

New Moston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105432
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	308856
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Sayers
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Berry
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Moston Lane East New Moston Manchester Lancashire M40 3QJ
Telephone number	0161 6813321
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school serving an area towards the north-eastern boundary of Manchester. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils learn English as an additional language. The proportion eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. A slightly smaller than average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

New Moston provides its pupils with satisfactory standards of education and care, and it is showing signs of improvement. Pupils say that they like coming to school because they enjoy lessons and the good range of additional activities such as sports and residential visits. Their improving attendance is now in line with the national average. Overall standards of behaviour are satisfactory. In lessons pupils demonstrate good relationships and behave appropriately. Pupils have a good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle and know the benefits of sticking to a sensible diet and taking lots of exercise. Pupils say they feel safe in school and agree that there is 'no bullying'. The school council is well established and plays a useful part in giving pupils a voice in the life of the school. Other opportunities to take responsibility, such as being buddies or play leaders, help pupils to develop appropriately the life skills they need to be part of a community.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily during their time in the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 build satisfactorily on their good start in the Foundation Stage. Standards by the end of Year 2 have been on a rising trend over the past three years and are now generally broadly average. There are, however, inconsistencies in standards reached across subjects by the end of Year 6. Better progress is seen in English where standards show continuing improvement and are now just above average. This is not matched, however, in mathematics and science where improvement over time has been too slow, resulting in standards that are below average. The school recognises that the rigorous focus on English has caused other subjects to fall behind. It has begun to build strategies, including more analytical use of assessment data to drive up standards in mathematics and science, but the impact cannot be evaluated at this early stage. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers establish sound relationships in classes and adequately engage pupils in learning. However, there is inconsistent practice in teachers' use of assessment and marking to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and science. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils adequately. There is sufficient emphasis on basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) but limited opportunities for pupils to apply those skills, in a purposeful way, across subjects.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school's vision is shared by governors and is clearly set out in the improvement plan. Leaders recognise, however, that it has taken too long to establish the necessary arrangements to support staff, ensure their accountability and to drive the school forward. The school's evaluation of the impact of actions taken has lacked essential sharpness. Nevertheless, systems are now in place to ensure that these things happen. Tracking of pupils' progress, though requiring further refinement to increase its accuracy, is more robust than previously. The school is embracing the local authority's support programme, which strengthens the push towards higher standards. Senior leaders now have clearly defined roles in the monitoring of standards and teaching quality through performance management, although it is too early to see the full impact of their work. Subject leaders know the strengths and what needs to be done in their areas. They are eager to develop a more corporate approach to planning across the curriculum to increase the purpose and enjoyment of learning for pupils. Governors support and challenge the school satisfactorily and manage finances carefully to ensure satisfactory value for money. Leaders have a broadly accurate view of the school's performance and demonstrate this in their self-evaluation. The school demonstrates satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children's skills are varied when they start Nursery, but generally below age-related expectations in communication, language and literacy as well as in mathematical and personal and social development. As a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress in all areas of learning so that most are close to, and some reach, the levels expected of them by the end of Reception. Exciting activities are planned which enthuse children and help them develop confidence and independence. Teachers engage children well through questioning and play, helping develop their language and thinking skills. Assessments are used thoughtfully to plan next steps in learning and take account of children's varying abilities and starting points. Staff make best use of the shared outdoor area to link physical development with other areas of learning. Parents are supportive and share good relationships with staff. The Foundation Stage leader has a good overview of the work in this area and manages children's learning and development well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2.
- Improve the use of assessment, target-setting and marking in order to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Embed systems for all leaders to monitor and evaluate standards and quality in their subjects and to plan more creative learning links across subjects.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory, their progress in English is much stronger than in other subjects because this has been the major focus in the school. In 2007, the results in English at the end of Year 6 were above average with a significant proportion of pupils gaining higher levels than expected for their age. Progress in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6 has not been sufficiently monitored and, consequently, standards in these subjects have fallen behind. Standards have been consistently below average in mathematics over the past four years and the school did not reach the targets set in 2007. Standards in science are also below average. Pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 1 because teaching has generally been more consistent. Reading, writing and mathematics show an improving trend over the past three years and overall standards are now broadly average by the end of Year 2. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their individual plans focus well on particular needs and additional help is effective.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. They enjoy school, particularly the range of clubs offered. Relationships and behaviour are good within structured settings such as lessons and assemblies, but a minority of pupils are less mindful of others during break times and sometimes spoil others' enjoyment

of play. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils have a sound understanding about aspects of staying safe. Year 2 pupils, for example, know which hazards to look out for around the home and school. All pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community through the school council and other caring responsibilities. However, opportunities to promote personal independence and to give pupils responsibility for their own learning are not exploited to their fullest extent.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and accounts for pupils' satisfactory achievement. There is good teaching and learning in some lessons where subject knowledge is secure and expectations are high. Relationships in lessons are good. Teachers manage pupils well and effectively engage them in learning through questioning and other activities to keep them interested. Nevertheless, there are times when the pace of learning slows because pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet and not enough time in practical work. Recent staff training in the use of interactive whiteboards means they are used with increasing effect to bring lessons to life and help pupils focus on their learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, particularly when working with small groups who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons and give day-to-day guidance through marking, however, lacks rigour. This results in tasks not always matching pupils' varying abilities and too little being expected of those who are more able.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum adequately meets the needs of most pupils but does not fully provide for the most able pupils as well as it should. There is satisfactory emphasis on literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, but limited opportunities for pupils to apply those skills purposefully across subjects to make learning more exciting. Provision for personal, social and health education, and citizenship is satisfactory. A programme to support pupils' social and emotional learning has been introduced recently. Whilst staff deliver the programme satisfactorily, it is too early to see its full impact on pupils' personal development. There is a good range of activities after school to enrich pupils' experiences and help them foster their various skills and interests. Residential visits are always popular and visiting theatre groups and musicians are greeted enthusiastically.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory standards of care, guidance and support. Staff are caring towards pupils and are thoughtful about their day-to-day pastoral needs. Pupils have clear guidance on codes of conduct regarding safety, and during the inspection were engaged in discussion and activities about preventing bullying, as part of their social and emotional learning. Satisfactory support for vulnerable pupils who have additional learning needs helps them to achieve alongside others. Essential checks on safety equipment are carried out. Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. Some parents and pupils raised a concern during the inspection regarding a matter of health and safety. This was brought to the attention

of the leadership and management of the school and appropriate action is now being taken. The academic support and guidance for pupils is not robust. Although systems to track pupils' progress are in place, the use of tracking information to set challenging targets and monitor pupils' progress towards achieving them is still developing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Improvement is gathering pace under the leadership of the headteacher. Pupils increasingly enjoy school and compete vigorously for the accolade of 'best class of the week'. An important step is the school's working partnership with the local authority in order to increase the incisiveness of monitoring and evaluation at all levels of management, and so help to raise achievement. The rigour, which has contributed to success in English, is now beginning to be applied in other subjects. A revised management structure giving senior leaders responsibility for more robust performance management is helping to give a clearer overview of standards and quality of provision. The school recognises that more reliable target-setting is needed in order to increase the challenges in mathematics and science, and raise standards. Governors recognise the need to establish more robust procedures for holding the school to account and to check the impact of their decisions more carefully with regard to outcomes for pupils.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of New Moston Primary School, Manchester, M40 3QJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, and you all helped to make our visit very pleasant.

You have a satisfactory school and you make adequate progress. We also found out that you enjoy your lessons and taking part in all the after-school clubs. Most of you behave well and look after one another, but a few of you need to be more thoughtful in the playground and respect others who want to enjoy a quieter break. We were pleased to see how healthy you all are. It's little wonder that your school achieved a Healthy Schools Award!

Even though your achievement is satisfactory, your teachers and parents and school governors want you to do better. We discussed with your headteacher how this might happen and decided on the following things.

We have asked your teachers to help you to reach higher standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. We have asked them to do that by making sure you all know what your targets are, showing you how you can reach them when they mark your work, and using their assessments to plan your next work. Finally we have asked that you are given the chance to use your writing, number and ICT skills in other subjects to make learning more exciting.

Of course, you must play your part too, by always trying your very best and continuing to behave in lessons as well as you do.