

Moston Fields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105427
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	335378
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Mark Williams HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Deborah Kelly
Headteacher	Mr Ron Peden
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors.

When Moston Fields was inspected in October 2007 it was judged to require special measures. It was asked to raise standards and improve:

- the quality of teaching
- teachers' skills in assessing pupils' learning and using this information to plan lessons better matched to pupils' abilities
- rigour of governance in holding the school to account
- the quality of leadership and management at all levels.

HMI have visited the school termly to check and report on its progress. This inspection was the fifth such visit. During the course of this visit inspectors judged that the school was at least satisfactory in these areas and also judged that the leaders were demonstrating capacity to secure further improvements. As a result, this visit was also deemed to be a section 5 inspection.

Inspectors visited 17 lessons in Years 1 to 6 and four sessions in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers, the School Improvement Partner and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' achievement, pupils' work in books and a range of policy documents, including those relating to safeguarding.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most other primary schools. Since the previous inspection in October 2007 the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has increased and is now broadly in line with the national average for England. Likewise the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals has also increased and is above average. While below average, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups has also increased. The Early Years Foundation Stage at the school comprises a Nursery class and a Reception class. The school holds a number of external awards including the Healthy Schools Award (Gold) and the local authority's Inclusion Standard.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

There have been significant improvements in the quality and the effectiveness of this school since the inspection of October 2007. Leaders rightly focused on the then areas of weaknesses and put into place effective plans for improvement. These have been successful. The quality of teaching is the most improved area and is now good with small pockets of outstanding practice. The result is that in 2008, pupils in Year 6 attained broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. Unvalidated results for 2009 repeat this picture thereby providing, for the first time in a number of years, a trend of satisfactory achievement for pupils. This overall good teaching, satisfactory achievement and sound leadership demonstrate that the school is no longer reliant on the good levels of challenge and support provided by the local authority and the School Improvement Partner. It is now able successfully to manage continued improvement from within its own resources. The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils.

Inspectors identified a number of good features in the life of the school which further typify its improvement. The school's engagement with parents and carers has improved, with parents and carers particularly valuing the headteacher's care and approachability. Outcomes for pupils have also improved. Behaviour is good, as is the way pupils show their awareness of safe and healthy lifestyles.

Leaders are not complacent. They are acutely aware of the challenges which lie ahead. While there have been improvements in the standards pupils attain at the end of Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have remained stubbornly low. While these represent satisfactory progress from pupils' starting points, this level of progress will not be sufficient to secure average standards by the time the pupils leave school and go onto secondary education. In addition, while assessments throughout the school are now secure and teachers are making better use of them to plan for pupils' different abilities, in some lessons the level of challenge for the more able pupils remains weak. This is evidenced in the low numbers of pupils who attain the higher levels in national tests and assessments.

The levels of care, guidance and support are satisfactory, as is the quality of the curriculum. Sensitive support is provided to vulnerable pupils and their families. There is a good range of activities to enrich the curriculum, including the teaching of a modern foreign language. The Year 1 curriculum, however, is not well matched to all pupils, particularly for those who have not reached all the early learning goals and are not

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ready for the challenges of the National Curriculum. Improvements have been made to the Early Years Foundation Stage and it is satisfactory in its effectiveness. In previous monitoring visits strengths were observed in the systems that leaders were using to gather information about children in order to better inform teaching and provision. These strengths were not as visible during this inspection.

The quality of leadership and management has been improved. Importantly, it has been extended – initially beyond the headteacher to the deputy headteacher and, within the last 18 months, to core subject leaders. All these leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have this overview too and they have improved markedly so that they now provide good challenge to the school and hold it to account well. Plans for improvement are appropriate, but they do not always make clear what the expected outcomes are for pupils. This has meant that while the checking of such plans and actions has been systematic, it has not always been rigorous. Nonetheless, the school's capacity to improve further is secure and, while satisfactory at this point, is continuing to show signs of strengthening.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1, so that pupils reach broadly average levels.
- Accelerate further rates of pupils' progress across the school by ensuring that:
 - improvements in the quality of teaching are built on so that all is consistently good or better
 - teachers consistently make good use of assessments to provide activities which challenge all pupils, particularly the more able, in their learning
 - the curriculum in Year 1 builds on the skills and abilities identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Strengthen further the capacity of the school to sustain further improvements by ensuring that:
 - all plans and actions make clear what are the expected outcomes for pupils
 - the monitoring of such plans and actions is always rigorous.
- Establish cohesive systems in the Early Years Foundation Stage which will:
 - set accurate baselines of what children are able to do on entry to the Nursery class
 - track the steps children are making in their learning and development in both the Nursery and Reception classes
 - enable adults to make use of the information gained to plan the next steps of learning and provision.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 and their progress, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is satisfactory overall. This represents an improvement after some years of decline in standards up to 2007. While the picture of progress as seen in pupils' current work is uneven across the school, importantly, there is nothing which is inadequate. The unevenness is, in part, the result of underachievement in the past, which has left gaps in the learning of some pupils. This underachievement is being eradicated as pupils pass through the school and particularly so in Year 6, where pupils are making the best progress. Assessments of what pupils can and cannot do are now accurate and have been so for the last year. Inspectors agree with the school and local authority that this is so.

The improvement in standards at the end of Year 6 is welcome. Nonetheless, the more able pupils are not consistently provided with sufficient challenge throughout the school. This is particularly evident in satisfactory lessons and in some pupils' books, where there is little difference between what different ability groups are doing and learning. While the low standards at the end of Key Stage 1 reflect satisfactory progress from pupils' starting points, a lack of consistent challenge for the more able pupils restricts better progress.

In addition to welcome improvements in standards at the end of Year 6, there have been notable enhancements to the attributes pupils demonstrate in their personal development. Pupils around school are polite and well behaved. They report how behaviour has got better under the leadership of the headteacher. They are also polite and articulate. They have a good understanding of what they need to do to be safe and healthy. For example, in this technological age, they talk confidently about the dangers and impact of cyber-bullying and, if they encountered it, what they would do about it. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a keen sense of right and wrong. They are aware of different faiths through their work in religious education, although their understanding of the culturally diverse nature of people is less well developed. Their contribution to the community is satisfactory. In school they take part in activities to improve their school further and value strongly the voice they have been afforded. They raise money for charities, for example Children in Need. At the previous inspection, pupils' skills to promote their future economic well-being were inadequate. They have improved and now basic skills are in place this is now satisfactory. Attendance is broadly average, although it has declined this year.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The most positive improvement in the school, and the one which has impacted best on raising standards by the time pupils leave school, is the quality of teaching. Determined leadership has ensured that in the past 12 months – as confirmed by this inspection and previous monitoring visits – over 70% of teaching is good or better, with the remainder being satisfactory. As a result, the large majority of lessons are typified by clear expectations of what pupils are to do and learn, good levels of challenge for all pupils, and teachers and their assistants able to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils in their classes and groups. In all lessons where teaching is good or better pupils make at least good progress in their learning. These features are not always evident in the small minority of lessons which are satisfactory. In these lessons challenge for the more able pupils is weak. It is the incidence of satisfactory teaching and the resulting lack of challenge which makes pupils' progress across the school variable. The school is well aware that if low standards at the end of Year 2 are to be translated to at least satisfactory standards at the end of Year 6, then all teaching needs to be good or better. Teachers are much more skilful in using assessments of what pupils can or cannot do to inform their teaching. However, inconsistency is still evident, particularly with regard to the more able pupils. Overall, the use of assessment is satisfactory.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. Positive features include the focus on literacy and numeracy, and increased opportunities to link subjects in a meaningful way. Pupils have played a key part in this. For example, pupils in a Year 5 and 6 class had discussed with their teacher how through studying the history of the Second World War they could also be involved in learning and participating in drama, information and

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communication technology, geography, art, design technology and writing. Such links promote enjoyment of learning well. Pupils with lower ability and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are catered for well in the curriculum through targeted support. The curriculum is enriched through the teaching of a modern foreign language, by visitors and educational visits. There are, nonetheless, areas which the school needs to improve. Most importantly, leaders need to match more closely the curriculum in Year 1 to pupils who have not yet completed the early learning goals. The school is working to ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to carry out investigations in science and in mathematics.

Satisfactory levels of care, guidance and support exist. The school cares for vulnerable pupils well with support also offered to parents and carers. Arrangements are also in place to ensure the safety of pupils. Staff work hard to make the school environment, which is in need of some refurbishment, warm and welcoming through a range of colourful displays. The arrangements to support pupils when they move to secondary school are managed well. However, the transition from Reception to Year 1 is less well managed resulting in some pupils not experiencing an appropriate curriculum. Leaders are working hard with pupils, and parents and carers to promote good attendance, including offering a range of positive incentives. The school is nonetheless not afraid to issue penalty notices if required.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders are now demonstrating satisfactory capacity to make further improvements; indeed there is evidence that this capacity is growing. Governance is much improved and is now good. The school is held to account well for the standards pupils attain and the progress they make. Parents and carers spoken to during this inspection expressed confidence in the school and the headteacher. This confidence is well placed. Leaders have correctly focused on the most important weaknesses that previously existed. They have been most successful in improving the quality of teaching from inadequate in October 2007 to good now. Their plans for further improvement are appropriate but, as with previous plans, they do not make clear what the expected outcomes for pupils are. This lack of clarity makes rigorous checking of how well plans and actions are working more difficult. The school's capacity to improve no longer lies in the hands of the headteacher, who has provided good leadership in the two years he

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has been in post. Capacity has been strengthened by the positive actions of the deputy headteacher and, over the last 18 months, the increased involvement of core subject leaders. They have a sound understanding of strengths and weaknesses across the age phases they are responsible for. Their understanding of the effectiveness of their subjects across the whole school continues to develop.

The school has sound partnerships with external agencies to support pupils. Leaders are aware of how well groups of pupils are achieving in the school. However, the lack of consistent challenge for the more able pupils means that the promotion of equal opportunity is no better than satisfactory. Systems for safeguarding pupils meet government requirements. The school's promotion of community cohesion is developing and is satisfactory. Overall, given the now satisfactory outcomes for pupils, resources are managed effectively. This is an improvement from the previous inspection.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

Children enter the Nursery class with a range of skills and abilities which are generally below those typical for their age. The progress they make in their learning and development has been satisfactory over time. Last year children's progress was good, meaning that when they entered Year 1 the majority were working at a level typical for their age. Nonetheless, the proportion entering at the higher levels was low.

Children settle well into the Nursery and Reception classes. They are cared for well, are happy and enjoy the activities on offer. Relationships with parents and carers are good.

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The planned curriculum covers all required areas of learning and provides children with an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Outdoor provision – much improved since the last inspection – is available but does not enhance learning as fully as that indoors.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Some of the stronger features observed during previous monitoring visits were not readily evidenced during this inspection. Currently, staff do not have a fully accurate picture of the small-step progress children are making. In addition, the current baseline identifies what children cannot do rather than celebrate what they can do. As a result, the good-quality systems previously observed to use assessments to plan the next steps of learning and provision were not as evident in this inspection.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires for parents and carers are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moston Fields Primary School, Manchester, M40 9GN

Congratulations! Your school no longer requires special measures. It now provides you with a satisfactory education and, for the first time in a number of years, you are leaving school with broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. This is because the teaching at your school is so much better than it was when inspectors came in October 2007. Well done to your teachers too! Now that over 70% of lessons are good or better we have asked that the governors, Mr Peden and the staff work to make all lessons good. By doing this – and in making sure teachers use the information they have about you well – we believe you all can make even better progress, particularly those of you who need greater challenge in your work.

Getting a school out of special measures takes a great deal of hard work. The governors of the school, Mr Peden and the senior leaders, along with all the adults and indeed yourselves have done just that. Not only have standards risen, progress been made better and teaching improved. The leadership of the school has improved too. Where in the past the school has needed a lot of help to get things right, Mr Peden and his team need this help less and can work out what the school needs to improve and how to do it. This is what inspectors call capacity and your school has it! We are asking your school to make sure all its plans make clear what is expected for you and that staff check rigorously how successful these plans and actions are.

We have already mentioned a couple of things which will help your school improve. In addition, we want to see you attain standards at the end of Year 2 that are broadly in line with the national average. We also would like see some of the strengths we had seen in the Nursery and Reception classes earlier this year. These include knowing exactly what children can do when they begin Nursery, recording the checks adults make on children's learning and development, and the use of this information to plan the next steps of learning in these classes. We also want to see Year 1 build on the skills and abilities they gain in the Reception class.

So what about you? You were very polite and clearly appreciate the improvements too. You are well behaved and you are developing important social skills well. We were impressed how well you know how to be safe and healthy, particularly when using the

internet. We know you want Moston Fields to be even better. We hope you will continue to work hard and attend regularly. We wish you every good wish for a successful future.

Yours sincerely

Mark Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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