

Moorgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105171
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	308785
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Elizabeth Godman

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 on roll	
School	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elaine Sherrington
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Entwistle Street Bolton Lancashire BL2 2RH
Telephone number	01204 333477
Fax number	01204 333478

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school serves an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. Most pupils live on the housing estate which surrounds the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. A greater than average number of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the number with statements of special educational needs is also above average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school has experienced a number of staff changes over recent years, but staffing is now more stable.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good and rapidly improving school. Parents are pleased with the quality of education provided. Dynamic and committed leadership is securing consistently good teaching, so that pupils make good progress. Senior leaders and managers have a clear and shared understanding of how the school can be further improved and work together as an effective team, with 'children at the heart' of all they do.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. They enter Key Stage 1 with below average skills and by the end of Key Stage 2 they have reached average standards overall, although a little below average in English and science. Lessons are planned well with varied activities to sustain pupils' interest and enjoyment. Relationships are positive, resulting in good behaviour. This helps pupils to make good progress in their learning. Accurate assessment ensures work is matched to the different learning needs of pupils in the class. Teachers ask questions well, helping pupils to think. Although some marking of pupils' work is helpful, this is not consistent and so not all pupils know what they need to do in order to improve.

Attendance is well below the national average. The school is working hard, with some success, to raise parents' awareness of the importance of regular attendance. However, there are still too many families whose children have poor attendance records. Pupils' good progress is supported by a well planned and interesting curriculum which is relevant to their needs and interests. Pupils have a good awareness of the need to stay safe, fit and healthy and the breakfast club, varied choice of school lunches and the good range of sports and physical activities help them to achieve this. Pupils work and play well together, showing care and consideration for each other and their environment. As a result they leave the school with personal, social and academic skills that prepare them well for the future.

Following the strong lead of the headteacher, staff take good care of the pupils and take suitable steps to ensure their safety. Parents agree that their children are safe and happy in school. A range of good partnerships with a variety of agencies and with parents helps pupils to settle in quickly. Effective steps have been taken to secure improvement since the last inspection and this has helped pupils to progress well. This gives the school good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage are taught well and so progress well in their learning. Activities are carefully planned to provide good stimulation and interest. Children in the Nursery thoroughly enjoyed working in the 'Mary, Mary' garden and those in Reception were fascinated by a giant snail. Most enter the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age. Some show marked difficulties with communication, language, social and independence skills when they first join. These children are initially slow to settle and to participate, but adults and other children extend a warm welcome and provide positive models to gradually coax them along. By the time they join Reception, children have made good progress in all the areas of learning. In Reception, this rate of progress continues and dialogue with the teacher is especially effective in challenging and extending children's language and mathematical learning, particularly of the more able. However, despite generally good progress in the areas of learning, difficulties

persist with social and communication skills for some children. Overall children leave Reception with skills which are still below those expected for their age. The good leadership in the Foundation Stage is effective in securing ongoing improvement in provision and in children's learning. Staff have accurately identified that improved opportunities for learning outdoors are needed to enable children to apply and extend their skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' attendance.
- Improve the consistency and quality of marking of work to give pupils clear guidance as to how it can be improved.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From below average starting points at the beginning of Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress during the key stage in reading, writing and mathematics, due to the effective teaching they receive. As a result, standards are just below average by the end of the key stage, and the gap between standards in mathematics and those nationally is very small. Good progress continues in Key Stage 2, so that pupils reach average standards in mathematics, with standards slightly below this in English and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. Some pupils whose attendance is poor do not achieve as highly as they can due to missed opportunities to practise and develop their skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in school and pupils are polite, friendly and eager to talk to visitors. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and like the practical activities and games which make learning fun. They are keen to learn, have good attitudes to work and behave well. Some pupils' attendance is not as regular as it should be. There are too many families taking holidays during term-time and there is a small group of persistently poor attenders. Pupils' social skills are well developed. For example, during the whole school mid-morning breakfast time they relate well to others in the class. Spiritual, moral and social development is good, although pupils have limited awareness of the cultural diversity within today's society. The school council is involved in decision making and has helped put together a bid for funding to improve the playground, whilst the Eco-club carefully plants and tends the school's memorial garden. Preparation for pupils' future lives is good. For example, all pupils learn to handle money when they make and sell items during enterprise week.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

From the outset of lessons, pupils are generally clear about what they are going to learn and what they have to do to succeed. Just occasionally, expectations are less clear and pupils are unsure about how to improve their work. Staff keep a close check on each pupil's achievement and so provide work that is neither too hard nor too easy, or give pupils any extra help needed to improve their progress. Teachers are consistently effective in managing the class well. Pupils respond rapidly to signals from the teacher that they are required to stop what they are doing

and to listen. Effective support from teaching assistants allows pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate as fully as possible in all lessons. Good teaching in small groups helps those with gaps in their knowledge or skills to make good progress. Teachers work hard to provide stimulating activities and resources to interest the pupils. Questioning is effective in encouraging pupils to think and the variety of teaching approaches and opportunities to talk with a partner are used well to consolidate learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills which they use well to support their learning in other subjects. However, the school recognises the need to develop a more investigative approach to science in order to raise standards and pupils' achievement further. The good programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education is at the heart of recent changes to make learning more exciting and meaningful, as well as to promote pupils' personal and emotional development. The good range of out-of-school clubs, visits and visitors and the teaching of German in Years 3 to 6 effectively extend pupils' learning experiences and help them develop their talents and skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and receive additional personal support when it is needed. The great majority of parents and pupils agree. Systems for ensuring pupils' health, safety and well-being meet current requirements. Pupils feel safe and secure in school; they say that this is a happy school and any rare instances of bullying or harassment are dealt with quickly. Relationships are good; adults place great emphasis on developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils know 'there is always someone there for them'. Well organised systems ensure early identification of those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very small number of pupils at the early stages of learning English. This enables these pupils to be fully involved in activities and to achieve well. Outside agencies provide valuable extra support. Good use is made of information about pupils' progress to provide the right level of support or challenge. Targets are used effectively in lessons, and although there are some examples of good marking, this is not yet used consistently throughout the school to show pupils how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's very strong direction and commitment to securing the best for the school's pupils has resulted in rapid improvement in the quality of provision for pupils' personal development since the last inspection. This has helped pupils to make good progress in all aspects of their learning. The headteacher and deputy have very high expectations as to what can be achieved and this is beginning to create a strong sense of purpose amongst all staff. Although developing well, middle leaders have yet to be fully effective in contributing to school improvement. Increasingly challenging targets are set each year and this is raising standards. Accurate self-evaluation has resulted in a clear understanding of strengths and areas for improvement and focused plans are in place to rectify identified weaknesses. A strong commitment to equality of opportunity and careful deployment of staff enables full participation

and good progress of all pupils. Resources are used well to help pupils learn effectively. Governors show a strong commitment to the work of the school and are highly supportive, but also ask questions to promote further improvement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Inspection of Moorgate Primary School, Bolton, BL2 2RH

On behalf of the inspection team, I should like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed visiting your lessons, joining you at lunchtime and talking to you about your school.

We found that your school is good and improving all the time. You told us that you enjoy school. We thought you were very polite and well behaved. We think your teachers work well together to take good care of you and help you to stay safe. Your school is teaching you to help other people and we saw you doing this well as helpers at lunchtime, on the school council and in your Eco-school work. You know about healthy living and enjoy the breakfast, lunches and sports sessions. Your lessons are helping you to make good progress. We think that your teachers are identifying accurately the areas where you need more help and provide you with the right work so that you make good progress in all your subjects. You particularly enjoy those lessons where you have things to investigate and where you can talk to other pupils about what you are learning.

We think that your headteacher and teachers have identified the right things to make the school a better place for you to learn and we have asked them to do two things to improve your learning:

- make sure that everyone attends school as often as they should
- give all of you clearer guidance when marking your work about how to improve it.

You can help by coming to school regularly, continuing to do your best and working hard. We feel sure you will try to do all these things.