

# Inspection of a good school: Moorlands Junior School

Chantry Mead Road, Bath, Somerset BA2 2DE

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Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

## **Outcome**

Moorlands Junior School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy school. Pupils feel safe and they say their teachers are always on hand to help them. Pupils say that bullying is not accepted. On the rare occasions it does happen, adults sort it out quickly.

Pupils and staff have positive relationships with each other. Pupils like the routines in place to help them learn. For example, they enjoy their early morning work and they say that this helps them get off to a calm and productive start to each day.

However, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Teachers are not adapting learning to pupils' needs, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means that pupils do not yet learn well in many subjects. Many pupils do not achieve their potential.

Pupils are polite, and most demonstrate good manners around school. Pupils say that pupils behave well most of the time but there are still occasions when other pupils interrupt learning time.

There are lots of opportunities to join in with sport, music, and clubs, and learn outdoors. This means that pupils learn about teamwork, gain confidence and have pride in belonging to the school community.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Since the school's previous inspection in 2015, the quality of education and pupils' behaviour had declined. The Trust has stabilised the school. The central trust team have a firm grasp of what needs to improve. School leaders have detailed plans in place to improve the quality of education pupils receive. Governors are using these plans to hold

leaders to account increasingly well. Parents and carers recognise that the school is settled after a particularly rocky time. Most are very positive about the recent improvements.

Standards in mathematics have not been high enough for some time. In recent weeks, leaders' actions are strengthening teachers' subject knowledge. This is helping teachers to think carefully about what to teach and when. This is already beginning to improve pupils' ability to complete calculations in mathematics. However, these emerging improvements in mathematics are not yet replicated in other subjects.

The school's curriculum is not well planned. Leaders have not ensured that there is a sharp enough focus on helping pupils to read and write as well as they should. Pupils who struggle to read accurately are beginning to catch up. However, these pupils do not read fluently yet. Leaders are clear about why writing is weak. However, plans to bring about improvements are only just starting. It is too early to see notable impact.

In other subjects, such as history, geography and science, pupils' learning is disjointed. This makes it difficult for pupils to know and remember more. Leaders are beginning to tackle this. Pupils really enjoy the 'wonder curriculum' that leaders have introduced. Nonetheless, the content of this curriculum does not cover the range of knowledge pupils should have.

Leaders are beginning to support teachers to use their assessments of what pupils already know. However, teachers do not routinely identify when pupils are stuck or when units of work do not deepen pupils' learning over time well enough.

The work of the new SEND leader is proving effective in identifying pupils' individualised needs. However, leaders' work to ensure that work meets pupils' learning needs is at its early stages. As a result, these pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Leaders' behaviour policy has established consistent expectations. This means that pupils usually listen and take part in their learning well. However, at times, teachers need to reinforce the school's expectations of behaviour. When learning is not matched closely to pupils' needs, pupils do not concentrate consistently well.

Leaders are beginning to put additional plans in place to remedy the shortfalls in the school's personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) curriculum. Aside from this, the school provides pupils with a rich set of activities to broaden their horizons beyond the classroom. For example, pupils take part in musical performances, represent their school in sports and charity events, and visit museums and galleries.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have strengthened the school's safeguarding systems. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of adults working at the school. Staff training is up to date. Staff apply their training well to keep pupils safe and they identify concerns quickly. Leaders responsible for safeguarding make timely referrals and work closely with

other professionals to ensure that they are doing all they can to minimise pupils' risk of harm. Leaders make sure that pupils know how to keep safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- For many subjects, the curriculum is not planned well. Pupils do not learn enough. Curriculum leaders need to develop their plans so that pupils' learning is coherently developed and sequenced in every subject.
- Pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders are addressing this head on. Pupils' needs are increasingly identified accurately but teachers are not routinely meeting them. Leaders need to ensure that teaching addresses pupils' learning well so that teachers meet their academic needs consistently.
- Previous weaknesses in the curriculum have led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' subject knowledge is not secure enough to ensure that children gain the knowledge they need in reading and writing. Pupils' gaps in their knowledge persist. Leaders need to ensure that teachers have strong subject knowledge so that pupils achieve consistently well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not use their assessments of what pupils can do well enough. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils in many subjects. Pupils who have previously underachieved do not catch up quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that teachers are adept at using all the information they have about what pupils know and understand to ensure that gaps in pupils' learning are removed.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Moorlands Junior School, to be good on 5–6 March 2015.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142716
<b>Local authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122362
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Nick Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Georgina Scott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.moorlands-school.org">www.moorlands-school.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Moorlands Junior School is federated with Moorlands Infant School. The schools opened in March 2017. The schools are part of The Bath and Mendip Partnership Trust.
- A headteacher of another school in the Trust is working at the school two days per week to provide leadership and curriculum support.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils about their work and school life. I held a meeting with three members of the local governing body. I also held a conversation with the chief executive officer from The Bath and Mendip Partnership Trust and met with the chair of the Trust. I held meetings with the learning partner and senior and middle leaders. I also met with members of the teaching staff.
- I reviewed a range of documentation including safeguarding information.
- I considered 70 responses to Parent View, and accompanying free-text comments, and 19 responses from the online staff survey.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, mathematics and history. This entailed discussions with subject leaders; visits to lessons; looking at examples of

children's work; discussions with teachers; discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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