

# Moorfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111188
<b>Local Authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	310529
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Steve Isherwood HMI

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>	5-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr D Curzon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr A Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	School Way Moorfield Road Widnes Cheshire WA8 3HJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4243108
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 4203379

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## Introduction

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

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry, test results, teachers' records, observations of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' current work and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and the local authority. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average school, situated in a residential area close to the town of Widnes. Pupils are drawn from a wide range of social backgrounds and the vast majority are of White British heritage. A smaller proportion of pupils than normal are entitled to a free school meal and a smaller than average percentage has a learning difficulty and/or disability. When children start school, their attainment is generally in line with that expected for their age. The school has gained several awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, PE Activemark, Healthy Schools Standard and awards in Financial Management and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Moorfield is a good school with some outstanding features. It is well placed to improve further. Pupils' achievements are good. They reach above average standards in their work and make exceptionally good progress in their personal development and well-being. Pupils behave very well and are caring and considerate towards each other. They always try their best and are keen to succeed. They enjoy school a great deal, which is demonstrated by their excellent attitudes to learning and by their enthusiasm for the wide range of opportunities that the school provides. Even when activities are less engaging they work hard and concentrate well in lessons. They have an excellent awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and a balanced diet. The school takes exceptionally good care of every child. Academic guidance is good. All required checks, systems and procedures are in place to safeguard the pupils' well-being. Pupils say they feel safe and have great trust in their teachers. Parents' questionnaires overwhelmingly endorse this view. One parent's view was typical of many: 'My child is very happy, well cared for and has come on in leaps and bounds.' Others commented: 'The school is warm and friendly; teachers are caring and enthusiastic and act as excellent role models for the children.'

One of the most striking features about the school is the quality of relationships. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and enjoy their work. Teachers know the pupils and their families very well. This means that pupils are confident to approach any member of staff and recognise that they have responsibilities towards other pupils and the adults in the school. Older pupils take good care of younger ones and through the work of the school council, pupils are confident in making decisions and showing initiative. They raise substantial funds for charities and develop a strong social conscience. The school has gained an enviable reputation in the community and has forged outstanding partnerships with other schools and agencies.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress overall from the moment they enter the school. By the time they leave in Year 6, the proportion reaching the level expected at age 11 is consistently above average in English and mathematics and exceptionally high in science where pupils make outstanding progress. A significant factor in this achievement is that teaching is good overall with elements of excellent practice. Nevertheless, pupils' achievements are not uniformly good. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is slower and pupils lose some ground compared to the promise they had shown in previous years. This is because there are pockets of inconsistency in teaching and learning which means that the level of challenge for some pupils is not high enough. As a consequence, some pupils, particularly the more able and those who fall just above average, are not achieving as rapidly as they should. Progress picks up as the quality of teaching improves in Years 5 and 6. In the very best lessons, learning comes to life with an Aladdin's cave of stimulating activities that challenge and spur pupils to make excellent progress. Pupils are given every opportunity to discuss and share their ideas with others. Expectations are high; the pace of learning is brisk, pupils are engrossed in their work and new learning builds well on pupils' prior knowledge. For example, in an outstanding history session in Year 5, pupils were proud to invite their parents to a 'World War Two Tea Dance' in the school hall. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement. Activities were very well chosen and included singing songs about being evacuated to the country and hand jiving to Glen Miller music. In addition, one boy gave a very good impression of the Prime Minister of the time, Neville Chamberlain, informing the population that the country was now at war while an air-raid siren sounded in the background.

The success of the school is underpinned by good leadership and management. The new headteacher is leading the school down the right path after a period of much change, and he benefits from the effective support and leadership of senior management in their various areas of responsibility. Since his appointment he has generated a strong momentum for improvement and has successfully ensured that the views of all stakeholders are taken into account in establishing a clear vision for the school. As a result, morale is improving, teamwork is strong and staff are forward thinking and reflective. As a group, they actively seek ways to improve further the current position, particularly in improving the quality of learning for all pupils and in promoting more creativity in the curriculum. There is clear agreement on the strengths of the school and where further improvements are required. For example, senior leaders are well aware of the need to quicken the pace of learning for some pupils in Years 3 and 4 and the fact that some aspects of teaching and learning could be more consistent. Plans to tackle these issues are already in place with stronger members of staff moving classes to provide support and guidance on elements of good practice in teaching and learning. The school's rapid response to potential underachievement is a strong feature of its work. For example, senior leaders have correctly identified that the achievement of pupils in mathematics could be stronger and has implemented action to raise achievement further over the last year. These actions are bearing fruit, with increasing numbers of pupils achieving more highly across the school.

The governing body plays a key role in shaping the school's direction and in holding it to account. Its members are well informed, extremely committed and offer good levels of support and challenge. They are confident in asking difficult questions and are involved in evaluating the school's performance and planning for improvement. As a result, and along with its other strengths, the school has good potential to be even better.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The good provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start and ensures that they achieve well. When children enter the school their skills and levels of learning vary but overall are typical for their age. Within a short period they settle quickly into a well structured learning environment where learning activities are well targeted on key learning goals that match well with their stages of development. For example, in one session children made good progress in their physical development by running races and playing games with a racquet and a ball. Elsewhere, children had the opportunity to chalk on a wall, and choose things to do from boxes of carefully selected literacy and numeracy activities. In contrast, a group of other children were challenged in their thinking about what happens when they poured water through a plastic tube into different containers. Staff have high expectations and children are very well cared for. As a result, children show positive attitudes, become engaged in their learning and have the confidence to initiate activities for themselves. Staff continually assess how well children are achieving and use the information to plan further challenges. This means that by the start of Year 1, most children are achieving and exceeding the levels expected of them and have made good progress. Parents are kept well informed and are encouraged to become actively involved in their children's learning. The coordinator provides good leadership and gives clear guidance and help to support colleagues.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning to accelerate pupils' progress

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<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	2
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



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

Thank you all very much for the friendly way in which you helped me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed chatting to you in the playground, in your classrooms and in the interview with the school council. You told me how much you enjoy coming to school and having spent the day with you, I can understand why. You go to a good school that is such a happy and safe place to be. I was really pleased to see how well you behave at all times and how well you sang in the school hall. You made a good attempt at singing 'What have you done today to make you feel proud?' It's a tricky one isn't it? I particularly liked your singing of 'Our God is a great big God'. I could see from your faces that you really enjoy singing this one. I could also see how well all the adults in school look after you really well, and your parents told me this too.

You told me that you enjoy your work and that your teachers help you to learn well by making your lessons interesting and often fun. I could see this with my own eyes when some of you in Year 3 were learning to draw in the style of Quentin Blake, when those of you in Year 2 were discussing why objects float or sink and when pupils in Year 5 were dancing with their Mums and Dads and your headteacher at the 'World War Two Tea Dance'.

Mr Williams and all the staff work very hard to make the school as good as it can be and I am confident that it will continue to improve. To help with this, I have asked them to ensure that all of you make good progress in your work and that more of your lessons are like the very best ones I saw when you were very enthusiastic about your learning. You can help them by telling them what makes lessons interesting and what helps you to learn.

Keep trying hard. I wish you and your families all the best for the future.