

# Moulton School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111052
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310489
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Bamber

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr G Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Coulbeck
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Moulton Northwich Cheshire CW9 8PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01606 592182
<b>Fax number</b>	01606 862548

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement especially in Key Stage 1, and particularly that of the more able pupils; how well pupils understand how to improve their work; the quality and impact of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from: national published data; the school's own documentation; observation of the school at work; discussions with senior leaders, parents, governors and pupils; parental questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Pupils who attend this average sized school come from a wide range of backgrounds but a higher proportion than normal come from relatively advantaged homes. Very few are from any other than White British heritage with a very small proportion who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have a free school meal or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has gained a number of awards. These include the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold, the Activemark and two Eco Awards.

## 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 outstanding school that provides excellent value for money. Because it is so well led and managed, pupils' achievements are extremely good, they behave impeccably and develop into very concerned young citizens. Pupils know they are well looked after and they feel safe in the knowledge that if they have any concerns they will be listened to and if necessary, action will be taken.

Many pupils report how much they enjoy lessons and that they 'learn lots when we do practical things'. They do indeed have many opportunities to work in pairs and teams to carry out investigations and to solve problems. These characteristics in lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' very high standards and outstanding achievement, especially in mathematics and science. For example, last year the overall progress pupils made between Year 2 and Year 6 was in the top 10% nationally. In science, it was in the top 2%.

All staff work diligently and successfully to provide pupils with a rich curriculum. In the classroom, there is a good balance between traditional teaching and activities that pupils devise and carry out themselves. The school has made excellent improvement since the last inspection in its use of information and communication technology (ICT). This is now very creative and adds much value to pupils' learning. For example, in most classes, teachers use headset microphones to clarify what they say, helping pupils to follow instructions and to promote better understanding. Together with daily, focused phonics lessons, this helps pupils to overcome any weaknesses in their spelling.

Parents and pupils talk very positively about the range and quality of after-school clubs and the visits pupils enjoy. There is a keen realisation among staff and pupils of the benefits of eating sensibly and of taking regular exercise. The democratically convened school council has a powerful voice in the school and has recently lobbied their local Member of Parliament. They asked him to use his influence on the authorities for free fruit to be made available to pupils in the junior years as well as to the infants. This request has been passed to the relevant Minister at Westminster! This is just one example of the positive influence of the pupils' representatives. As well as membership of the council, pupils take on a range of responsibilities around the school. This even includes Reception children who as members of the 'Eco team' have responsibility for switching lights off when their room is vacated. All these attributes ensure that pupils' personal development is outstanding and that they are provided with skills that prepare them extremely well for their further schooling and for life.

Excellent teaching ensures that pupils know exactly where they are in their learning and what they need to do next to improve even further. They are helped greatly in this by being set clear, challenging targets and through well focused marking. At all levels, leaders and managers promote high expectations which result in excellent standards and provision. The special educational needs coordinator organises very effective support and, with the deputy headteacher, interventions for pupils at risk of underachieving or who are more vulnerable than most. Very skilful and sensitive support assistants ensure that pupils catch up and gain confidence. As a result, most of these pupils attain at least expected levels by Year 6. The special provision for the small number of pupils who have physical disabilities is also excellent, enabling them to play a full part in all the school offers and to achieve as well as their peers.

The quality of assessment and the way in which the school tracks pupils' progress is very effective and promotes outstanding achievement. An innovative assessment method was

observed in a Year 5 literacy lesson, when pupils used a handset to log their responses to questions. The individual responses were then displayed on the whiteboard and subsequently printed out. This meant that at a glance the teacher could identify which pupils needed further support in using conjunctions appropriately.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work harmoniously and their leadership and management skills complement each other extremely well. In tandem, they are responsible for much that is excellent in the school. High on their list of priorities is the continuous professional development of all staff. This results in excellence at all levels. This is not to say that other leaders do not make telling contributions to the outstanding provision evident in pupils' curriculum, in their personal development and in their excellent care, support and academic guidance. The school's administrative officer and governors play a key role in ensuring excellent value for money, liaising with parents and in managing the school's finances prudently.

Leaders at all levels who work in the school have a clear view of the quality of the school's performance. Such accurate evaluations enable them to plan precisely for further improvement. The school is not complacent. It has recognised that there are some gaps in the provision for the Reception class, namely that there is no dedicated outside area, for sole use, in which children can learn and play. Governors also acknowledge, correctly, that they need to be more rigorous in overseeing aspects of the school's provision through a keener knowledge and regular reviews of the school's improvement plan and of its self-evaluation.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress in Reception because they are well taught and supported. They settle into school quickly because the partnership between parents and staff is strong and enables children to start school confidently. For the most part, provision is good. Children enjoy their independence and make choices about the activities they join in. The degree of guidance they receive from adults is well balanced and their progress is checked on a regular basis. They enter the class with skills which are typical for their age and achieve well so that most either meet or exceed the targets set for them by the time they enter Year 1. However, because they have no dedicated outside area, easily accessible from their classroom, the curriculum is somewhat restricted. This means that while good, the overall provision is not outstanding.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that children in Reception have an outside area in which to learn and play, so that they have full access to the early years curriculum.
- Improve governors' awareness of the school's plans for improvement and of its self-evaluation.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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

### The quality of provision

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

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Inspection of Moulton School, Northwich CW9 8PD

Thank you for making my recent visit to your excellent school such an enjoyable day. You were all very friendly and many of you explained very clearly to me how much you like the school and enjoy your learning. I can see why! Your lessons are exciting and you have lots of opportunities to share your ideas and to work together in teams to solve problems.

I was most impressed with your teachers' use of headsets and with Year 5 pupils using handsets to answer questions. Your parents and many of you were keen to tell me how well looked after you are and how safe you feel. I think that the way the older children look after the younger ones and organise their play time helps a lot with this. You all seem to know that fruit and vegetables are good for you. Isn't it great that the school council has written to your MP to try to get free fruit for the juniors too?

You are taught extremely well and make really good progress through the school, especially in mathematics and science. You get on really well together because all your teachers encourage you to behave so well and help you to take care of each other. You told me about the many clubs you can join after school and how much you enjoyed your residential visit to Wales.

The adults who run the school do a wonderful job and take great care to make sure that you all learn very well and reach really high standards. Even though your school is excellent now, your headteacher and staff want the school to be even better. I have asked them to do two things to help with this.

- To provide the children in the Reception class with an outside area especially for them and right outside their classroom, so that they can learn and play in it easily.
- For the governors of the school to know a bit more about what the school thinks about itself and about the plans it has to improve.

I wish you well in everything you do.