

# Moorside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119273
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326985
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	412
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Saul
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Len Guest
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Bowerham Road Newlands Lancaster Lancashire LA1 4HT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01524 66516
<b>Fax number</b>	01524 848837

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: why outcomes in writing are weaker than other subjects; if the school was right to judge the quality of care, guidance and support as outstanding; and whether subject improvement planning is sufficiently rigorous, particularly in literacy.

The inspector gathered evidence from: school documentation; interviews with pupils, staff and governors; observing lessons and other activities; and analysing parents' questionnaires and comments. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated 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 large primary school serves a mainly White British population and a few pupils from a small range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. The school has a few pupils learning English as an additional language. The local area is below average in terms of social and economic advantage and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is around half the national picture. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has a very small number of pupils in its Strategic Educational Resource Facility (SERF) for the hearing impaired. The school has successfully achieved the following awards: Healthy School, Sportsmark, Basic Skills and Eco School. Extended services include well attended before- and after-school clubs.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The inspector agrees with the school's accurate judgement that it is a good school and gives good value for money. Parents and their children are highly appreciative of the school and a typical view is: 'I am totally happy and proud that both my children attend Moorside.'

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This has much to do with the way the effective curriculum and excellent tradition of care promote personal growth. The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme provides pupils with important guidance and insights into a wide range of personal issues. For example, the work on discipline and anti bullying has fostered pupils' good behaviour. Pupils say the school is a safe place that is very largely free of any oppressive or violent behaviour. Management ensures that pupils are safeguarded in school and there are appropriate policies in place, such as child protection and attendance policies. Exemplary monitoring of attendance and behaviour means that they are strengths of the school.

Pupils and staff are rightly proud of the excellent contribution made by the active and enthusiastic school council. It provides proper leadership on issues ranging from supporting younger pupils and safeguarding the environment to raising money for charities. It is little wonder, therefore, that pupils enjoy school and that their attitudes to work are so good. Moreover, attendance is consistently above average. Pupils know and understand the importance of having a healthy and active lifestyle. They also enthusiastically tend the vegetable plot and appreciate the fruits of their labour.

Achievement is good and standards are above average. The expectations placed on pupils are high, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils' academic progress is checked effectively by using regular assessments. Tracking documents illustrate the good progress the majority of pupils make. Consequently, there is a brisk move from a level of skills expected for their age, when they enter Reception, to above average standards by the end of Year 6. Results in national tests have mostly been significantly above average at ages 7 and 11. Early indications from the unvalidated 2008 national test results show they are similar to those of previous years. Writing standards are not as high as reading, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, there has been an improvement in the number of pupils who reach the higher Levels 3 and 5. In recent times, there has been an improvement in the way that pupils' writing has been assessed and tracked and close attention is rightly being paid to the rate of progress pupils are making. It is too soon to see the full benefit of these initiatives. Pupils are well prepared for future learning and life beyond school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those in the SERF, make good progress. They benefit from the deployment of good resources and the effective support of teaching assistants. Pupils learning English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those looked after by the local authority also progress well. Pupils recently joining the school, who speak very little English, take a full part in lessons and settle very quickly.

Good academic and personal progress is promoted by strong provision. Throughout the school, pupils concentrate very well and 'have a go' because they are confident that they have forged very strong relationships with the staff. Lessons are business-like, but fun, because teachers' classroom management is so effective. Staff have developed good questioning skills that probe pupils' knowledge and understanding and check whether pupils are ready to move on.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is used successfully to enthuse and inspire the pupils. Higher attaining pupils are often set challenging tasks from the computer that supports the main focus of the lesson in, for example, mathematics. The clear expectation is that they will think, plan and find alternative strategies for their calculations. Assessments, setting of targets and marking play an increasingly influential role in learning and teaching. Nevertheless, some of the marking of writing is inconsistent and does not sufficiently inform pupils what they need to do to improve or challenge all pupils.

Leadership and management are good. Senior staff are focused on high expectations and continuous improvement. They are also willing to listen and try new initiatives, such as the setting up of a monitoring programme. There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' skills in areas such as music and sport. Management is willing and able to augment the staff with specialist coaches and teachers. Improvement planning identifies the correct priorities, such as improving writing. Nevertheless, progress is slower than it might be because the measures used to gauge success lack sharpness and challenge. Senior staff are supported well by the sound governing body. Governors are active and bring to the school their wide-ranging experience and expertise in, for example, teaching and health and safety. However, they are too reliant on the school staff for the information they need rather than having the ways and means to find information for themselves. The school promotes community cohesion well and the pupils play a full part in this, particularly in activities in school and in the local community. The curriculum and parents provide rich opportunities for the pupils to gain knowledge and insights of the much wider global community. For example, religious education provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the practices of different faiths.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is strong and gives a good start to children's education. Arrangements for the children's transition from Nursery settings are effective. As a result, children settle very quickly and adjust extremely well to classroom routines. Attainment on entry to Reception is as expected for children of this age with strengths in communication, language and literacy development and particularly in the excellent personal, social and emotional development. Staff provide a welcoming, exciting and challenging environment, which stimulates children to learn through practical play. There is also a range of displays around the room that provide lots of literacy and numeracy support and stimulation. Most children reach levels that are a little above those expected for their age and their progress is good. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and those chosen by the children. Children practise key skills and develop social skills very effectively. They establish excellent relationships with each other and the staff. Curriculum provision has been improved by the development of a good outdoor area that is used well to extend learning. Leadership and management of EYFS are good and have provided the impetus needed to bring about development, such as upgrading the premises and the curriculum.

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

- Raise standards in writing.
- Ensure that marking in writing is of a consistently high standard, so that pupils are clear about what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve further.
- Sharpen the subject improvement plans, particularly in writing.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	1

## 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	3
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**

3 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorside Primary School, Lancashire, LA1 4HT

Well done everybody. I really enjoyed inspecting your good school this week. Thank you for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. Here are some of my main findings.

What I really liked about your school:

- the good standards you achieve because of the effective teaching and learning in Reception
- the way you 'look out' for each other in classes and outdoors
- the excellent personal development that prepares you well for the future, including good behaviour, first-rate attitudes to work and the relationships you develop
- the good progress that you make, particularly in reading, mathematics and science
- the way that you all contribute to a safe and caring ethos in the school
- the good and interesting range of activities that enrich your curriculum
- the good leadership and management, including the contribution of the school council.

To make your school even better, I have asked the school to ensure that your teachers help to make your writing skills even better, particularly by the end of Year 6. I have also asked them to make sure that the marking of your written work gives you a clear picture of how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve further. You can be a great help in this by continuing to follow the advice you are given. Finally, I have asked your teachers to make sharper plans to improve your learning, particularly in writing.

Good luck for the future and continue to enjoy school.

John Heap

Lead inspector