

# Moorlands Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106308
<b>Local Authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	309090
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Arif Hussain

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>	Primary
<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	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr C Harrop
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss J Hiller
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 June 1998
<b>School address</b>	Temple Road Sale Cheshire M33 2LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 962 5452
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 912 3669

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pupils who attend this average sized school come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage but around 18% of pupils are from different minority ethnic groups. There is a local authority funded Small Specialist Class (SSC) currently providing for 16 pupils. The local authority allocates pupils to this class. All pupils in this class have a statement of special educational need for complex learning difficulties and a few have significant medical needs. In the main school a further 11% of pupils have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has Artsmark Gold, Activemark, National Healthy School and Race Equality Awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. Representative views from parents include, 'The school is run as a family and all pupils are equally respected and cared for.' In the main school, pupils enter Year 3 with levels of attainment that are broadly typical for pupils of this age. Standards reached by these pupils by the end of Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science and this represents good achievement. Pupils' attainment on entry to the SSC is well below that expected for their age, but their achievements are excellent in relation to their capabilities.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils flourish as learners and mature very well. The quality of support provided ensures that pupils are particularly well prepared for their future. Pupils' progress is good and this reflects the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers present the work in a stimulating way and so pupils are very interested and involved in their learning. The school acknowledges that lesson plans do not always set appropriate objectives for different groups of pupils to ensure that they always achieve as well as possible. The innovative and very good curriculum excites pupils, captures their imagination and meets their needs exceptionally well. Pupils love the excellent musical and sporting opportunities. The 'options afternoon' includes all pupils, offering them a very wide range of good quality activities which they look forward to very eagerly. The school works very effectively with outside agencies to ensure pupils' excellent welfare. Links with other schools are very good. For instance, pupils often go to a local secondary school to develop their art skills, producing high quality ceramics.

Personal development is outstanding. Parents are very pleased, saying for example, that 'It's a very nurturing school.' The way in which the SSC pupils are fully included in the life of the school supports the personal development of all pupils very well. Pupils in the main school are caring and protective towards the SSC pupils. All are keen to celebrate other's achievements and value each other very highly. Attitudes to learning and behaviour are exemplary. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem. They enjoy school life very much and this is reflected in their excellent attendance. Pupils develop very positive attitudes towards leading healthy lifestyles. For example, they said that they really enjoy the good range of healthy foods provided at lunchtime. Pupils' contribution to the community is excellent. Older ones take their positions of responsibility very seriously and take immense pride in wearing the badges they earn for helping others. The school council has made many good suggestions leading to school improvement, for instance, regarding the path to the recycling bins.

Leadership and management are good. Their impact is seen in the good progress made by the vast majority of pupils in many areas of their learning, in their sense of well-being and in the very good reputation the school has in the community. Pupils describe the headteacher as 'a special person in our lives who wants the very best for us'. Parental comments include, 'She is friendly but firm and kids obviously love her.' Governors have a firm grasp of educational matters and make an exceptional contribution to the work of the school. For instance, governors have vigorously pursued improvements in the accommodation and hold the school to account very effectively. Managers at all levels make an effective contribution to the school's success. The school knows its strengths and areas for development very well and is clearly focused on raising achievement to even higher levels.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more attention is given to setting specific objectives for different groups of pupils so that they achieve as well as they can.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

In the main school, those pupils who were in Year 6 in 2007 entered Year 3 with broadly average standards. They achieved well to attain above average standards in the national tests. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Their achievement in writing and in information and communication technology (ICT) is outstanding. All pupils make outstanding progress in music. In some lessons, where specific objectives for different groups of pupils are not set, the less able pupils do not always progress as well as they might.

From very low levels of attainment, pupils in the SSC achieve exceptionally well in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with the most complex difficulties move forward in small steps but their achievements are just as outstanding as others in their class. The development of their speaking and listening skills is often a strong focus in learning and pupils make very good progress in these areas. Other groups, including pupils in the main school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ethnic minorities, generally achieve as well as others.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Personal development makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. During a religious education lesson, older pupils showed their ability to see things from different points of view. They showed an appreciation of the sorts of personal values parents might want their children to have. By comparing different cultural attitudes, values and beliefs they came to the same conclusion and made points such as, 'It doesn't matter what religion parents are'; 'They all want the same important things for their children.' Pupils have an exceptionally good awareness of the diversity of cultures in society and appreciate the richness this brings to their lives. This is a particular strength of the school and contributes markedly to racial harmony. All pupils are very well mannered, polite and respectful towards others. Pupils are very caring and considerate. For example, in the playground the older pupils are always keen to befriend the pupils from the SSC and include them in games.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and show excellent attitudes towards learning because teaching is effective. Inspectors observed much good and outstanding teaching during the inspection. Strengths include close teamwork between adults, the imaginative use of learning resources and much involvement of pupils in lessons, including opportunities for them to evaluate their own work. A good example of these characteristics was observed in a science lesson where pupils took turns to play a violin as they learned about the effect of shortening strings on the sound this instrument made. Adults worked together very effectively and pupils thoroughly enjoyed their learning, including work in the ICT suite. All teachers set clear whole-class learning

objectives. However, where teachers do not set specific objectives for different groups not all pupils make as much progress as they could. Marking is good and teachers provide clear guidance in pupils' workbooks about how they can improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum provides a very good balance between developing academic skills and promoting pupils' overall development. For example, the excellent yoga sessions promote pupils' physical, social and spiritual development very well. There is good provision for pupils to gain key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Achievement is also enhanced by further opportunities, such as lessons in French, German and Spanish for all year groups. Provision for music is outstanding. Activities offered through the 'options afternoons' are great fun and support pupils' personal development very well. For example, in the gardening club, pupils delight in growing vegetables which are subsequently incorporated into the lunchtime menu. The carefully planned and individualised curriculum for pupils in the SSC enables these pupils to make excellent progress. Pupils take full advantage of the very good range of clubs and exciting activities, such as water sports, that are available outside the classroom.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Every child matters at this school. Pupils are extremely positive about the support they receive from all the staff. For example, pupils said, 'Teachers cheer you up when you are down.' Excellent attendance and behaviour is promoted very effectively through very good relationships with pupils and excellent rewards. Procedures to ensure health, safety and child protection are clear and regularly reviewed. Academic support and guidance is effective. Pupils all know what their learning targets are and what they have to do to achieve them. Individual education plans for pupils who have additional learning needs are very effective and help these pupils to achieve challenging targets. Support assistants, including those in the SSC, make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leaders and managers at all levels set a very clear direction for the school. Their drive and determination ensures that pupils receive an excellent quality of care and a good education. Senior leaders are very successful in maintaining a common sense of purpose across the school. Improvements since the last inspection, most notably to the curriculum, demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement. Pupils' personal development and academic performance are checked very closely and any problems are quickly identified and support put in place. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good and this ensures that the strong learning ethos is maintained. Although leaders and managers regularly check the quality of teaching and learning, they have not yet fully ensured that all teachers set specific objectives for different groups of pupils. Managers evaluate their work particularly well and inspection judgements match the school's self-evaluation very closely, apart from the curriculum which the school modestly judged as good. Inclusion is strong and this enables all pupils to take advantage of the excellent curriculum. Resources are well used to support all pupils' learning.

For example, interactive whiteboards in all classrooms are used effectively. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis with office staff making a very strong contribution.

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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	1
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?	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	1
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	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**

Inspection of Moorlands Junior School, Sale, M33 2LP

Thank you for making the Inspectors so welcome at your school and for all your help during the inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and learning about your school. Your school is good and has some outstanding features. You are taught well and obviously enjoy learning. We are very pleased to see that you are getting on well with your work and some of you make excellent progress. Your curriculum is excellent. This is because there are many chances for you to learn about so many different things. Your school looks after you really well and helps you. We were very pleased to talk with members of the school council and are impressed by the suggestions made by pupils to improve things. We are also pleased to see the excellent contribution you all make to the community. We are amazed at how much you help each other. You are all very polite and well mannered. Your attitudes and behaviour are excellent. Well done.

Your school is in good hands. Lots of you told me how much you like your headteacher and the staff. They and the governors are working very hard to make sure you carry on doing really well. We have told them what a great job they are doing. However, there is one thing we have asked them to do to make your school even better.

We know that you are always given learning objectives in lessons. If all your teachers had objectives to meet the specific needs of groups of pupils it would help you all to achieve even better.

Once again, thank you for the welcome you gave us, it made our visit really enjoyable.