

Moat Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133253
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	294045
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Brenda Cusdin HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	167
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Parson
Headteacher	Roger Higgs
Date of previous school inspection	17 February 2003
School address	Juniper Avenue Matson Gloucester GL4 6AP
Telephone number	01452 520502
Fax number	01452 504701

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Moat Primary School has more pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds than most other schools. More pupils than usual join the school later than at the normal time of admission, a few moving because long-term care arrangements change. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than usual. Very few are at the earliest stages of learning English as an additional language. About a quarter of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities, which is above average. Many children enter the Foundation Stage with skills much lower than often found at that age. Moat Primary School is involved in various partnerships, for example with a nearby children's centre. A pre-school and after-school club share the same site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Moat Primary School's overall effectiveness is satisfactory with good features.

'The staff are very dedicated – a lot of effort goes into extra clubs and there are wonderful trips.' 'The teachers are always there to listen and support children's needs.' These parents' views are shared by many other parents and pupils.

The staff put considerable thought into the care, guidance and support of the pupils. There are many constructive ways in which staff help pupils settle into school life and develop good personal skills. Links with families are nurtured well and pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are learning how to cope better. Pupils behave well in lessons, get along with each other and adults, and take pride in their school.

The curriculum is good. Teachers look for ways to tap into pupils' natural curiosity and enjoyment of practical and creative activities. There is very high take-up of clubs, such as the gardening club, and the 'forest school' is loved by all. The children in the Foundation Stage have made good progress this year from low starting points.

Achievement in Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly satisfactory. Standards have fluctuated in Year 2 and were well below national averages in 2006. Standards in Year 6 have remained well below average in the last three years, and in mathematics they were much lower than expected last year.

Pupils are making steadier progress this year because lessons were learned from what did not work so well last year. Programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are skilfully managed and these pupils are making good progress. However, more able pupils are not always moving forward fast enough.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are planned in great detail and classroom management works smoothly. Some teaching is very successful. At times, teaching is less effective because explanations to the whole class continue for too long, cover too much and do not stretch the more able pupils enough.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The tracking of pupils' progress has improved this year and this is another reason why pupils are making steadier progress now. Other useful management systems have been introduced recently. The staff are highly committed to providing a very good start in life for their pupils. Everyone is keenly aware of the most urgent priorities. Moat Primary School has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teaching consistently promotes good progress for all ability groups and sustains a good pace in learning in each lesson.
- Ensure that strategies for monitoring pupils' progress continue to develop effectively so that all pupils achieve well over their time at the school. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards on entry to the Foundation Stage are well below those found nationally. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage but standards on entry to Key Stage 1 are still below average. At Year 2, standards are below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in Year 2 have varied widely over the years. They matched national averages in 2005 and 2003 but were well below average in 2006, 2004 and 2002. Standards in Year 6 have remained well below average since 2004. Standards in mathematics declined significantly in 2006. The school has addressed the particular decline in mathematics by increasing the emphasis on the teaching of mental mathematics to improve performance.

The progress pupils make over their time at the school is broadly satisfactory, as demonstrated by the school's improved tracking system this year. Those identified as needing extra help are making good progress and are well supported by a range of intervention strategies. Occasionally, in lessons, more able pupils do not move ahead fast enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school. They love the clubs, trips and visitors. They speak positively about the ways that they take responsibility, for example taking food to the class recycling bins. The school council is elected democratically and understands that it is the 'voice of the school'. Pupils appreciate the healthy food and many take part in physical and sporting activities at break and lunchtime.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils settle to work quickly and respond well to classroom routines. They are very polite to staff and really welcoming to visitors. They do not approve of the occasional play-fighting that occurs but say that incidents are dealt with quickly. Attendance is a little below average but most pupils attend regularly and turn up on time.

Quick paired discussions during lessons show that pupils are developing useful skills for their future life. Pupils engage earnestly in sharing their ideas and listening to their partners' thoughts. They are learning responsibility for resources through the token system for borrowing play equipment. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are high participation rates in the choir and the gardening club that looks after the very attractive school outside areas.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and some practice is outstanding. Considerable thought goes into lesson plans. Usefully, lessons have a clear structure and drive towards specific learning. Some teaching is imaginative, and gets pupils actively engaged and thinking. This very effective practice pitches demands on pupils well and sustains a good pace by varying learning approaches throughout the lesson.

Some teaching is less effective because it lacks variety and because teaching points are dealt with slowly. In part this happens because staff want to cover topics very thoroughly. However,

when whole-class explanations continue for too long, pupils who could work faster are held back and the time for small group activities, where work is matched much better to pupils' starting points, is reduced.

Teaching assistants support individuals constructively and help them to succeed at their tasks. There is very good planning and team-working in Year 2, where the teaching assistant was observed helping pupils to dress up and role-play a story, carefully prompting them to use relevant vocabulary. Teachers mark pupils' written work regularly and give feedback on how well the pupils have done. In Year 4 pupils often assess their writing themselves, helping them concentrate on particular skills. This good practice is not evident in all books.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teachers have put considerable thought into curricular planning, aiming to stimulate pupils' natural curiosity and give them something exciting to talk about. Staff have cleverly devised programmes to promote the pupils' personal development. The curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors, and there is a good range of out-of-hours activities. The outdoor facilities are very good, although currently the Foundation Stage does not have enough access to outdoor learning during the morning sessions.

The school's programmes for teaching literacy and mathematics have been strengthened following last year's results. Concerns about the teaching of mental mathematics have led to a greater focus on this in teaching programmes. Resources for guided reading have improved and more emphasis given to this within the timetable. Catch-up programmes are very well planned. Provision for more able pupils is less well developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The staff are very committed to making every effort to ensure that their pupils get the very best start in life. They work constructively together, and link well with parents and other agencies. The learning mentor arranges sessions about parenting and works closely with individual families. The pastoral support worker provides a welcome safe haven for those pupils who need it, when they need it. The good care strategy means that pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties learn how to cope better.

There are good links with the pre-school and children settle quickly into the Foundation Stage class. Arrangements for reporting pupils' academic progress to parents are satisfactory. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding are sound.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has been involved with various local and national initiatives, including the Intensifying Support Programme. These have largely determined improvement priorities in the last two years. The headteacher and other managers are working at the right things to improve the quality of care and education.

The headteacher has a sound grasp of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. The different roles and responsibilities relating to care, guidance and support have been thoughtfully

developed in response to the particular needs of pupils and their families at Moat Primary School. Very recently, the headteacher reorganised the senior leadership team's responsibilities to increase their accountability for standards and quality. This was a sensible move. The school is developing a tracking system to monitor pupils' progress each term rather than wait until the end of each school year. This was a necessary step, allowing staff to intervene quicker if pupils are falling behind and anticipate end-of-year standards more securely than before.

The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities very effectively and is gathering evidence about the impact of this work. Day-to-day management of the school is good. Systems run smoothly and everyone knows what they need to do to ensure that this happens. The governing body has an appropriate committee structure and organisation. It fulfils its statutory duties and is supportive of the school. Governors recognise that they need further training to help them gauge the school's progress more rigorously.

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?	3
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?	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	2

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	2

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?	2
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.

Annex A

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	2
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	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	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moat Primary School, Gloucester GL4 6AP

Many thanks for your warm welcome. We really enjoyed our visit to your school. We learnt a lot from talking with you and the staff, and joining in your lessons and activities.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education and there are some things which are good. Your headteacher and staff are working at the right things to make it even better.

We were impressed by the confident way that you spoke to us and by the good behaviour that we saw in lessons and outside. You have wonderful outdoor facilities and it is really good that you take such good care of these. You spoke to us enthusiastically about activities that you like very much, such as the forest school.

Your staff want you to get the best possible start and they care for you very well. If you have problems there is someone you can talk to. Those of you who get extra support are making good progress and you told us how much this means to you.

Teachers try to make lessons exciting. Some lessons do this very well and they get everyone thinking and learning. Some lessons are fine but explanations can go on a bit too long.

Your teachers are checking your progress more regularly than they did before. They set targets each term and test to see how well you do. We thought this was very sensible.

Very best wishes

Brenda Cusdin Her Majesty's Inspector