



# Moat Farm Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 103948  
**Local Authority** Sandwell  
**Inspection number** 286818  
**Inspection date** 1 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mary Hamby HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Brookfields Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Oldbury
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-11		B68 9QR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 5521215
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	439	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 5441776
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Janet Wyer
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 October 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspector's of Schools.

## **Description of the school**

This large school contains pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Although there is a higher than average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, very few of them are at an early stage of English acquisition. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is greater than average, as is the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

Most pupils transfer from two other local schools. The majority transfer in Year 3, but a significant proportion of them do not enter the school until the start of Year 4.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an excellent school that can be proud of its achievements. The headteacher leads the school extremely well and his vision for its success is shared by staff and governors. The strong teamwork by all involved creates a consistently caring and friendly atmosphere in which pupils feel valued and do outstandingly well. The school is expertly managed and gives very good value for money. Resources are used efficiently and plans are checked scrupulously to ensure that they are being implemented effectively. An outstanding aspect of school leadership and management is the meticulous way that the school evaluates every aspect of its work. No stone is left unturned and, despite its success, there is a clear agenda for further improvement.

Standards are consistently above average and the proportions of pupils reaching higher levels in tests are well above average. All the pupils achieve very well in reading, mathematics and science, but some of the younger pupils do not make enough progress in writing. This is because the teaching does not always provide enough opportunity for writing, give pupils consistent feedback or engage them in evaluating their own work. Other than this, the teaching is good overall with some outstanding practice in Year 6. Lessons are lively occasions where staff use a range of resources effectively so that pupils enjoy learning and achieve their potential. The staff team are developing their already good curriculum to ensure that it responds to the needs of the pupils. The effective way that they plan the curriculum helps the pupils to make links between subjects and reinforces their learning of basic skills.

The care and guidance provided for pupils are excellent. The strong sense of community within the school encourages all members of staff to share this important responsibility. The firm focus on teaching pupils to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles helps the pupils to make sensible choices in their own lives. They feel well cared for and are developing into responsible youngsters who make a good contribution to their community.

The pupils say they enjoy school enormously and this is clear to see by the way they respond in lessons, play together and have fun. Their good personal development is evident in the friendly way that they treat each other and visitors. They are keen to find out about the world around them and are developing a good appreciation of culture locally and further a field. Attendance has improved considerably in the last few years and is now close to the national average.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in writing, particularly for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, by ensuring there are sufficient opportunities for writing, marking is consistently helpful, and involves the pupils themselves in becoming more critical of their own work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils from a variety of backgrounds achieve exceptionally well and meet the challenging targets that are set for them. Parents' views that 'learning is fantastic' and 'the school's focus is on motivation' is clear in the way that the pupils respond to the targets that are set for them. Standards in national test results for the past few years have been well above average, significantly so in science. More capable pupils make outstanding progress because expectations are high and the teaching encourages them to think hard about their learning. Progress through Year 6 is particularly rapid because the highly effective teaching captures the interests of all the pupils. However, achievement in writing is not as good as other subjects, especially in the lower school. In Year 3 and Year 4 the pupils do not sustain their writing to sufficient length or have enough awareness of matching the style of their writing to their intended audience.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The high expectation of pupils' achievement in lessons has a beneficial impact on their personal development. The pupils know that they are expected to behave well and to be responsible members of the community and they rise to these challenges well. Many of them enjoy extra responsibilities, such as Playground Activity Leaders (PALS) and carry these roles out diligently and thoughtfully. The pupils enjoy the broad range of activities to keep fit and lead healthy lifestyles and talk convincingly about such issues.

Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils are keen to celebrate each other's achievements and have a clear appreciation of a diverse range of cultural issues. Some of the pupils are starting to understand the advantages of reflecting on issues before venturing their opinion, but others do not yet have this critical awareness. Most of the pupils talk enthusiastically about the targets that they are hoping to achieve in English and mathematics. However, the younger pupils are not sure about what they must do to achieve their targets, especially in writing.

Attendance is improving and is now close to the average. The management team are assiduous in following up unexplained absences and are successful in promoting good punctuality.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good teaching helps pupils to enjoy learning and achieve very well. Most of the teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well with clear objectives. The sharp focus of lessons helps the pupils to know what is expected of them and promotes an ethos of hard work. All the pupils are encouraged to contribute

to lessons and this gives the more reticent pupils confidence to venture opinions and take an active part in their own learning. However, there are fewer opportunities for them to reflect on what has been said and respond to each other's views. Lessons are interesting because the staff use resources very effectively and this helps the pupils to concentrate well and enjoy learning. Assessment is developing well, but there are some inconsistencies in the marking of writing. In some classes the pupils are given superb critical comments on their work which spurs them on, but in others the comments are too vague and so the pupils are not sure what they must do to improve to achieve a better standard.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum is planned well to motivate the pupils to do their best. One of the recent school priorities to develop topics of interest helps the pupils to make links across subjects and understand key ideas. The pupils enjoy the curriculum enrichment afternoons and say how much they learn about a wide range of cultural and sporting topics. The opportunity for pupils to visit places of interest improves their understanding of subjects such as history and helps them to appreciate their own and more distant environments. The curriculum plans for more capable pupils are very well tailored to their needs and so these pupils do exceptionally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well by a curriculum that motivates them to achieve all they can and enjoy school. A start has been made to identify opportunities for writing of different styles in various subjects, but this is still at an early stage.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's effective links with the local infant schools helps pupils to settle in very quickly when they start at Moat Farm. The pupils feel safe and well cared for and so they should. Procedures for safeguarding them are good and the pupils themselves are frequently consulted on issues which might affect their enjoyment of school. PALS keep a watchful eye on behaviour at playtimes and this helps recreation times to run smoothly. Pupils know where to turn if they are worried, saying for example, 'all the teachers are kind and listen to us'. Parents are pleased with the level of care their children receive and express very positive views of this aspect of the school's work. The school looks after its vulnerable pupils very well and so these pupils do well in lessons and develop self-confidence. Systems for tracking progress are very well established and effective in identifying the achievement of different groups.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher provides the school with an outstanding model of effective leadership. His commitment to the school, clear vision and drive for improvement have seen standards rise year on year. Self-evaluation is extremely robust and, despite the

excellent quality of existing provision, shows no sign of complacency. Leadership skills are developing very well amongst other staff and the senior team provide them with a good model to work towards. The combination of present leadership skills and its track record of success indicate that the school is extremely well placed to continue along its successful path.

The school is very well managed and efficient use is made of all resources at its disposal. The governors provide the school with effective support and are becoming increasingly able to offer critical challenge to the management team. The school consults well with parents, through such opportunities as the parent council, and takes account of their views. Other interested parties are also consulted and the school makes good use of advice and expertise available locally.

Overall, as one parent commented, 'the school does a wonderful job'.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to tell you about my visit to your school and to thank you all for making my visit so enjoyable. I thought that you were very well behaved and was pleased to see that you enjoyed your lessons. I was only in school for a day and so it was very helpful for me to hear your views and to read what your parents had to say. Please thank them for responding to the questionnaire, which has been very valuable to me in understanding their points of view.

It is clear that you have much to be proud of at Moat Farm. Your headteacher and all the staff work very hard to ensure that you have an excellent school where each and every one of you is a valued member of the community. The governors and staff work together very well and have high expectations for you. They make sure that you are given interesting things to do and activities that really make you think. This helps you to reach high standards in your work, especially in science. They also make sure that you feel safe and happy and are encouraging you all to become good citizens of the future. They provide you with lots of opportunities to have your say and make a contribution to school life.

Your headteacher and the governors keep a close eye on all the things that happen in school and have very good plans to make your school even better. The reports that they write give a very clear picture of all the many good things in school and the few things that would make school even better. They know that some of the pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 need to improve their writing. You could help with this. If you are in these year groups you must always try your hardest to write clearly, and keep your audience in mind. If you are in Year 5 and Year 6 you should keep up your good work so that the younger pupils can gain inspiration from you. Good luck!