

Moorlands Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135030
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	294257
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Ann Sharpe

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	598
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Laird
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Leeson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Moorland Road Mount Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD3 3UH
Telephone number	01484 222197
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The majority of pupils attending this large school are White British although an increasing number are from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds, particularly Pakistani. About one fifth of the pupils speak English as an additional language and a few are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school opened in September 2005, following the amalgamation of Outlane Infant School and Outlane Junior School. A new school building is currently under construction in the school grounds. The headteacher retires at the end of this school year and a new headteacher takes over in September 2007. The school holds the Investors in People award, an Effective Early Learning award and two Healthy Schools awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Moorlands Primary is a good school, providing good value for money. Its modest view of itself as a satisfactory school is understandable, considering the short period of time since the amalgamation and the lack of reliable data available. It is a happy and welcoming school, where pupils attend regularly, behave well, enjoy their education and achieve well from their starting points. Most parents think highly of the school and many take up the good opportunities they have to play an active part in their children's education. The school has productive links with other schools and with the community which help it to cater for pupils' varying learning needs.

Good standards and quality in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes) ensure that pupils get off to a flying start. They build very well on this in Years 1 and 2 so that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Although standards are average by the end of Year 6, they are showing clear signs of rising beyond this, because leaders and managers have put effective strategies in place to drive up standards. Standards in writing have been a concern in all classes but they are now improving as a result of teachers' united efforts to provide more exciting opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills. The school is aware that the more capable pupils could sometimes achieve more across all subjects and the firm action taken is starting to reverse this trend. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the sensitive and caring support they receive.

The key to the school's successful start is the headteacher's outstanding leadership. She has united staff and governors from two very different schools so that they work together to do the best they can to improve the quality of pupils' education. The school runs very smoothly and this is a significant achievement considering the large number of pupils on roll and the potential disruption of working so close to a construction site. The headteacher has very good support from the senior management team who share her vision and her determination to drive up standards by Year 6. This, along with a strong governing body and the establishment of effective leadership teams, indicates that the school has good capacity to improve in the future under the leadership of the new headteacher.

This is a school that does not shy away from problems. Although some groups of pupils have not always made the progress they should, they are now catching up quickly as a result of improvements in teaching and learning. As governors commented, the headteacher ensures accountability for every teacher. Consequently, teaching and learning are now good, overall. Nevertheless, the school is not complacent and knows that there remain pockets of teaching and learning that do not yet match up to the high standard expected.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being stands them in good stead for the future. They know how to keep themselves healthy and safe and the school councils give them a growing understanding of democracy. As a result of a good standard of care and a good quality curriculum, pupils grow in self-esteem and confidence. The school does not take fullest advantage of pupils' good attitudes, however, by making sure that they always know how to reach their challenging learning targets, especially in reading and mathematics.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure more consistency in teaching and learning across the school, so that all pupils achieve as well as they can, especially the more capable.

- Involve pupils more fully in their own learning and progress, so that they always know what to do to reach challenging learning targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although children enter Reception classes with below average attainment, the good progress they make enables them to start Year 1 with the skills expected for their age. They make at least good progress in Years 1 and 2, and teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Although pupils' progress between Years 3 and 6 has often slowed down in the past, there has been a determined effort to put this right by improving teaching and learning. The school missed its targets for the Year 6 national test results in 2006 because they were based on unrealistic expectations of how quickly pupils could catch up on lost ground. Pupils currently in Year 6, however, are on track to meet their challenging targets and recently unconfirmed test results in English and mathematics indicate that standards have started to improve. Although standards are average by Year 6, this represents good progress for these pupils, who have had a disrupted education since they started in Year 3. Writing has been a weaker area of attainment for pupils of all ages. As a result of a strong focus on improving pupils' skills, however, their progress is accelerating. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of close attention to their needs. The more capable pupils, however, could sometimes do better, if teachers expected more of them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, along with good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, help them to achieve well. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds work and play together in harmony. They enjoy school and attendance is good. Pupils willingly take on many responsibilities, such as charitable fundraising, and are proud of their achievements. Year 5 play leaders, for example, explained how they set a good example to other children. Older pupils explained that they would like even more opportunities to get involved in after-school clubs. Although the school councils are fairly new and still evolving, pupils say that they feel listened to. They were especially pleased to play a genuine part in the appointment of their new headteacher. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to keep healthy and safe is good, reflecting the national awards the school has received. Many enjoy sporting activities and select the healthy options available for school lunches. They have a good knowledge of the local community, gained as a result of strong links with community services. This, along with good progress in basic skills, ensures that pupils' future economic prospects are good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Enthusiastic and positive teachers prepare lessons carefully and ensure that pupils behave well and try hard. They are good role models and take every opportunity to further pupils' personal development and well-being. Particularly good teaching for pupils in the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 helps them to learn quickly. Although teaching and learning have improved recently, especially in Years 3 to 6, there remain pockets of inconsistency. Slower learning

sometimes occurs when teachers do not move lessons on quickly enough and expect too little of pupils, particularly the more capable ones. Teachers have started to involve pupils more fully in their own learning and progress. Although this is helping to raise standards in writing, pupils know little about how to reach individual learning targets in reading and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Recent revisions to the curriculum are enabling pupils to start to make interesting links between their work in different subjects, and there are clear signs that this is accelerating their progress, for example in writing. Good opportunities for enrichment, such as the recent visit to Shibden Hall by Year 1 pupils, add interest and excitement. Similarly, visits to school by a wide range of community workers give pupils an understanding of the world of work. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology are improving as a result of a recent investment in resources and teachers' good use of them. Staff in the Foundation Stage work hard to ensure that children's outdoor curriculum is not interrupted by the building works. The curriculum is adjusted well to meet the specific needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is not always matched tightly to the needs of the more capable pupils, however, and this sometimes holds them back.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of the pupils, including meeting the latest requirements on protecting and safeguarding them. Induction for children starting school and arrangements for transferring to secondary schools are good. The learning mentor provides good support for pupils needing help to manage their behaviour. Sensitive support staff ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve in line with their capabilities. There is good bilingual support for pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English. The site manager works diligently to ensure that pupils learn in a clean and safe environment, and to minimise the potential problems of having building works so close to where pupils are being educated. Staff now keep a closer eye on pupils' progress and take swift action, when necessary, to prevent them from falling behind. Guidance to pupils through marking their work is inconsistent between classes, however, as is guidance about how to reach individual challenging learning targets, especially in reading and mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's outstanding leadership has steered everyone successfully through the challenge of amalgamating two schools. In a fairly short time, she has united staff and governors, so that they pull together to deal quickly with problems and are focused well on raising standards. The two deputy headteachers are enthusiastic, skilled, and equally committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. They play a major part in improving the school and in supporting other teachers. Consequently, the leadership teams work well together to enable the school to put its action plans into place. This puts the school in a strong position for making sure that the current trend of improvement continues in the future. The role of subject leaders is developing well, but there is further work to do in relation to ensuring that subjects always link together successfully. Governors keep a very close eye on all aspects of pupils' education,

including their welfare and safety during this potentially unsettling period. Financial management is very good.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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

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

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for talking to us and for answering all our questions so thoughtfully and sensibly. Your behaviour was good both in lessons and around the school.

We found that your school is a good school because adults make sure that you enjoy coming, work hard and learn a lot in most lessons. They care about you all equally and make sure that you are safe and happy. We were pleased to see how well they prepare you for starting in the Reception classes and for transferring to secondary schools.

Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting, and it was good to see how much your writing has improved recently because you have had interesting things to write about. It looks as if you have done well in your recent assessments and national tests, and you have every reason to feel proud. Well done!

The main reason why things are getting better all the time is because your headteacher and deputy headteachers know what is best for you. They help all the other adults to work together as a team to help you to learn. It is amazing that everything is so bright, clean, calm and happy, when there are noisy things happening outside all the time and when your school building is to be pulled down when the new one is ready.

Although your school is good, we have asked your new headteacher and other staff to make sure that you learn just as quickly in all lessons and classes. We also want your teachers to make sure that you know what your own learning targets are, not just in writing, and work with you to make sure that you reach them. You can help by continuing to try hard in lessons and by asking teachers about your learning targets.

We hope that you enjoy working with your new headteacher and that it will not be too long before you can move into your new school building.