

# Moorlands Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109000
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	324876
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen McShane HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<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 (total)	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Karin Morgan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Warby / Stephen Bailey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Chantry Mead Road Bath BA2 2DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 421912
<b>Fax number</b>	01225 425848

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	324876

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Moorlands is an average-sized junior school. The majority of pupils transfer from the adjoining infant school. Most pupils are White British. A small number of pupils speak a first language other than English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than the national average; the majority of these have learning, language or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Since January 2009, the headteacher has reduced the number of days she works at the school. There is now an arrangement of co-headship in place with two part-time headteachers leading the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Pupils make inadequate progress at Moorlands, particularly in mathematics and science. Underperformance in these subjects was highlighted at the last inspection in 2005. While a great deal of work has taken place to improve progress and raise standards, the overall impact of this work has been inadequate.

At the end of Key Stage 2, in English, standards historically have been broadly average. In 2008, standards in mathematics and science improved and were below average. Unvalidated data from the 2009 National Curriculum tests indicate that standards in all three subjects are now below average and progress, based on pupils' broadly average starting points, remains inadequate.

Teaching during the inspection was satisfactory and occasionally better. The school and local authority monitoring indicates that teaching in lessons is improving and is often good. Teachers are very knowledgeable about their subjects, plan activities for groups and there is often a good and purposeful atmosphere with effective use of support assistants. However, in too many lessons, the level of challenge varies and the progress pupils make is variable, the pace is too slow and work is badly matched to the needs and interests of the pupils. Throughout the school the amount of work covered, the quality of planning, target setting and marking to ensure progress all range from being good to inadequate.

Pupils are cared for well they are well known by staff and receive appropriate interventions, as necessary, to help them make better progress in their personal development. There are good procedures and routines in place to ensure pupils' safety. Behaviour is good; pupils are polite and friendly and care for each other well. Some parents expressed concerns that behaviour was not good enough and there was bullying at the school. Inspectors found no evidence of this; however, the school was clear that in previous years there had been a number of individual pupils with very challenging behaviour. This is no longer the case.

The school has taken steps to ensure that behaviour in classrooms is better through offering a wider variety of interesting activities in the curriculum to improve pupils' engagement. This has had clear benefits and pupils work together well, sometimes in mixed-age groups, and develop cooperative and work-related skills. Pupils enjoy all the different things they do and have had memorable opportunities, for example being evacuated to Dorset as part of their study of the Second World War. While the curriculum is broad and is used effectively to develop pupils' personal skills, teachers are not yet using it well enough to inform planning to improve pupils' basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

Leaders and managers, including governors, are knowledgeable and work hard for the school. They have improved tracking and assessment procedures and worked with the local authority to introduce different strategies to improve progress. Additionally, they have taken steps to ensure that all groups have equal access to the provision. For example, they monitor discriminatory practices such as racist behaviour and the achievement of vulnerable groups including minority ethnic pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Although there are some recent signs that some pupils are now making better progress, the impact of the many initiatives has not been quick enough. Management and leadership are inadequate. This is because the many different initiatives that have been adopted have not been consistently embedded into practice or evaluated. There is a wealth of data and monitoring. However, they are insufficiently evaluated to highlight key messages and check on the ongoing impact of the school's work on pupils' progress. Leaders and managers have not drawn together a clear set of agreed priorities with measurable success criteria. Expectations of teachers are high but are not clearly focused or consistent. This has led to too much variation in practice throughout the school and now many teachers themselves are unclear about the best way of promoting progress. A significant minority of parents expressed their concerns about how the school is led and managed and its impact on their children's progress.

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

- Improve the progress of pupils, particularly in mathematics and science, to ensure that no group is underachieving.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels so that leaders and managers: Develop a concise set of agreed priorities for action with clear success criteria related to pupils' progress; Take rapid and decisive action in order to implement the actions consistently; Carry out robust and ongoing monitoring and evaluation so that all are clear about the difference that their actions make to the pupils' academic progress.
- Improve teaching, the assessment of pupils' learning and the curriculum by ensuring consistency of good practice throughout the school.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 4**

Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment but, taken overall, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below average. Over the last three years, standards in English have been broadly average. In 2008, results in the national tests were slightly above average with a significant number of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in this subject. Standards in mathematics and science improved in 2008, but remained below average.

Progress in English was satisfactory in 2006 and 2008, but inadequate in 2007. Additionally, over the last two years, pupils made inadequate progress in mathematics and science. The school's current assessment data show that pupils are not on track to achieve the expected levels at the end of Year 6. Unvalidated data from the 2009 National Curriculum tests support the inspection evidence that approximately half the pupils in the current Year 6 have made inadequate progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress due to the recently improved group interventions and individual support.

### **Personal development and well-being**

#### **Grade: 2**

There are good relationships between the pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils are very proud of their school. They put great energy into the different activities; for example singing with great exuberance in assembly and enthusiastically practising their excellent end-of-year performances. They are inquisitive, reflective and thoughtful and have a good knowledge of different cultures. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and they have a good

knowledge of healthy lifestyles, eagerly taking up the sporting activities on offer. Attendance is above average. Pupils take on different responsibilities, including participating in the effective school council and being 'buddies' to younger pupils. They are well prepared so that they are confident for their transition to the next stage of their education. The positive way pupils apply themselves and work together harmoniously, even though some are held back by their slow progress in basic skills, means that their skills to ensure economic well-being are satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

All lessons are planned in detail and there are different activities available for different ability groups, although these activities are not always well matched to pupils' abilities. Effective use of interactive whiteboards means that children remain motivated and explanations are often backed up by interesting examples. However, there is too much variability in the quality of teaching overall that significantly affects pupils' progress. Individual teachers use a wide variety of effective techniques to support learning. Some have very clear success criteria that are referred to, while others vary their approach to questioning, for example, choosing pupils to answer at random by selecting their names out of a tub. While these practices may lead to good learning in individual lessons, they are not used consistently across the school. The school's marking policy is not consistently applied and marking ranges from very good to unsatisfactory.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school has recently adopted a more creative curriculum in response to their analysis that many of the pupils were passive learners and some were becoming disaffected. It is clear that the breadth of the curriculum is good and pupils are now interested and acquire knowledge in a range of subjects. Literacy and numeracy are given sufficient attention during specific lessons devoted to these areas. However, the curriculum does not always support sufficiently the systematic development and acquisition of pupils' basic skills and the urgent need to improve progress in mathematics and science. The school has a sound range of 'activities weeks' during the year, for example arts and intercultural weeks. Enrichment activities are also timetabled to encourage pupils from different age groups to work together; for example animation, orienteering and film club.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school's structures and routines mean that pupils are safe and can work and play together well. Appropriate arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place. Monitoring of any racist incidents is thorough and action taken appropriate. There is strong behaviour management, including the effective use of commendations. The opportunities to play on different playgrounds means there is space for energetic ball games and quiet talking. The school works well with other support services to ensure that pupils receive additional support as necessary. Support staff work with individuals in classrooms very sensitively. Small group work has improved over the last year and is more effective and results in pupils catching up, particularly in reading.

There are suitable systems for target setting and recording but their use is inconsistent. Some children know their targets and know how to improve toward them. Some do not.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

Senior leaders work hard. There is some limited evidence that modifications to the curriculum and intervention programmes are beginning to have an impact on pupils' outcomes. However, overall, leaders' response to the key issues identified at the last inspection has not been strategic or systematic enough to ensure rapid and improved progress. The raft of initiatives, the detailed tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress and new techniques have actually confused issues rather than clarified them. They have not been synthesised into key improvement actions that are resolutely carried out. The monitoring and evaluation of provision has been ineffective and has not provided sufficient ongoing and accurate information. The school development plan does not have clear success criteria that are related to pupils' progress. The activities are too broad and actions have been too slow to accelerate pupils' achievement. Practice in the school is inconsistent and the leaders and managers at all levels have been slow to take direct action to challenge this inconsistency. As a consequence of this, there has been insufficient progress on the addressing the key issues from the last report so the school cannot demonstrate the capacity for further improvement. The school's work to promote community cohesion and equal opportunities is satisfactory. The school's particular strengths are in promoting international knowledge, the repeated efforts to engage parents from different parts of the community and the work to ensure pupils gain equal access to activities.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

**Overall effectiveness**

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

---

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

5 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorlands Junior School, Bath, BA2 2DE

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We are very grateful to those of you who spoke to us so thoughtfully about your school and shared your work with us.

We were very impressed by your behaviour and the way you care for each other. We particularly liked your enthusiastic singing and were very lucky to see the excellent production of 'Olivia' that Year 6 were preparing. It was clear to us that you do many interesting things at your school and you enjoy them a great deal.

Unfortunately, your school is not doing as well as it should. We found that many of you are not making enough progress. Your headteachers and teachers are working hard to make things better but your school has not made enough improvement. We have asked them to work on three things to help you make more progress. These are to make sure that:

- all of you achieve better results in mathematics and science
- all leaders and managers have plans for improvement in the future.
- lessons are always good, activities are matched to your needs and you know your targets and how to improve your work.

Other inspectors will visit the school and see how well you are getting on. We know all of you will do your hardest to ensure your school improves quickly. Continuing your good behaviour and positive attitudes will help the teachers and the headteachers to work on the things they need to do.

I wish you all every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

Stephen McShane

Her Majesty's Inspector