

Moorside Community Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 119303 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 326997 |
| Inspection dates | 30 June –1 July 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Geoffrey Yates |

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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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 151 |
| 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 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Debra Hyman |
| Headteacher | Mrs Christine Howard |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 February 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Back Lane Holland Moor Skelmersdale Lancashire WN8 9EA |

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| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection dates | 30 June –1 July 2009 |
| Inspection number | 326997 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school situated in an urban area of Skelmersdale. Most pupils are of White British heritage. An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible to receive free school meals. The percentage identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. There are a small number of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The school has achieved many awards including the Healthy School award. It has Early Years Foundation Stage provision for Reception aged children. The nursery and after-school club on-site, which are run by a private provider, were inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that shows signs of improvement. Pupils' personal development and the pastoral care the school provides are both of a good quality. Pupils say they feel very safe and get all the help they need. There are clear signs of improvement in pupils' attainment in English as a result of the emphasis given to the subject. Improvements have also been made in pupils' behaviour and in levels of attendance. Parents are highly supportive of the school and it is held in good regard within the community. A typical comment is, 'Moorside Primary is a fantastic part of the community, it is very friendly, very approachable and my child has thrived at this school.'

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It is not always as good as it might be, in Years 1 to 6. This is partly because information about pupils' progress is not used effectively in some classes, which results in uneven progress, especially in mathematics. Pupils enter Year 1 with average standards and most reach the level expected for their age by the end of Year 2. The 2008 test results at the end of Year 6 showed that standards were slightly below average in English and science but well below average in mathematics. Current standards of attainment in English and science have improved so that they are now average. While there are signs of improvement in mathematics, standards are below average. The main reason for this is that pupils do not use and apply their numeracy skills well when asked to solve mathematical problems.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There are examples of good teaching and learning. In these classes, pupils are consistently challenged to achieve their best, because assessment information about their progress is used well to plan work that is demanding and pupils respond accordingly. Classrooms are managed well throughout the school. A good feature in all classes is the high quality of relationships between staff and pupils. Support provided by teaching assistants ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils. Where teaching and learning is not as strong, the pace of lessons is slow and assessment information is not used well to set work that is challenging, especially for the more able pupils.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They behave well both in class and outdoors. Pupils talk sensibly about the importance of healthy eating and are very aware of how to maintain their own safety and protect that of others. Pupils report feeling safe in school and parents confirm this. The school's safeguarding procedures are robust and meet current requirements. Pupils are given good opportunities to take on responsibility. For example, older pupils act helpfully as playground buddies. Attendance is satisfactory. While the curriculum is satisfactory with good provision for pupils' personal development, the mathematics curriculum does not pay sufficient attention to developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership and management and has correctly identified the right priorities to move the school forward. For example, improvements in the teaching of English, pupils' attendance and pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are already very apparent. Senior and middle leaders are developing their roles but are only just beginning to influence standards. The school caters equally well for all pupils. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and value other individuals and their diversity. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. The school ensures pupils have a good awareness of the local community but strategies to improve pupils' understanding

of the wider community are at an early stage. Governors are very supportive of the school. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve because of the clear direction provided by the headteacher and the willingness of staff to embrace change. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children start school with skills that are well below what is typical for their age, especially in their language and communication skills. Children make good progress. The school focuses successfully on activities that help them develop skills such as confidence in speaking and listening. By the time they enter Year 1, they are close to reaching the expected learning goals. Staff are well informed about what children need to learn. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. This is because the good practice seen in class is not mirrored outside. In the classroom, interesting and ever changing play areas capture children's interest and they make good use of the many opportunities to write. However, children do not learn as effectively outdoors, because they have not been prepared to use the resources independently as thoroughly as they have in the classroom. Behaviour is good because the staff are consistent in what they expect and teach children to express their feelings. Children are proud of what they do and are keen to welcome visitors. They understand what is expected in daily routines and move around safely to tidy up equipment or wash their hands before eating. Secure arrangements are in place to protect children's well-being and there is improved liaison with the privately owned nursery that shares the building. A good start has been made by the new coordinator to developing leadership but some of the newly introduced initiatives have yet to impact fully on improving further aspects of provision. Staff constantly review current practice and know how changes they have made are benefiting children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics ensuring that all pupils are regularly challenged to use and develop their problem solving skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school ensuring that staff use assessment information effectively so that pupils make good progress and marking explains to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Ensure that senior and middle leaders are more effectively involved in their roles.
- Ensure children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make effective use of the outside area.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average. Pupils enter Year 1 with broadly average skills. Most make satisfactory progress but the rate of progress varies across the school. The 2008 teacher assessments and current work show that standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, that has been variability in standards since the previous inspection linked to disruptions in staffing.

School data and inspection evidence indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 are average in English, in relation to both reading and writing, and average in science. These improvements in results reflect the good impact of the school's efforts, with the support of the local authority to improve standards. However, while there has been some improvement in mathematics, standards remain below average. This is mainly because there are too few opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to apply their numeracy skills in solving challenging mental arithmetic problems. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the support they receive which ensures satisfactory achievement. The small numbers of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school as shown by their improved and now satisfactory attendance. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers. A typical comment made by a child was 'the best thing about this school is the way teachers respect your feelings'. The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good. Assemblies help them develop a sense of values that are important in life and they learn to see things from someone else's point of view. Cultural development is satisfactory and pupils develop an understanding of the key beliefs and festivals of other faiths. Pupils grow in maturity because they are trusted with responsibilities for the welfare of others in the school and the wider community. They make a sound contribution to the community. In addition to the active school council and the Pupils' Parliament across local schools, older pupils check the concerns raised in the 'worry' boxes. They report that these are on the wane because there are so many activities, particularly sports, to keep them busy. Pupils feel safe and secure in school. Pupils' behaviour is good. It has improved; with clear signs that the school's behaviour management policy is effective especially when supporting pupils with emotional and social problems. Pupils generally play well together and lessons run smoothly. They say there are few instances of bullying and any disagreements that do occur are dealt with promptly and they are shown how to resolve issues themselves. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, by making good food choices and by keeping active, for instance, by riding cycles to school. The popular Enterprise week is an example of ways in which pupils learn to work together appropriately in teams and take decisions about issues that will face them as they grow older. Their broadly satisfactory basic skills mean pupils are soundly prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Satisfactory teaching and learning enable pupils to make satisfactory progress. All members of staff are successful in ensuring that pupils' behaviour is managed well and that the social and emotional needs of pupils are met. Good use is made of teaching assistants to help ensure pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have the right support to help them achieve their personal targets. In good lessons, pupils are more involved and positive about their learning, and know what is expected of them; as a result, the pace of learning is brisk. However, this good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school. In some lessons, the pace is too slow and activities are not sufficiently interesting or challenging to ensure good progress. In these classes, teachers do not systematically use assessment data to match work closely to pupils' needs and this is one reason why numeracy skills are not good enough. Not

all pupils are aware of how they are doing in their work, or how to improve, because marking is inconsistent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum broadly meets children's needs and extends their interests and experiences. Good use is made of support staff in helping to ensure vulnerable pupils are able to benefit from all aspects of the curriculum. There are some examples of links being made between different subjects but this is not extensive across the school. The school has plans in place to review the whole curriculum next year but has rightly seen the improvement in basic skills as the key priority. However, the curriculum has also focused successfully on ways of ensuring pupils' personal and social needs are met. Special curriculum projects work well in helping pupils to develop skills for the future. Enterprise week and the residential visit for Year 6 make a significant impact on pupils' team skills and their broader abilities to live and work alongside others. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used more extensively than at the time of the last inspection. Changes to the literacy curriculum have led to improved standards and also increased pupils' enthusiasm for reading and writing. The introduction of a new approach to teaching writing and increasing opportunities to enjoy and act out stories in role-play areas are successful features of classroom practice. However, the curriculum for mathematics is less successful in ensuring that pupils have adequate opportunities to use and apply their mental arithmetic skills. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Visits to local galleries, museums and science centres capture pupils' interest.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures to ensure pupils' personal care are good. Staff care well for their pupils. They are deeply committed to helping pupils improve their social and emotional skills so that they can establish good working relationships to make the most of school life and their lessons. Programmes tailored to the needs of particular groups teach pupils how to manage their feelings so disagreements do not disrupt their learning. Pupils who need special help are fully included in the life of the school and this is seen to benefit to the whole community. All safeguarding procedures are in place and meet statutory requirements. A governor takes responsibility for working with the school staff to check that systems for child protection and risk assessment are thorough. The school's procedures to improve pupils' attendance are good. Staff are vigilant in following up any absence and as a result few pupils miss school on a regular basis.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils know their targets and find them helpful in keeping focused in lessons. However, marking in books does not always explain what it is that pupils need to do to improve their work. The results of assessments made of pupils' academic progress are not scrutinised well enough to identify exactly why it is that pupils are not making the progress they should. The school is in the early stages of developing systems to look more broadly at where pupils make quicker or slower progress over longer periods of time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Despite disruptions in staffing, determined leadership from the headteacher, together with her passionate belief that every child can succeed, is helping the school to move forward. Very good improvements to the management of pupils have resulted in good behaviour throughout the school. The headteacher has introduced good initiatives, such as improved assessment systems. Standards in English have improved as a result, but initiatives have not yet had time to influence standards and pupils' progress fully. Other school leaders and managers have been encouraged to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluating progress based on the school's priorities; in most cases these developments are at an early stage. The school's own evaluation of its performance is satisfactory. It gives a realistic picture of provision, but is too generous in its overall judgement with regard to its effectiveness. Parents speak very positively about the school. The headteacher and her staff encourage communication; concerns are always taken seriously and appropriate action taken. The governors discharge their statutory duties satisfactorily. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the previous inspection, with good improvements in ICT.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

| | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| 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? | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 3 |
| 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? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 3 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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

| | |
|---|---|
| How good are 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 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 3 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 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

| | |
|--|-----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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**

2 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorside Community Primary School, Lancashire, WN8 9EA

I am writing to you to thank you for your help during my inspection of your school and to share with you my opinions about it. Your school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. Both inspectors were impressed by how friendly you are, not just with us, but most importantly with each other. You behave well, work hard and try your best in lessons.

I agree with you that your headteacher and teachers give you a lot of help if you have a problem or personal issue. The younger children in the Reception class get a good start to school life but the outside area is not used as well as it could be to develop their learning. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress. By the time pupils get to Year 6 they do well in English, and science but we have asked your school to make sure you do better in mathematics. The quality of pupils' writing has really improved and it was a delight to see some of the work produced in Year 4. In some classes the work that some of you are given is too easy. We have asked that the school improve these lessons by making sure that information about the progress you make is used more effectively to plan work to help you to reach even higher standards. All the jobs you do in school and the way many of you help others, for example, playground buddies at lunchtimes, is certainly helping you to become sound citizens of the future. It is good to see that many of you know what you need to do to be safe and keep healthy and fit.

Your headteacher provides all of you with a very caring place to learn. You are given lots of help by teachers and teaching assistants which means that you are safe and secure at all times. I have asked the senior staff in the school to become even more involved in leading their areas of responsibility. I hope you continue to enjoy school and wish you the very best for your future.

Yours faithfully

Geoffrey Yates

Lead inspector