

Moorlands Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109001
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	337193
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Rundle HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Buxton
Headteacher	Mrs B Collett
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan and its self-evaluation, tracking information on pupils' progress, individual support programmes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, curriculum documentation and 83 parent questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' progress and learning in Key Stage 1, especially that of boys, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those receiving free school meals
- the difference Every Child Matters is making to pupils' opportunities and development
- whether teaching and the curriculum are sufficiently well targeted to enable all pupils to attain national expectations and make sufficient progress
- whether initiatives are making a difference to the rate of pupils' progress and helping them to attain the expected standards.

Information about the school

Moorland Infant School is a smaller than average school. The school has more girls than boys on its roll. It has below average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and statements of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background, or who speak English as an additional language, is very low. There are six classes in the school organised into single-age groups. Privately run breakfast and after-school clubs are provided on the school site. The school has been reaccredited as an Investor in People organisation and has attained National Healthy Schools status and the Primary Quality Mark for basic skills.

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

The headteacher, governors and other leaders have an accurate view of the school's work. Priorities for improvement are articulated clearly in the school development plan and remain focused on raising attainment. Changes since the last inspection have improved systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the gap in attainment between boys and girls has narrowed, particularly in reading.

Children in the Reception class are helped to settle into school quickly and they make satisfactory progress from their starting points. Pupils also make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, with the best learning taking place in reading. Standards dropped in 2008 to significantly below average, but senior leaders have taken a number of actions to tackle and reverse this decline. The reading recovery programme has had a significant impact on the rate of pupils' progress, raising teacher expectations, and consequently standards have returned to the national average. Other initiatives, such as the use of targets for pupils, a revised marking scheme and professional development for staff, are improving pupils' progress in writing and mathematics. Consequently, the standard in writing has also improved and is close to the national average but mathematics remains significantly below average. The range of initiatives is yet to be securely embedded in all classes and monitored for success but this positive trend indicates a satisfactory capacity to bring about sustained improvement.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and occasionally good. Pupils are not consistently challenged to reach their full potential, especially those capable of attaining the highest levels. Although the curriculum is balanced and meets National Curriculum requirements, it does not contain enough creative and imaginative opportunities to stimulate pupils or help them to develop independence. Occasionally, lessons are not adapted well enough to meet fully the needs of some pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

The care of pupils is good. Staff know pupils and their needs well and relationships are good. Behaviour in and around the school is good and older pupils particularly like taking the role of buddies and caring for younger children. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. As one said, 'I am very happy with Moorlands. My children are very happy and achieving well. The school is very welcoming and is amazing at meeting all children's different needs.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure the same rapid progress in writing and mathematics for all pupils by building on the success of the reading recovery programme and raising expectations further.
- Adapt the curriculum to:

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- challenge higher attaining pupils consistently
- help pupils become more independent in their learning
- offer more creative and stimulating opportunities for all pupils.
- Rigorously monitor new initiatives to ensure they are consistently implemented and are having a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils achieve better in reading because of the emphasis placed on this by senior leaders in the last couple of years. One-to-one work in reading is significantly improving pupils' skills, motivation and enjoyment of learning. Although standards overall dipped to significantly below average in 2008, unvalidated data for 2009 indicate that standards are now at the national average in reading and close to the national average in writing. Mathematics remains a weaker aspect of the school's work as standards remain significantly below average. Standards overall are low as pupils have not consistently reached national averages in the last couple of years. Support from local authority consultants for mathematics has led to significant recent improvement. The work seen in pupils' books and the assessment and tracking information held by the school indicate that this improvement is accelerating. Boys do not do as well as girls, but the gap between their attainment has narrowed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who receive free school meals make the same progress as others in their class.

Pupils say they like coming to school. They work cooperatively in lessons, play well together and show concern for each other's welfare. They feel safe, know who to talk to if they have any concerns and are confident that issues are dealt with promptly. School councillors are elected and they understand their roles, although the influence they have on decisions about improving provision is underdeveloped. Year 2 pupils take their responsibilities as playground buddies and reading partners seriously, although they contribute less to the community outside the school. Pupils are learning how to develop a healthy lifestyle, helped by the two hours a week of physical education, extra-curricular sport, drinking water throughout the day and selecting healthy foods at lunchtime. They are also developing an understanding of other cultures through visits and visitors to the school and they particularly enjoy activities such as the international week.

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	4
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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall and slightly better in Year 2 because of a broader range of methods used to stimulate and motivate pupils. A number of good features are present in different lessons but this good practice is not consistently applied throughout the school. Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations, include a good range of interesting resources and activities and help pupils to maintain their focus and concentration to finish work. Teachers have secure subject knowledge that has been developed further through training, especially in mathematics. They are starting to use their observations and assessments during lessons to intervene and help pupils understand what they have to do to make progress, but this not consistently applied and embedded in all age groups. Teachers use a range of questions to elicit pupils' responses but do not always press pupils further to help them develop their knowledge and challenge their thinking; this fails to stretch those pupils capable of high attainment. At times teachers talk for too long and pupils sit on the carpet for extended introductions without enough opportunities to offer and explore their own ideas. Staff have started to transfer the positive aspects of the very successful reading recovery programme to writing and mathematics with some success. This is particularly noticeable in Year 2.

The curriculum is taught through a topic-based approach that pupils enjoy. Pupils in Year 1 particularly liked learning about Mendhi hand patterns in religions education and then designing and making their own patterns using a variety of drawing techniques. At times, however, the curriculum is over-prescriptive and this leads to unimaginative teaching and activities. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to initiate ideas and

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tasks and not all lessons are consistently adapted to match the needs and interests of all pupils. The curriculum is enriched by theme weeks, visitors to the school and visits to local points of interest. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available with high participation levels. Pupils particularly enjoy the cooking club, music opportunities and sport.

The care of pupils is at the heart of the school's work. Good arrangements are in place for induction to help children settle into school and when they move to the junior school. Links with parents and carers are good and the vast majority say they are kept well informed about their child's progress. Many comment that staff are approachable and available to discuss any concerns. Support and guidance for vulnerable pupils are good, and include links with external agencies where appropriate.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, governors and other leaders at the school have a clear view of the school's work and have accurately identified the areas that need improvement. Changes have been made to assessment and tracking systems and to staff responsibilities to make the best use of their expertise; meetings have a greater focus on pupils' progress. Although pupils are now making better progress as a result, school leaders and governors are aware that monitoring must be more rigorous, especially to ensure that new initiatives are accelerating improvement. Staff are collectively committed to improving the school further. The school recognises there is more work needed to improve the equality of opportunity, for example by closing further the achievement gap between boys and girls.

Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are secure, child protection procedures are thorough and the school has made the appropriate checks on adults working at the school. Pupils and staff work well together and create a calm working atmosphere. Pupils have good opportunities to develop understanding of other cultures including links with children from other countries, although the wider promotion of community cohesion is yet to be fully embedded.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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 school overestimates the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage which inspectors found to be no more than satisfactory. Pupils' progress is satisfactory, given their starting points which are slightly below average. Children make best progress in their communication, language and literacy skills and in their mathematical development. Judgements on children's progress are moderated between staff to help bring about consistency. By the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's attainment is close to the national average. Girls outperform boys.

Teaching is satisfactory. Direct questioning of individual children is not used consistently to maintain their interest and concentration. A minority of children are inattentive and do not listen well enough to instructions. At times sessions lack pace. A broad range of opportunities is provided for child-initiated activities in a safe environment. The care and well-being of children are good. Good relationships exist between staff and children and children work cooperatively together. Good links exist with parents.

The use of assessment and the recording of children's progress and participation in different activities are satisfactory. Data are not always used sharply to track the progress of individuals or groups of children to ensure all their needs are fully met.

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

The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school's work. A high proportion of those who commented said that the school meets individual pupils' needs well; they were particularly appreciative of the range of clubs and activities available at the school. Parents are generally very pleased with the progress made by their children. Many commented on the friendly, supportive and caring staff that make them feel welcome in school and a few specifically mentioned the accessibility and effectiveness of leadership. A small minority expressed some concerns about the inappropriate behaviour of some pupils. Inspection evidence found that behaviour in and around the school was good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moorland Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 165 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	67	23	28	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	65	25	30	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	41	38	46	6	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	42	36	43	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	53	30	36	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	51	32	39	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	64	26	31	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	35	42	30	36	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	47	33	40	5	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	46	30	36	7	8	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	35	42	51	3	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	44	53	28	34	5	6	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	65	23	28	2	2	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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.



13 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Moorland Infant school, Bath BA2 2DQ

I am writing to say 'thank you' for making us feel welcome and for talking to us when we came to visit your school recently. I also want to tell you what we found out about your school.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Adults know you well and take good care of you. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and that you like being buddies for the Reception children. We found that you behave well and that you take good care of each other.

Most of you are learning new things all the time but we think some of you could be doing even more, so we have asked the school to improve some important things.

- Help all of you get better quickly in your writing and mathematics.
- Change some of the lessons so all of you have exciting chances to be challenged, to think more for yourself and to perhaps work more on your own.
- Check that new ideas in lessons are making a difference to how quickly you are learning.

I hope that you keep working hard and continue enjoying school. Make sure that you listen carefully to your teachers and follow their advice on how to get even better in your work. Thank you once again for letting us see your school.

Yours sincerely

Judith Rundle

Her Majesty's Inspector

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