

Moorthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130863
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	341046
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Lesley Clark

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Brook
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Wildey
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons and observed nine teachers. The inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and three groups of pupils from Key Stage 2 and also attended a school council meeting. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including material on pupils' progress, safeguarding, younger children's 'Treasure Chests' (detailed records of children's progress and development), individual education plans, the school improvement plan and 49 completed questionnaires from parents and carers as well as completed questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- pupils' progress in Key Stage 2, especially in writing and whether more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged
- whether pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and if they do, what factors enable them to do so
- the impact of pupils' behaviour and independence on their progress
- to what extent children in the Early Years Foundation Stage lead their own learning, solve problems and develop pre-writing skills.

Information about the school

This larger-than-average-sized primary school serves the local community. Most pupils are White British. Very few learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has had staffing difficulties in the last year affecting four classes. Two classes were taught by supply teachers during the inspection and two other teachers had recently returned to work after maternity leave. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools award. The after-school club is privately run and is not part of this inspection.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to safeguarding, leadership and management in terms of driving improvement, the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and the care, support and guidance given to pupils.

The school provides an acceptable standard of education. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they make good progress because of the good provision. They have lots of opportunities to solve problems and learn new skills both indoors and outdoors. Pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve satisfactorily from their varying starting points. Attainment at the end of Year 6 fluctuates from well below average to broadly average in English, mathematics and science depending on the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the cohort. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some key strengths in upper Key Stage 2, where pupils make the best progress. Teachers challenge more-able and less-able pupils well but do not always match work sufficiently closely to the needs of average attainers. The good curriculum provides effective learning opportunities that meet the needs of most pupils. Pupils have good health awareness and talk knowledgeably about factors which promote good health. They have a voice in the school through their well run school council and want to make a difference to their school community. The school displays pupils' work well and the artwork is of good quality.

The school's self-evaluation is inaccurate. This is because leaders, managers and governors do not check and review all aspects of the school's work with sufficient rigour. They do not devise suitable plans with appropriate actions, targets and clear lines of accountability to ensure pupils' well-being. This is why, despite some strengths in the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the care, support and guidance of all pupils is inadequate. The governing body does not fulfil its statutory requirements. It does not have adequate procedures to ensure pupils' safety. The school is less effective than it was at the time of the last inspection and has inadequate capacity to improve. Pupils continue to receive a satisfactory education because senior and middle leaders check on the effectiveness of teaching and use the information to push on pupils' learning. This is why the school provides satisfactory value for money, despite its shortcomings.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- With immediate effect, take steps to mitigate risk to pupils, by:
 - setting up systems and procedures with clear lines of accountability to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils
 - establishing clear management responsibilities and record keeping in relation to child protection
 - establishing clear management responsibilities and record keeping in relation to vulnerable pupils
 - setting up scrupulous practices and record keeping in relation to accidents, incidents and medical needs
 - carrying out thorough and regular risk assessments
 - establishing systems to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding measures
 - ensuring that adults receive up-to-date high quality training, guidance and support in safeguarding.
- Make the governing body effective, by:
 - ensuring it meets its statutory duties with regard to safeguarding and community cohesion
 - ensuring that governors have up-to-date training so they are in a position to challenge the school to address weaknesses and bring about improvements.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, by:
 - setting up systems to drive school improvement
 - setting realistic but ambitious targets in order to ensure that pupils, especially average attainers, make good progress throughout the school
 - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants receive continuing professional development
 - establishing systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the schools actions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement and enjoyment are satisfactory. More-able and less-able pupils say quite candidly, 'Sometimes we learn in a fun way. Sometimes it's a bit boring when you've done it before or when you have to wait until everyone knows it.' Currently, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly average, reflecting the range of ability in these year groups. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from being in the lower set for literacy and numeracy. Their progress is often good in lessons when they receive extra support. However, their individual education plans are not sharp enough to ensure consistently good progress. More-able pupils in Years 3 to 6 often make good progress in the upper set where they are

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challenged well, especially in writing. Year 6 pupils avidly collect interesting words such as 'melancholy' and 'sombre' to use in their own work. Average attaining pupils make slower progress because the work in the two ability sets is not always finely tuned to their particular needs. The school has identified accurately underperformance for some pupils in lower Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons in Key Stage 1. Sometimes the work is too hard for less-able younger pupils because teachers are trying to push their learning on beyond their present capabilities. When this happens, pupils' attention wanders and they become restless. Pupils know what to do to stay safe but they have some reservations about their play area. They are polite and behave sensibly for the most part. Pupils show a mature understanding of those who have behavioural difficulties, suggesting that 'it would be good if we had a space for people who get angry to go and calm down, read a book and make them feel better.' Pupils are proud of their work and keen to succeed. They have good social and moral awareness, but limited understanding of the richness of cultural and ethnic diversity. They develop the wider skills and personal qualities to equip them suitably for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
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

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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How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers give different ability groups different success criteria to work to. These lessons move at a good pace because pupils are involved, challenged and interested, as in a mathematics lesson when older pupils worked out how to graphically represent random data and analyse the results. In all lessons, teachers use teaching assistants effectively to support pupils, especially the less-able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, though tasks are not always closely related to individual education plans. Lessons are well planned to stretch more-able pupils, but less well matched to average attainers' needs. This means that average-attaining pupils do not get the extra support they need to help them cross a grade boundary. Pupils have a clear understanding of the marking policy and work hard to improve selected highlighted areas. This is not used consistently well in all classes.

Pupils follow a good curriculum with particular strengths in art and the Open Future's project whereby pupils are involved with local schools in a 'Grow it, Cook it, Film it, Ask it' sequence of activities. Although the curriculum meets the needs of most learners well, it can sometimes be too formal too soon for some Year 1 pupils. The school organises a broad range of educational visits and visitors to school which supports pupils' enjoyment of learning effectively.

The care, support and guidance given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully planned to meet the needs of individual pupils. The coordinator has identified that the targets in pupils' individual education plans are not focussed enough and has put an action plan in place, including training, to make them more effective. This has yet to have an impact. The care, support and guidance given to potentially vulnerable and other pupils are less well organised. It is not clear who makes sure that records are maintained and updated and keeps a record of outside agency involvement. The information is not recorded systematically and so, for example, behaviour logs are mixed up with more serious issues. Records and procedures relating to medical problems and administering medicines are inadequate. Staff do not know what procedures they are supposed to follow in relation to reporting, recording and monitoring welfare and safeguarding concerns. The school's successful drive to improve attendance has substantially reduced the number of persistent absentees, so that attendance overall is average.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

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How effective are leadership and management?

The weaknesses in leadership and management stem from the lack of systems to check and evaluate the work of the school. This means that the school does not base its actions on an accurate assessment of what it needs to do next and why. The lack of clarity and commitment has led to low staff morale. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard but in isolation. This, together with restricted training opportunities, inhibits their effectiveness. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are satisfactory because middle and senior managers monitor pupils' progress and put in measures to ensure improvement. These are well judged, as in the current programme to improve younger pupils' understanding of letters and sounds and older pupils' writing skills. The impact is lessened, though, because of the lack of strategic direction from the top and so target setting is not sufficiently ambitious and does not drive improvement. The governing body has not had sufficient training to understand what it needs to do to ensure that it meets statutory requirements. It does not challenge and support leaders effectively. The arrangements for safeguarding are not robust and there are no systems to maintain, update them or take action in order to reduce, for example, the extremely large number of incidents involving bumped heads at break and lunchtimes. Adults working in school are suitably vetted but governors have not had safer recruitment training. The school does not plan or evaluate its promotion of community cohesion either within or beyond the school. This restricts pupils' understanding of religious, ethnic, social and cultural diversity. The school plays a leading role in the Open Futures Project. It has not as yet evaluated the impact of this on pupils' well-being. Pupils have equal opportunities to learn and pupils who may be subject to discrimination are part of the 'happy family' that pupils describe.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The large majority of children start in the Nursery class with limited personal, social and communication skills. They make rapid progress because they are well taught in both the Nursery and Reception Years. Staff take great pains to develop children's speaking and listening skills, talking to them and reinforcing new vocabulary all the time. Children mirror what adults say to them and by the end of the Reception Year they play together sociably and companionably, addressing each other politely and inventing imaginative games together. For example, one group turned the writing area into a doctor's surgery, using sticky notes as pretend pills which they counted out carefully using the numbers of the nearby chart to help them. Adults carefully record children's small steps in learning and use these to keep accurate records of children's progress in individual 'Treasure Chest' books. These well thought out assessments of progress give parents and carers valuable insights into their children's learning and development. Staff take children's interests into account when planning activities for them. This means that activities change frequently so as to reflect children's current interests and help them to make the next steps in their learning. The outdoor provision is a notable strength, with many opportunities for children to practise their pre-writing and problem solving skills. However, the writing materials are not as imaginative as they might be, tending to be pre-prepared sheets for children to fill in and a limited range of writing implements. Within the Early Years Foundation Stage the leaders and managers take great care of the children. They have a separate secure playground. The outdoor provision is risk assessed daily. The setting is well led and managed, with good systems in place to ensure that it runs smoothly.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

About a fifth of parents and carers returned the questionnaires. Many of those who responded wrote at length to explain their views. Forty per cent of the questionnaire responses contained negative comments relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and the school not taking notice of their concerns. The large majority of

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replies highlighted parents delight with the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and feel their children settle in well and make good progress. Most agree their children enjoy school. The inspection team endorses the views of those parents who responded.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moorthorpe Primary 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 269 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	57	17	35	4	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	47	21	43	4	8	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	24	25	51	11	22	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	29	28	57	5	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	43	21	43	5	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	27	22	45	8	16	3	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	27	30	61	5	10	1	2
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)	10	20	24	49	6	12	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	27	28	57	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	18	25	51	10	20	4	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	20	26	53	8	16	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	13	27	24	49	3	6	3	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	33	24	49	4	8	3	6

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorthorpe Primary School, Pontefract, WF9 2BL

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome. A special 'thank you' goes to the four groups of pupils, including the school council, who spent time showing their work to me and talking to me and my colleague about your school. Your school helps you to make satisfactory progress. You are satisfactorily taught and older pupils work quickly and well. I was impressed at some of Year 6's writing and think that collecting words is a really good way to make your writing more interesting. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and they have a lot of fun learning both indoors and outside. You have a good understanding of why it is important to lead healthy lives. The good curriculum meets your needs well. We have given your school a 'notice to improve' because although it is giving you a satisfactory education it is not taking care of you as well as it should. To make sure that every one of you is well looked after and has the chance to make good progress we have asked your school to :

- set up good systems to check that where you play is safe and secure and that adults know exactly what to do if any of you hurt yourselves, need to take medicines or have any worries or concerns that you need help with
- make sure the governors know exactly what they have to do to help the school improve. They need to ask lots more questions, check the school site regularly and make sure you have the same opportunities as other pupils of your age to extend your understanding of different social and cultural communities
- set up systems to check how well it is working so it knows what to do to make it better.

You can help by making sure you get to school on time and attend every day. You must ask for help when you need it and say when you find the work too easy or too hard. This will help your teachers to teach you in the best possible way.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lesley Clark

Lead inspector

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