about all that you are doing, and you are good at this. You like taking part in role play and acting things out. However, you need to remember to listen more to what others have to say, so that you can share ideas and learn from each other.

Your school is getting bigger and will need to think further about how it will organise and manage the work of both the infant and junior classes, so that you all continue to do your very best.

I did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell, Lead Inspector