

Moorside Community Primary school

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134659
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	300523
Inspection dates	28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Stephen Hardwick 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr L Gill
Headteacher	Mrs. J Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2006
School address	Keighley Road Ovenden Halifax West Yorkshire HX2 8AP
Telephone number	1422 365236
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

When Moorside Primary School was inspected in January 2006 it was given a Notice to Improve and asked to address issues related to standards, teaching, assessment, and monitoring and evaluation. It was subsequently visited in May 2006, when it was judged to be making satisfactory progress.

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Moorside Primary School was formed in 2004 following the closure of separate infant and junior schools. It serves an area to the north of the centre of Halifax. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average, reflecting low family incomes in the area. Relatively high proportions of pupils are considered to be vulnerable or have additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average, particularly in relation to their language development.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards in English, mathematics and science.

Moorside has thoroughly tackled the critical matters that were raised when it was inspected in January 2006. Assessment, and monitoring and evaluation have improved significantly, and teaching, which was inadequate overall, is now satisfactory with some strengths. In consequence the pupils are making better progress in lessons and their standards are rising. Nonetheless, standards are still low and the changes have come too late to affect the school's performance in the latest national tests. These have been very low and declined from 2005 to 2006; the Year 6 pupils who took the tests made poor progress. The school recognises that results have been unsatisfactory. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

Inspectors do not agree with the school's view that it is now effective overall. The timescale has been too short to overcome fully the widespread nature of the pupils' underachievement, and the improvements have yet to be translated into appropriate standards

Nonetheless much of what the school offers for its pupils is good and there is close concern that each individual should succeed. The pupils work hard, behave well and enjoy school. Their attendance is satisfactory. The pupils act responsibly and readily cooperate, in lessons and at playtimes. Good attention is paid to their personal development, safety and well-being. The pupils learn how to follow healthy lifestyles and, particularly, to care for the environment. The curriculum is well adapted to the pupils' needs: it balances an important emphasis on basic skills with much enrichment in lessons and after school. Provision for the Foundation Stage is good, and there are well-judged procedures for dealing with the large number of pupils who have additional learning difficulties or disabilities.

The improvements at Moorside have resulted from strong leadership and management and from the hard work of the staff, particularly in their willingness to adopt change. New and inexperienced staff have adjusted quickly to the demands of the school's position. Governors have fulfilled their role well and there have been many fruitful links with outside agencies, especially the local authority. Parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses. The need to raise standards has been at the heart of the well-judged actions that have been taken. The systems that have been established and the gains that have been made, particularly over the quality of teaching, demonstrate good capacity to maintain the momentum for improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The school's performance in the national tests has been poor in the last two years, and its targets were missed by a considerable margin. The results were well below average, and in most respects they declined between 2005 and 2006. Only half the 2006 Year 6 pupils reached the

standards expected for their age in English and mathematics. The pupils performed better in mathematics than in English, markedly so at Key Stage 1. Very few pupils reached the higher levels.

The Year 6 pupils who took the national tests in 2005 and 2006 had spent relatively little time in the newly amalgamated school. Nonetheless, their progress from age seven to eleven was weak, and well below average in all subjects. There was little difference in the progress made by different groups of pupils; all achieved much less than might have been expected, given the results they gained as seven-year-olds.

The school acknowledges that these outcomes have been inadequate. Raising standards is at the top of its agenda and the initiatives that have been taken are proving successful. The pupils in the Foundation Stage are making good gains, and are on course to reach the nationally expected levels by the time they reach Year 1. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the pupils make satisfactory and often good progress in lessons, and the school's regular assessments show they are making up lost ground. However, the legacy of underachievement is considerable and standards remain too low.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are well conducted occasions which exemplify the school's values and aspirations, and allow pupils time to pray and to reflect on issues such as self-esteem. Pupils enjoy good relationships with their teachers and respond by behaving well. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and they work and play together happily. Attendance is satisfactory and the school has good systems to monitor and improve it. Most pupils show a keen interest in their lessons and have a positive attitude to learning. They willingly take on responsibility and appreciate the opportunities they have to express their views through the school council, which has been instrumental, for example, in improving the range of play equipment available for lunchtimes. Pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe and healthy and say they are confident that they can approach a member of staff if they have a worry. They show concern for others by collecting enthusiastically for charities and they help in the community, for instance in a conservation project. Pupils work effectively in pairs and teams and their personal skills and attributes are developed well, which should help them in their future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning was inadequate in January 2006. It is now satisfactory overall but with an increasing number of good lessons. This has come about through monitoring and advice, training and judicious recruitment. The inconsistencies that hampered pupils' progress have largely been eradicated, and this should enable pupils to build on what they have learned as they move through school.

The lessons are well planned, on the basis of appropriate learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. Materials and presentations engage the pupils' interest and the teachers employ a good range of strategies to sustain concentration and ensure that each pupil is contributing.

Classroom assistants are well used, particularly in leading small groups. The teachers' detailed knowledge of the pupils' levels of attainment is reflected in regular checks on understanding, in individual targets and in marking. Expectations have been raised and the need to drive up standards is well recognised in lessons.

Relative weaknesses in some of the teaching relate to a lack of differentiation in tasks according to the pupils' varying needs and to misjudging the pupils' ability to keep up with the pace of the teaching.

The pupils work hard in lessons, benefiting from the good routines that have been established across the school. They arrive ready to learn, and they are attentive to the teachers and to each other. They organise their equipment and books well and move from one section of work to another with a minimum of fuss.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a lively and stimulating curriculum which is meeting pupils' individual abilities, needs and interests. There is a strong emphasis on developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Close links are being developed between different subjects and this gives pupils further opportunities to practice their reading, writing and computer skills. A programme to enhance the provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is making a significant contribution to their relationships and attitudes to learning. As a result, there is an air of calm in lessons. 'Brain gym' sessions ensure that pupils are ready to learn, and all enjoy their visits to the 'Wow Factory', where their knowledge on environmentally sustainable developments is extended through topics such as recycling materials or saving water. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good, providing a balance between activities that pupils choose themselves and those led directly by adults; outdoor provision has been developed, as has work to improve the pupils' language skills. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good; all have challenging but realistic targets that are reviewed regularly.

Residential stays for Years 4, 5 and 6 and a good range of visits and visitors considerably enrich the curriculum. Netball and the computer club are examples of the satisfactory range of things for pupils to do after school. These activities are well attended and contribute much to pupils' personal development and their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good. Staff work hard to create a supportive environment in which pupils grow in self-esteem and confidence. Pupils say they feel safe; careful attention is paid to issues of child protection, and health and safety. Supervision during playtimes and lunchtimes is thorough. Good academic support and guidance is valued by pupils, who appreciate the help they are given through their targets and the teachers' marking of their work. They say this helps them understand how they can improve. Systems for supporting pupils who have additional learning needs are good. Effective partnerships with other local schools ensure that the pupils' transfer to the next stage of their schooling goes smoothly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school well, setting a good example for her colleagues and the pupils. A carefully devised management structure promotes teamwork, allowing staff to develop and to contribute their expertise. This has been particularly effective for the senior and middle managers, who set good role models as teachers and have driven forward change.

The school has addressed the weaknesses identified in January 2006 with purpose; its priorities have been clear and understood by all. The programme for monitoring and evaluation is wide-ranging and thorough, and the outcomes have been acted upon. Teachers, for example, have received frequent feedback on their practice and the support they have received has proved successful. The provision in the Foundation Stage has been overhauled, and now includes an exciting outdoor area. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly, aspirations have been raised, and appropriate strategies have been introduced to bring pupils' standards into line with those expected.

The measures taken have improved provision and increased pupils' progress but there has been too little time to overcome fully previous inadequacies and the effects of considerable turnover in staffing. Standards in national tests have thus remained much too low. Nonetheless, the school has established secure foundations on which to build and demonstrates good capacity to improve.

The governors have played their part in what has been achieved and fulfil their responsibilities well. They have been closely involved, for example, in checking the school's progress and they fully recognise its priorities.

The parents who returned questionnaires are highly supportive of what the school provides for their children. The school works in productive partnerships with many other agencies and institutions, including other local schools. Cooperation with the local authority, for instance over improving teaching, has been particularly beneficial.

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?	4
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	3
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?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

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?	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?	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	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?	Yes

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

Thank you for welcoming us to Moorside. You were polite and very helpful in telling us about your school and your work. This is what we found.

You told us that you enjoy school, that you feel safe and know who to turn to for help, and that you know how to stay healthy. You were well behaved, worked hard in lessons, and took your responsibilities seriously. There are many exciting things to do at Moorside, such as the Wow Factory, the clubs and the visits you make. You also have a new Foundation unit.

Thanks to Mrs Edwards' leadership and the hard work of all the adults at Moorside, your school has improved a good deal since it was inspected in January 2006. Mrs Edwards and the governors have checked very carefully to see that everything is going to plan. Your lessons ask more of you and your teachers keep a close eye on your progress, giving you extra help when necessary. You know your targets and your work is carefully marked so you know what to do next.

Although you are learning more, your standards are not yet as good as they should be. They need to be higher so you achieve well in the national tests and, by Year 6, are ready for secondary school. Your teachers know this and, if the measures they are taking continue, you should succeed. You can play your part by attending school regularly, and continuing to work hard.

We wish you all well in the future.