

# Moss Hall Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101294
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	307644
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth McFarlane

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	357
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Shirley Bilgora
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Neil Marlow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Nether Street Finchley London N3 1NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8445 7965
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8446 6559

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large multi-cultural junior school. A quarter of the pupils are White British and three quarters are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is Indian. More than an average number of pupils have English as an additional language or learning difficulties and statements of educational need, mostly for speech, language and communication difficulties. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Before and after-school provision is shared with other schools in the immediate area.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Moss Hall is a good school. Particularly strong leadership from the senior team sets an especially caring ethos in which pupils thrive. The exceptionally rich curriculum contributes greatly to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Parents value the education the school provides. 'This is a happy, lively and friendly school that has learning at the heart of everything they do,' one commented. Others praised 'the dedicated staff' and 'the atmosphere of encouragement which enhances learning.'

When pupils enter Year 3, the attainment of many is broadly in line or just above the national average. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Most pupils achieve the expected levels for their age, with large numbers achieving higher standards. Pupils achieve well because they enjoy very high standards of care and their learning is stimulated by a vibrant and innovative curriculum that helps them enjoy school immensely.

Pupils are articulate and polite. They say they feel happy, confident and safe, and there is very little bullying. They appreciate the caring attention they are given when problems occur and feel confident approaching staff for help. Pupils know how to stay healthy. They are keen to take on responsibility, work very cooperatively and, as a result, their independence grows quickly.

Teaching is good and lessons are interesting and enjoyable, with clear explanations and interesting tasks that capture the imagination. Staff know their pupils well. Strong systems are in place to give academic guidance, and these are having a positive impact on progress, especially where the available information is used fully in the classroom. In some lessons, activities are too general to meet all learning needs and insufficient challenge is provided. In these lessons, progress slows.

Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent. Joining with other schools in the area to provide breakfast and after-school care helps parents and the community. Strong links with outside agencies and partners means pupils are supported and cared for very well indeed, especially those with learning needs and those at an early stage of learning English. Business enterprise initiatives and meaningful links forged with local and European schools prepare pupils well for their futures. They leave the school confident learners well-equipped for secondary school.

The senior leadership team provides very clear direction and is developing a budding group of enthusiastic middle managers. Governance is good. Governors provide suitable challenge and support and have been fully involved in the good progress the school has made since the last inspection. The school knows itself well. Taking this into account, and the team development underway, it has good capacity to make any necessary improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress by raising expectations and challenge in all lessons and matching tasks more precisely to pupils' abilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and make consistently good progress from their individual starting points. Inspection evidence shows that by the time pupils leave Year 6, standards are above average. Almost half the pupils exceed the expected levels in English and mathematics. Almost a third exceed these levels in science. Relative weaknesses in writing and science, identified in recent years, are gradually being reversed. The well-planned remedial action has already adapted and strengthened the curriculum and improved academic guidance and is now set on making its good teaching even better. There is no significant difference in the relative attainment of minority ethnic groups. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with learning needs make particularly good progress because they are supported skilfully in their personal development and learning.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal skills develop extremely well. As a result, they thoroughly enjoy their learning and show exemplary behaviour and attitudes, respecting each others' views and creating a palpably harmonious multi-cultural community. Pupils are excellent school ambassadors, warmly welcoming visitors and proudly showing off their school. They cooperate successfully together and demonstrate high levels of responsibility. They are confident, articulate speakers able to express their views, feelings and emotions with increasing maturity. School councillors feel they contribute significantly to decisions in school and that their views are highly valued. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the importance of exercise and making good choices for a healthy lifestyle. They have a shrewd understanding of how to stay safe on the internet as well as personally. Attendance is above average. 'I love school' said one pupil, echoed by many. Their good basic skills provide a firm foundation for their adult lives. Their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development shows in their broad understanding of traditions, values and diversity. Their growing reflective appreciation of the world and issues beyond school includes compassion encouraged by global and local fund-raising activities.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

'The teachers are great' is a typical comment, from parents and pupils, reflecting the excellent relationships in the school. Consistently good activities, well planned with a variety of tasks, engage and maintain pupils' interest. Lesson aims are explained and learning checked. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support learning. As a result, all pupils make good progress. Teamwork is strong in presenting the innovative elements of the curriculum, such as the exciting interaction with several European schools. Staff use comprehensive individual assessment and target data meticulously to measure progress, but lessons are sometimes not precisely tailored to individual needs. In these cases, tasks are too general and extension work is an 'add-on' providing insufficient challenge for pupils to explore and develop their responses. In these lessons, expectations are not high enough, so progress slows. Marking is often good, praising the pupils' efforts and providing guidance on how to make further improvements.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding curriculum contributes a great deal to pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. It is innovative and highly responsive to pupils' needs and interests whilst meeting statutory requirements. The school holds several awards for its provision. Comprehensive personal, social and health education, widespread use of information and communication technology and specialist teaching for French, music and physical education provide strongly for learning. Readily accessible swimming, in the on-site swimming pool, enhances provision. Cross-curricular work is fully integrated and meaningful for today's world. Pupils talked enthusiastically of their work with other European schools, and enterprise projects such as the gardening venture, that help them develop good life-skills. Frequent visitors and trips out, some residential, aid personal development and preparation for life beyond school. The school corridors dazzle with the many trophies pupils have won, often through the well-supported and worthwhile extra-curricular clubs and activities. Additional provision for those with learning needs and the gifted and talented contributes to a strong picture of inclusion and energy.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Robust systems help the school provide outstanding care and support for pupils, fully meeting all safeguarding, health and welfare requirements. Staff provide high quality nurturing care that underpins pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils see staff as 'friends who listen to us seriously and give very good advice'. Meticulous academic guidance systems enable individual pupil targets to be set and progress carefully monitored. This has helped lead to the good progress pupils make. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as an additional language receive excellent additional support and guidance enabling them to make good progress. Long-standing links with feeder schools and secondary schools encourage the culture of confidence as pupils take the next steps in life. The various reward systems encourage and achieve a very well ordered school. In particular, the highly prized 'special mention' letters, posted to individual pupils at their homes, help cement the parent partnership, and value and support success.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The impact of senior leaders is especially apparent in the exciting curriculum, through the high levels of care and in pupils' outstanding personal development and their enjoyment of school. The headteacher and his deputy are sharply focused on raising standards. They form a strong, motivating team, setting very clear direction and forging valuable partnerships with others. This results in pupils' good progress and excellent behaviour. Significant support is voiced by parents. 'Excellent head, always forward thinking, encouraging the staff to do their best,' is typical of the comments received. Year-group heads and subject leaders are less experienced overall. Rallying to clear direction and training, they are now working more cohesively to help raise standards. There is good governance by a well led governing body that discharges its responsibilities effectively and is increasingly involved in school life. Challenging whole school targets are used successfully to lift achievement and move the school forward. Funding is supported by efforts to maximise lettings, for the benefit of pupils. Equal opportunities are

promoted vigorously and all pupils are included fully. The school's self-evaluation is concise and accurate. Its development plan identifies key factors that indicate the school's good capacity to improve.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

22 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moss Hall Junior School, London, N3 1NR

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. You were so polite and helpful. We appreciated all your help and also the comments made by your parents in their questionnaires. Please thank them on our behalf.

You go to a good school. You learn lots because your activities are so interesting. The gardening project looks fun, and so does the work with other schools in Europe. Aren't you lucky to have your own swimming pool? We enjoyed your assemblies. We could tell you enjoy singing.

Your behaviour is excellent (that doesn't mean it's perfect!). Do keep that up because it makes the school such a pleasant place to be for everyone. Your teachers care for you very well. No wonder you feel happy and safe! We enjoyed looking at your books; you have made good progress since the beginning of the year.

Your headteacher and deputy head are really good at their jobs, and all the staff and governors are keen to work together. Because of this, they have been successful in improving your school and they know what to do to make it even better.

Your lessons are fun. Your teachers check carefully how you are doing in your work. We'd like them to make sure you have work to do that is just right for you, and especially, not too easy! If you are expected to do some harder and different work, it will make you think a bit more. We know you will rise to the challenge and we think that will make you progress even faster.

Well done for all the good things you are doing in school and for helping to make it such a friendly and fun place to learn.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead Inspector