



Moorside Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114050
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279300
Inspection dates 2 February 2006 to 3 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Moira Fitzpatrick

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Chester Road
School category	Community		Moorside
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Consett, County Durham
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01207 509724
Number on roll	128	Fax number	01207 509724
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ian Penrose
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Janet Wrightson

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 2 February 2006 - 3 February 2006	Inspection number 279300
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and has seen a significant decline in numbers since the last inspection, mainly as a result of housing clearance in the area. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also above average. This includes a number of pupils whose behavioural difficulties have had a significant impact on the school. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The attainment of children when they start school is well below what is typical for children who are four. The school holds the following awards: a School Achievement Award, the Healthy Schools Award, the Quality Mark for Basic Skills and the National Clean Air Gold Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors differ from the school's view that its overall effectiveness is good. They judge it to be satisfactory and to give satisfactory value for money, because teaching and learning are satisfactory and so is pupils' achievement. By Year 6, pupils reach standards that are slightly below average and all groups have made satisfactory progress from their low starting points when they joined the school. However, teachers' guidance to pupils does not make enough use of assessment information, nor does it give them enough direction on how to improve their work to help them make better progress. Pupils' personal development is good, because of the opportunities they have to make a contribution to the community and because they are well cared for by teachers. Attendance is improving but still below average. Standards and provision in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, but this phase of the school has not been developed to make the most efficient use of expertise and resources for the benefit of the children. Since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress, most notably in raising standards by Year 6. However, difficulties in behaviour management in recent years, which have caused some parents to feel distanced from the school, and long-term staff absence have slowed the school's development in some areas. While leadership and management are satisfactory, the role of subject leaders is too limited to allow them to make a full contribution to the school's development. Given the expertise of the acting headteacher and the commitment of staff and governors, the school is securely placed to continue to improve.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards at the end of the Foundation Stage by sharing planning and resources more closely together so that children's progress continues unbroken from Nursery to the Reception class.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment, target setting and feedback, so that pupils learn and achieve as well as they can.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so they have better opportunities to monitor the work of the school and play a fuller part in promoting its improvement.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils whose poor attendance adversely affects their learning.
- Improve relations with those parents who feel distanced from the school and unable to support its efforts to help their children to succeed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6 they reach average standards in science, and slightly below average in English and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily since the last inspection, and current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach realistic but challenging targets set for them in national tests.

By the end of Year 2 standards are close to average in reading, writing and mathematics. A decline in test performance in the previous two years was due to the proportion of pupils in both years who had significant learning difficulties, and to the impact of teacher absence in one year. Pupils now in Year 2 are on course to exceed last year's performance and to meet the targets that have been set for them. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children do not reach the goals set for their learning, though they have made satisfactory progress from their low starting points. Many still have weaknesses in language and mathematical development when they start Year 1. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as others towards the targets they are well supported to reach.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They learn to accept responsibility from an early age and older pupils show an ability to take initiatives, such as organising a regular school disco. Pupils take their roles as monitors and Buddies very seriously, so that they contribute strongly to the smooth running, harmony and safety of the school. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and clearly enjoy of their learning, though a small minority still need support to manage their behaviour. The very high rate of exclusions in the last school year has reduced this year as more pupils have learned to manage their behaviour and conform to the school's rules. Despite improvement this year, attendance is still below average, because of the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils. Pupils adopt safe practices and healthy-eating habits and are keen to participate in sport and fitness activities run by the school. By Year 6, pupils have mature personal and social skills and are well equipped for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers make good use of their subject knowledge to teach basic skills in English and mathematics, so that pupils make steady progress in these subjects. Teaching in English has improved this year as a result of involvement in a local schools' project to improve writing. Planning to capture the interest of boys is clearly increasing both their enjoyment of literacy lessons and their work rate. Teachers' management of behaviour is good and contributes well to the calm and purposeful atmosphere found in all classrooms. Pupils say that behaviour has improved in the last year; that they are able to listen better in class, and that disruptive children are dealt with. Pupils' concentration in lessons is good. They listen closely and work well in pairs or small groups to help each other learn. They enjoy learning best from the many practical and first-hand experiences that teachers provide. While teaching promotes satisfactory progress for all groups of pupils, teachers' use of assessment is not sharp enough. Their planning does not take enough account of

the different needs of pupils, and the targets set are not always demanding enough or linked to teachers' regular marking of pupils' work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets requirements and is satisfactory overall. Teachers have responded well to national initiatives to develop areas of the curriculum in ways that match the interests of pupils. A good range after-school activities, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. A weakness is the lack of after-school clubs for younger pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about safe and healthy lifestyles and to develop awareness of their role in the community. In the Foundation Stage, the Nursery and Reception teachers do not share their planning. As a result, the curriculum does not ensure continuity of experience and progression for those children who transfer to the Reception class. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory, though the school needs to review its criteria for placing pupils on the register. Currently too many of the pupils who are on the register do not need additional support for their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school's arrangements for health and safety and child protection are satisfactory. Care is good; pupils say they feel safe in school and that having Buddies in the playground has made it 'a better place'. They are confident that teachers will look after them if they are unwell or upset and will deal with any bullying. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is satisfactory and parents are involved in supporting them in their learning. However, some parents, especially those who have children with emotional or behavioural difficulties, feel that the school could do more to involve them and inform them more quickly when problems arise. Support for all pupils on how to improve their work is satisfactory, because teachers do not make enough use of the assessment information they have when planning or when giving pupils advice on how to do better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher is providing strong and effective leadership for the school by continuing the school's development. She works closely with colleagues to ensure that all pupils are on course to meet their learning targets for the year. School evaluation procedures are satisfactory, though the role of subject leaders does not involve them enough in identifying what the school needs to do to raise standards. Governors have worked closely with the school to support improvements to behaviour in recent years. However, their first-hand knowledge of the school is weak, and improving this is one of their priorities this year. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall,

but with good improvement in standards at the end of Year 6. Some developments have been slowed in recent years by serious behaviour problems and long-term absence of staff. Parents are consulted about improvements to the school, particularly with regard to pupils' behaviour. This has caused problems with some parents, who found it difficult to accept the school's stance on improving behaviour. At present some parents feel distanced from the school and unable to support their children's learning. Given the expertise of the acting headteacher and the commitment of staff, the school is soundly placed to continue to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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4 February 2006

Dear Children

Thank you very much for giving us such a warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and meeting you to talk about your school.

Here are some of the things we liked about your school:

most of you behave really well in lessons. We think that the few who are still having some difficulties are getting better, so keep it up

you work hard in your lessons by listening closely and then getting on with your work when the teacher asks you to. You are all good at helping each other with work too. That was very nice to see

we were really pleased to see you taking on so many responsibilities and helping the school to run smoothly. Well done! It was very good to hear how much the playground Buddies and Mini-buds are appreciated

some of you told us that sometimes your work is too hard or too easy. We agree and have asked your school to do something about this

your good attendance shows that most of you enjoy school, but we think that a few of your friends need to come to school more often so they don't fall behind in their learning.

To make things better we have asked your school to:

make sure that teachers give you work that is at the right level for you and tell you what else you can do to improve, so that you can all make good progress

help those who don't come to school enough, so they can enjoy all the things that the rest of you do.

Thank you again for your help and our best wishes to you for the rest of the year.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Moira Fitzpatrick