

Moorside Community Primary school

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134659
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	318569
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Julie Price Grimshaw

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	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr L Gill
Headteacher	Mrs. J Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2007
School address	Keighley Road Ovenden Halifax West Yorkshire HX2 8AP
Telephone number	01422 365236
Fax number	0

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Introduction

During the inspection in February 2007, the school was given a Notice to Improve and asked to address issues relating to standards in English, mathematics and science. Subsequently, the school was inspected in October 2007, when the school was judged to have made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and raising pupil's achievement.

This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized school, which serves an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. The great majority of pupils are from a White British background, and there are very few pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The school gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark in November 2007, and also holds the Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. This is now a good school. A determined corporate effort by the school's staff, capably led by senior managers, has resulted in the school making considerable progress over the past year, particularly in relation to achievement and standards.

The school's admirable work in improving the quality of teaching and learning, including the introduction of a number of effective school-wide strategies, means that there are now clear signs that the previous legacy of underachievement is being successfully tackled. Data from 2007 show a significant increase in pupils' achievement throughout the school. There was a similar improvement in standards, which had, in previous years, been exceptionally low. In 2007, standards by the end of Year 6 were average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. Over the past 12 months, the school has built on this and has ensured the trend of improvement has continued. Currently, pupils make good progress, and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science.

Careful monitoring of teaching by senior managers has resulted in areas for improvement being identified and addressed promptly. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and manage behaviour well. Pupils respond with much enthusiasm; the great majority are very keen to learn, and love to celebrate their achievements regularly. Teachers' increased confidence in assessment and target-setting means that academic guidance is good overall, and suitably challenging work is planned for the great majority of pupils. Occasionally, however, the most able pupils are provided with work that is too easy, and teachers do not always give sufficient ongoing guidance to these pupils. Consequently, a small minority do not always make progress that matches their capability.

The school does a great deal to support pupils' progress in their personal development, and the quality of pastoral care provided is exceptionally good. Many pupils benefit greatly from the school's emphasis on the development of social and communication skills, and grow in confidence and self-esteem as they move through the school. They are delighted with the wide range of activities on offer, both in and out of the classroom; these include break time and lunchtime clubs, as well as those after school and during school holidays. Pupils also gain a great deal from out-of-school visits, including the very popular residential trips. A key strength of the curriculum is the work of the 'WOW Factory', where pupils learn about a wide range of issues related to conservation, environmental awareness and global citizenship. Pupils speak with pride about their birdwatching skills and their knowledge of local wildlife. They talk in great detail about how much they enjoy growing and eating their own salad vegetables.

The headteacher, assisted by senior managers, has successfully built a strong team of staff and developed their expertise. Together, they are now seeing the results of their work in the good progress made by pupils. School governors have provided outstanding support during this period. The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection. When pupils were asked to identify the strongest feature of the school, their shared view was summed up in the comment, 'everything and everyone - because we all work as a team.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision in the Foundation Stage is good. When children start in the Nursery, their skill levels are well below typical expectations, particularly with reference to language and social skills. As a result of good quality teaching and support, they make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage leader has worked very effectively with staff to bring about a range of significant improvements within a relatively short space of time. For example, rigorous and accurate systems for assessing and tracking children's progress have been established, and, consequently, staff are aware of how they can best support individuals in all areas of learning. Progress is promoted both indoors and outdoors through a wide range of rich and exciting activities that engage the children's interest. Adults capably lead structured learning activities, but they are also skilled in their support of children's learning through play. Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the Foundation Stage unit, becoming increasingly aware of the needs of others and the importance of sharing and taking turns. By the end of the Reception Year, their skill levels are below those typically expected for their age, but this represents good progress overall given their starting points.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the most able pupils are provided with sufficiently challenging work, together with the guidance they need, to enable them to meet their full potential.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Since the last inspection, the school has responded swiftly to areas of underachievement with considerable success. For example, in previous years, pupils' standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 were exceptionally low, and progress inadequate. By introducing school-wide strategies, such as 'big writing', this underachievement has now been addressed, and standards overall by the end of Key Stage 1 are just below average. In 2007, pupils' achievement in English during Key Stage 2 improved significantly. Following this success, the school then focused on raising achievement in mathematics and science, and inspection evidence shows that this has been successful. Currently, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the good quality targeted support they receive. More able pupils, however, do not always make the progress of which they are capable, due to the level of challenge in lessons occasionally being too low.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupil's personal development and well-being are good, with an outstanding feature being the enjoyment they show in all aspects of their school. They value the good relationships they have with each other, their teachers and other adults. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Spiritual awareness is very well promoted by activities where the pupils learn to marvel at aspects of the natural world. Behaviour is good overall. Although a small number of pupils struggle with self-control on occasions, the majority behave well at all times, and some excellent behaviour is seen. Attendance is broadly average and the school's work to raise the attendance

rate is reflected in recent improvements. Pupils take advantage of many opportunities for exercise and have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles. They feel safe around school. As a result of the school's good provision, they have a very thorough awareness of safe use of the Internet. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community, serving as school councillors, playground befrienders and 'red hats', who help staff at lunchtimes. Through the school council, they propose additions and improvements they would like to see. For example, in response to their suggestions, staff and governors agreed that pupils should have the opportunity to go horse riding. Pupils show community spirit by helping to improve the local environment. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education and have a good awareness of economic issues through some excellent environmental work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils say that 'teachers make sure learning is fun'. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good, and support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Work is carefully planned and reflects teachers' high expectations of the great majority of pupils. Interactive whiteboards are used well to enhance learning. Most lessons move at a brisk pace, and include a good variety of activities that help to keep pupils totally engaged. Teachers and support staff use praise very effectively. They constantly look for ways to increase pupils' self-esteem, for example, by making clear to pupils that their contributions are valued. Work is assessed thoroughly and, in the main, marked well. Pupils know what they need to do in order to improve, and are aware of their targets. Teachers plan work at the right level for the majority of pupils. However, the most able are sometimes given work that is insufficiently challenging. On occasions, such pupils work independently for long periods, and do not always receive enough guidance to support and improve their progress. As a result, the progress made by these pupils is not always as rapid as that made by their classmates.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, exciting and stimulating curriculum, which is well matched to pupils' needs, abilities and interests. There are opportunities for pupils to practise the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) across a range of subjects, and this has contributed to the recent improvement in their achievement. There have been good improvements to methods of teaching letters and sounds across the school. The school's curriculum for personal and social development is particularly strong. The innovative 'WOW Factory' is an outstanding feature of the curriculum, and pupils benefit greatly from the themed approach to learning and environmental issues that are features of their sessions there. There is good curricular enrichment, and very high numbers of pupils enjoy the extensive range of extra-curricular activities on offer.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Moorside is a very caring school, and a clear priority is to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils know that they can rely on the adults in school

to care for them. Many enjoy breakfast and the mid-morning snacks provided. Adults provide very good support to pupils at play during break and lunchtimes. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are all in place and reviewed to meet all requirements. Vulnerable pupils are identified and measures taken to provide them with good support. The school works well with external support agencies to effectively meet the needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities or behaviour issues. Data on the progress of individuals are analysed so that pupils can be set achievable and challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Consistently strong leadership and management have been the driving factor in securing the improvements to all aspects of the school's work, and, consequently, to rising standards and achievement. The headteacher and senior leaders have worked continuously to raise morale amongst staff, whilst maintaining a rigorous focus on improving the quality of pupils' learning through frequent monitoring. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate and effective, and improvement planning is of good quality. There is no complacency amongst school managers, who are aware of the need to continue raising standards and have identified clear strategies for this. Senior leaders are particularly skilled in identifying strengths of individual members of staff, and allocating responsibilities accordingly. In addition, a range of training activities has been provided, and has successfully developed staff expertise.

The contribution of the governing body has been outstanding. Governors have an excellent awareness of data and have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are fully involved in all aspects of school life, and have provided consistent support and challenge to school leaders. Together with the support of the local authority, leaders and managers have effectively built a team that shows good capacity for future improvement.

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?	2
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 ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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

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?	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	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

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

Thank you very much for making the other inspectors and me so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, hearing your views and watching you learn.

You attend a good school. We can see that lots of things about your school have improved. You now make good progress in English, mathematics and science. You told us that your teachers make sure learning is fun, and we agree with you. We thought that the 'WOW Factory' was great! I was really impressed that you knew so much about birds, wildlife, and environmental issues. It's fantastic that you get the chance to grow your own vegetables – and even better that you get to eat them! This brings me on to the subject of healthy eating. You know quite a lot about nutrition. Many of you obviously enjoy the sports activities at school. You said that there is always something for you to do, every break time and lunchtime. There are lots of different fun activities, so I can see that some of you are spoilt for choice!

All of the adults in school care about you, and it's also good that you care about each other. Even the youngest children in the Nursery learn to share and listen to each other, and we could see that some of you are keen to take on responsibilities, such as being a school council member, a befriender or a 'red hat'. This is very worthwhile, so keep it up!

We were glad that you knew your targets, and that you know what you need to do to make your work better. All this will help you to improve even more! We thought that a few of you were finding your work a little too easy, so we have suggested that the school looks at ways of making sure that the work is always hard enough for you and you have the help you need to improve. This will help you all to make even better progress. You have an important part to play here, so always aim to reach your targets, and don't forget to tell your teacher if the work is too easy – or too hard – for you.

Your headteacher and all the staff want each one of you to achieve your full potential at Moorside. We are really pleased that you are proud of your school and enjoy learning, and we wish you well for the future.