

Great Moor Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106049
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	309011
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Toft HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Martlew
Headteacher	Mr P Berry
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2004
School address	Southwood Road Great Moor Stockport Cheshire SK2 7DG
Telephone number	0161 4834987
Fax number	0161 2923949

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This school of above average size caters for boys and girls aged from 7 to 11 years from Woodsmoor, Great Moor, Mile End and nearby areas of Stockport. Most pupils transfer from the adjacent infant school. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, though the number with statements of special educational needs is above average. Twelve percent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups but English is the first language of the vast majority of pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstandingly effective school. Staff and governors focus consistently on providing a high quality of education and care. The school has developed steadily over the years. Improvement since the last inspection has been highly successful and the school has excellent capacity to continue to develop.

Standards are high. Results in national tests were significantly above average in the last two years in English and science and above average in mathematics. A few boys did not perform as well in mathematics as in other subjects in these years. However, evidence from the inspection and the teachers' assessments of pupils currently in Year 6 indicate that attainment in mathematics is expected to be above average in the national tests this year. Pupils make very good progress throughout the school. This applies not just to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science; the school's excellent marking and tracking procedures show clearly that pupils make very good progress across the whole of the very broad curriculum. This high performance is a result of the great lengths staff go to make learning active, practical and interesting. Teaching is outstanding overall. The vast majority of lessons observed were good and over a third were excellent. The subject expertise of staff is impressive and the school makes astute use of teachers' specialist knowledge to teach subjects rigorously. On occasion in mathematics, the work set in class was not well matched to the abilities of all of the pupils. The curriculum is excellent and is well supported by a popular and exceptionally extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils develop as well rounded and articulate individuals with a strong moral sense and capacity to play and work cooperatively. This prepares them admirably for their next stage of education. Staff work strenuously to promote the health, safety and care of pupils. They give them excellent academic and pastoral guidance. The school has the strong support of parents. It is highly popular and respected in the local community.

The school is exceptionally well led and managed. This encourages staff at all levels to be sharply focused on enabling pupils to learn and develop as well as they can. Leaders have developed very effective and accurate procedures to monitor the school's performance and to ensure that it remains on track. These procedures are eminently practical and are deployed well without imposing an onerous administrative burden on the staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the previous underachievement of a small number of pupils whose test results in Year 6 were not as high in mathematics as in other subjects, is eradicated by improved teaching and differentiation to raise attainment.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is very good. Standardised tests administered by the school at the beginning of Year 3 indicate that pupils enter the school with skills in English and mathematics that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Pupils make impressive gains in their learning so that, by the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are above average. In 2007, results in the Year 6 national tests were above average in English and science and slightly above average in mathematics. Overall, standards have remained consistently above average in recent years. Pupils make steady progress as they move through the school because of the excellent teaching and curriculum provided, and their

obvious appetite for learning. Because of the effective support provided, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress very well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is excellent. They feel that school is a happy, friendly place where staff help them and make lessons interesting and fun. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Older pupils take on many responsibilities through the wide range of activities they help with, for example supporting their 'reading buddies' in Year 2. School council members are very proud to be chosen to represent their peers. They play an extremely active part in the life of the school and community, not least through effective fundraising events. Pupils show great respect for and readily include all members of the school community; pupils joining Year 3 are made particularly welcome. An understanding of other cultures is exceptionally well promoted, including through the arts, and this also nurtures their ability to reflect on life. Attendance levels are good, and pupils' behaviour both in and around the school, towards each other and adults, is exemplary. Pupils have a good sense of how to live healthily and act safely. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the mini-marathon recently held to raise funds to provide an all weather pitch for the school. They all also enjoy the exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them, and say that they wish they could join in them all.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Lively and stimulating lessons enable pupils to make very good progress. Teachers' very strong subject knowledge, exceptional planning and sensitively differentiated questioning help pupils to achieve well. Teachers vary activities successfully and ensure that lessons move at a brisk pace and challenge pupils' thinking. Teaching in mathematics is a little more variable than in other subjects and on occasion lacks sufficient differentiation. As a result, a few pupils are less enthusiastic about mathematics than other areas of learning. Teachers' excellent relationships with pupils support exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. Highly professional class management and stimulating environments contribute to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teachers and assistants work very effectively throughout the school to support pupils. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately, and use the information well to plan suitable work. The rigorous tracking system has strengthened teachers' capacity to monitor pupils' progress throughout the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The rich, well-planned curriculum effectively meets the needs of all pupils and contributes in great measure to the good progress that they make. The school places a strong emphasis on learning through practical activities and first-hand experiences, and also on linking subjects together for in-depth studies within a range of topics. This makes lessons relevant and exciting and promotes a palpable enjoyment of learning. Pupils use their English and computer skills well to support learning in other subjects. Music, art and physical education are strengths of the school. Displays of pupils' work help to provide a vibrant, stimulating learning environment

which celebrates pupils' successes in the creative arts. A carefully structured programme of personal, social and health education helps pupils develop a good understanding of keeping safe, fit and healthy. The outstanding range of enrichment opportunities includes well attended, after-school clubs, day and residential visits and visitors, the teaching of French in Years 3 and 4 and opportunities to learn and perform at external venues. These extend pupils' learning experiences, help develop their talents and skills and contribute well to their personal development. Pupils say that the varied and exciting trips are what they like best 'because they make learning come alive'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes exceptionally good care of all its pupils. Pupils trust staff and know who to turn to if they need help. There is good support for them when they are upset or troubled. Parents and carers feel welcome in the school and are encouraged to be involved in their children's education. The pupils say they feel safe in school, because all the staff are always ready to help and support them. There are clear and established procedures to promote child protection and health and safety; staff are meticulous in putting these into daily practice. Teachers know what their pupils can do, and pupils say that they are well informed about their individual targets and what they need to do to help them achieve the next level. Clear procedures are used for the early identification of children in need of additional support. Through regular reviews and tailored support they make very good progress. The arrangements for settling children into school in Year 3 and their transfer to secondary school are excellent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The highly experienced headteacher has developed a very clear management structure. Within this structure, staff at all levels work cooperatively in well balanced teams to ensure that pupils gain a broad and rigorous education in which both academic and personal development are of a high order. The senior team has an exceptionally thorough oversight of the overall direction of the school. Through strong leadership and the setting of clear examples, the senior team encourages middle managers, class teachers and teaching assistants to plan in fine detail and execute their plans to teach the excellent curriculum and promote the personal development and care of all pupils. The able and energetic governing body brings a wide range of skills to the school and these are evident, for example, in the significant part they have played in helping the school to upgrade its premises in recent years. Governors have a sharp insight into the performance of the school and are particularly well briefed and confident enough to challenge this performance as well as to give clear strategic guidance on its overall development. Staff recruitment and development have been excellent in recent years and the school has made very effective use of new skills and ideas gained from external courses and internal curriculum development. This underpins the high morale of the staff and their good, often outstanding, teaching skills. The school runs exceptionally smoothly and administrative and financial procedures are first rate. Resources for teaching are excellent, reflecting careful purchasing and organisation of stock to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. Procedures for monitoring the performance of, and setting targets for, pupils, staff and the school as a whole are highly effective and the senior staff have a sharply focused understanding of how well the school is doing. Self-evaluation procedures are detailed and

evidence based, revealing a school in a very healthy state and with a strong sense of purpose. Much effort is put into canvassing the views of parents and the school is rightly very popular in the local community. Given the impressive track record of carefully considered improvement in the recent past, the school has outstanding capacity for further improvement. It gives very good value for money.

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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?	1
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	1

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 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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

I promised to write to you after our recent visit to let you know what we think of Great Moor Junior School.

- Your school is excellent. It gives you a first class education and opportunity to develop as individuals.
- Standards are high and you make very good progress in each year. However, in the recent past a few could have done a little better in mathematics.
- The teachers are very skilled and go to great lengths to make your lessons and activities exciting. This really does help you to learn a great deal.
- You are given a very full range of subjects to learn. The activities available in and out of school are excellent. It is no wonder that so many of you take part in them.
- The staff take excellent care of you and you play your parts by behaving so well, enjoying school, and by being keen to learn.
- The school is managed extremely well by the headteacher and senior staff. All of the adults, governors included, play full and effective parts in running your school.
- The staff are always looking for ways to improve what they do and we have asked them to develop ways of helping the few pupils who struggle with mathematics to learn a little better.

We do hope that you appreciate how good your school is, as we know your parents do.

Best wishes for your future learning.