

Moorland Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110361
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	378085
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Rist
Headteacher	Juliet Jones
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed four teachers in 10 lessons, and held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan and subject plans, minutes of governing body meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, they carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work, and analysed 38 questionnaires received from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of more-able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- The provision for writing and the progress pupils make.
- The progress of some groups of pupils: White British pupils and those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially those identified for school action and school action plus support.

Information about the school

Moorland Infant is a small school. Most pupils come from the estate of Beanhill and the neighbouring estate, Netherfield. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which is Black African. Very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is well above average. The needs relate mainly to learning difficulties with some emotional, behavioural and physical difficulties. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in the Reception class. There is a breakfast club and after-school clubs on the school site. This provision is managed by the governing body and was inspected. The school has achieved the Healthy School award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Moorland is a good school. Pupils achieve well in both their academic and personal development. Parents, carers and pupils appreciate the good quality care and exciting learning opportunities on offer. One parental comment summed up the views of the vast majority: 'Children always settle into school well and make good progress; staff are dedicated and friendly and children are always happy to come to school. I have the highest regard for the headteacher and all the staff.' Pupils were equally positive. One pupil spoke for many in saying, 'We like the school, especially the activities and the playground. We like writing and numeracy because we are getting good at them.'

These are the key strengths of the school.

- Children settle into Reception extremely well and make good progress in all areas of learning because induction for parents, carers and their children is very effective.
- Good teaching enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and from a range of backgrounds, to make good progress as they move through the school.
- Relationships are strong and the school ethos is supportive. Consequently, pupils make good gains in their personal development.
- Care, guidance and support are good; pupils behave sensibly, develop confidence and enjoy all the activities they are given.
- Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities say the school is supportive and encouraging, keen for their children to succeed but also firm.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well and, consequently, they develop a positive attitude to their learning.
- The headteacher leads the school effectively and is supported by a dedicated and committed staff who, together with an active governing body, lead the school effectively and demonstrate a very clear vision for its future improvement.
- Good links with parents and carers, the local community and external agencies contribute effectively to pupils' learning and their well-being.

These are the key areas for improvement which remain.

- While increasing numbers of pupils are reaching the expected levels for their age in reading, writing and mathematics, the numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels are too low. Teachers occasionally miss opportunities to challenge

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more-able pupils in lessons.

- Although attendance and punctuality have improved considerably, they are not good over time.

All staff are committed to providing each pupil with the very best possible education. Equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination are pursued effectively. A continual drive for improvement is underpinned by effective systems for evaluating the strengths of the school and further areas for development. The school's good organisation and strong, shared vision underpin its good capacity to continue moving forward.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the higher levels for their age in reading, writing, and mathematics by ensuring that teachers use assessment information rigorously to plan challenging tasks, especially for more-able pupils.
- Raise attendance and punctuality through more rigorous monitoring and by increasing parents' and carers' awareness of the positive impact that regular attendance has on their children's learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From starting points that are well below those expected for their age, pupils make good progress throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, their attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Numbers reaching the higher levels are, however, low.

Inspectors found no significant overall difference between the progress of boys and girls or between White British and other ethnic groups. Lessons are well planned and good relationships contribute to a positive climate for learning. Pupils are provided with opportunities to solve problems and to think for themselves. They develop good skills in using the computer and use their literacy and numeracy skills well. These good outcomes are contributing effectively to pupils' economic well-being.

Year 2 pupils were enthusiastic about the 'Super Hero' theme for their literacy lesson. They were encouraged to use their imagination to describe their hero. More-able pupils used phrases such as, 'I am yellow like the sun and black like the clouds. I run fast like a cheetah.' They were keen to write their description and to share their work with others. All groups made good progress. Lower attaining pupils were well supported by adults and, consequently, they were able to complete their description and share it with others. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers because they are well supported by teaching assistants and most teachers skilfully target questions to enable these pupils to contribute fully to the learning in the lesson. The relatively few pupils learning to speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as

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their peers because they develop good relationships with staff and gain confidence to learn.

Pupils behave well because they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is average and improving. Pupils have a good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, and after-school activities, such as multi-skills and country dancing, are popular. This is reflected in the Healthy School award. Pupils say they feel very safe and know that they can talk to the adults if they have a problem. Pupils make a good contribution to their school and local community; for example, carrying out jobs around the school and planting bulbs in the local area. They all learn to be responsible in the classroom and around the school. The school council is well organised and pupils plan, organise and run events to raise money for charities and for playground resources. Links with a school in Norfolk, raising money for international charities and links with a group of African artists are raising children’s awareness of life in other communities.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use effectively information from assessment to plan work that matches the needs of all pupils and, as a result, different groups are challenged well in most aspects of their work. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to challenge and extend more-able pupils. Teachers use a range of methods and strategies to promote learning. They use questions effectively to check pupils’ knowledge and understanding and well-planned opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas with others. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils talked enthusiastically to their partner

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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about different eye colours. Teachers give good oral feedback to pupils on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is generally well planned and matched to the needs of all groups of pupils, although occasionally it is not challenging enough for the more able. Strategies to improve pupils’ thinking skills and confidence are well developed. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used well in other subjects. Year 2 pupils, for instance, used computers well to describe their artwork. A strong personal and social education programme assists pupils’ good personal development. Pupils enjoy the curriculum and this contributes to their enthusiasm for learning. Specialist teaching in art is well organised and this contributes to the good standards achieved. Pupils’ artwork is displayed attractively; colourful paintings in the style of Paul Klee enhance the school hall. Curriculum enrichment is good and the wide range of visits, clubs and activities are popular and well attended. During the inspection, pupils made good progress in learning to greet each other in French and, in country dancing, learnt some basic steps, for instance, right and left hand turns with a partner.

The caring ethos results in happy pupils who enjoy school life. Pupils’ needs are central to the work of the school and all adults effectively help children, parents and carers to get the best from learning. The school works effectively with external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The breakfast and after-school clubs make a significant contribution to care and support. Induction and transition arrangements are good for children entering the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and when moving on to other schools. The school gives sensitive carefully organised support to its pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and to those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This is one of the main reasons why pupils new to this country settle so well in school. There are well-considered mechanisms to help parents and carers support their children’s learning. Improving levels of attendance are celebrated each week. However, while strategies to improve attendance have had some success not all pupils are attending regularly and on time.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher’s efficient management and skilful leadership permeate the school. Drive and ambition are effectively communicated and leaders have a thorough

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understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school has successfully established an inclusive ethos and the drive to raise standards and achievement is well embedded. The vast majority of teaching is good and senior staff effectively monitor, support and identify areas to improve. There is a strong sense of purpose and desire to overcome any difficulties. The school tackles any form of discrimination decisively and deploys its resources well, particularly to provide extra support and intervention for pupils who may face significant barriers to learning. As a result, there are no significant gaps in the progress made by different groups of pupils, although the most able pupils are not consistently challenged.

The governing body ably supports staff in their work to improve the school. It is increasing the degree of challenge offered to ensure school improvement initiatives are successful. It monitors and evaluates the work of the school effectively and is particularly effective in managing financial aspects. All safeguarding procedures and checks on adults are thorough; governors monitor the site and procedures rigorously. Tracking of progress over time is thorough and senior leaders quickly identify any dips and develop sensible strategies and interventions to promote improvement. Appropriate developmental areas to improve further the effectiveness of the school are clearly identified in the school improvement plan.

The school promotes and audits the provision for community cohesion well. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of local, national and global contexts in which they live. There are good links with the children’s centre and local schools. Parents and carers are invited to lead Eid celebrations and an African group’s visit extended pupils’ knowledge and awareness of Africa. The school has an effective link with a contrasting school in Norfolk.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Reception class from low starting points in all areas of learning. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1 their attainment is only slightly below average. Staff are skilled in providing a wide range of challenging activities both indoors and outdoors, which enables the children to get off to a flying start. They challenge children to learn to share, consider others and develop their communication skills. Relationships are strong and consequently, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and behave well.

Children make good progress in their speaking and communication skills because teachers encourage them to respond to individual questions and to talk about their ideas. Personal aspects of care and welfare are good and this contributes to a very positive start. Staff provide interesting activities and children have good opportunities to learn through activities led by adults and those they choose for themselves. Good teaching, good links with parents and carers and extremely well-planned induction arrangements contribute successfully to children’s enjoyment of school. Opportunities for using the outdoor area to enhance all areas of learning are well developed. Most activities are fun and challenging. Children made very good progress in learning to recognise and count the teddy bears with more-able children counting beyond ten. Even though they had only been in school for a few days, they were learning to cooperate with each other using the rope to pull the boat down the slope. They were encouraged to think of others and had great fun working together to mix leaves, twigs and mud into a special lunch for their headteacher. During the circle and snack time, they were learning to be kind and to consider the needs of others. Adults occasionally miss opportunities to challenge more-able children to extend skills in writing and calculation. The provision is led and managed well.

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

There were 38 responses from parents and carers; this is a good level of response for a school of this size. All who returned questionnaires were happy with the school and felt it is welcoming and friendly. The overwhelming majority agreed that their children enjoy attending and that they make good progress. Parents and carers regard the school as caring and supportive and say the staff are approachable.

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Parents and carers were unanimous in saying the school provides a very safe learning environment. They identified a number of strengths including: the good quality of teaching and learning; the good progress all pupils make; the good care and support for pupils and families who are new to this country; relationships with staff; the school's ethos; their children's enjoyment; and the good leadership and management of the school. There were very few concerns from parents and carers. Inspection findings confirmed the many positives expressed by parents and carers.

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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 71 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	82	7	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	79	8	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	25	66	13	34	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	71	11	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	68	12	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	24	63	13	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	53	18	47	0	0	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)	21	55	17	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	24	63	13	34	0	0	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	53	18	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	45	21	55	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	50	19	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	27	71	11	29	0	0	0	0

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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



29 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorland Infant School, Milton Keynes MK6 4ND

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember how polite and well behaved you all were and how joyfully you all sang in assembly. You and your parents and carers told us that Moorland is a good school, and we agree. These are the things we found that your school does well.

- You all get off to a good start in Reception and continue to make good progress through the school. You achieve well by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You all enjoy learning and teachers give you interesting work to do.
- Your behaviour is good and you are sensible and know how to keep safe.
- You really enjoy and benefit from the many activities, clubs, visits and visitors, such as country dancing, multi-skills, and French club.
- Those of you who join the school other than at the usual time or who speak very little or no English settle in very well and make good progress.
- Your school cares for you well and teaches you much about how to be healthy and to care for others.
- Your headteacher and all the staff work very well together as a team to make sure that the school is a very safe, secure and fun place to learn.

These are the things we have identified for staff and the governing body to improve.

- Your attendance has improved but it can be even better if you avoid taking holidays in term-time.
- Help those of you who can do more challenging work to reach higher levels in reading and writing.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future. You can all help by continuing to work really hard.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace
Lead inspector

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