



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**MOORLANDS SCHOOL
INTERIM INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Moorlands School

Full Name of School	Moorlands School
DfE Number	383/6002
EYFS Number	EY310999
Registered Charity Number	529216
Address	Moorlands School Foxhill Drive Weetwood Lane Leeds West Yorkshire LS16 5PF
Telephone Number	0113 278 5286
Fax Number	0113 203 3193
Email Address	info@moorlands-school.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr John Davies
Chairman of Governors	Mr Trevor Mulryne
Age Range	2 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	204
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (127 boys, 77 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 18 5-11: 97 3-5 (EYFS): 57 11-16: 32
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 204
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Wendy Cooper
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	15th March 2011 to 16th March 2011

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule for INTERIM inspections*. The inspection is a two-day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in March 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Moorlands School is a co-educational day school founded in 1898. The school was founded as a boys' school in Headingley, Leeds. In 1967 it relocated to Foxhills, a Victorian mansion, which stands within leafy grounds in the northern suburb of Weetwood. The school became a charitable trust in 1967 managed by a board of governors and became coeducational in 1981. Buildings have been added over the years including a sports hall and swimming pool. Since 2007, the intake age of pupils has extended from the age of three to the age of two. The Moorlands Diploma, a modular curricular programme for Years 7 and 8, has been developed and a pupils' school council set up.
- 1.2 The school is non-denominational with a 'family' ethos. It aims to develop every child's full potential in a happy, caring and friendly environment and to equip its pupils with a strong foundation for their future lives. The school has a total of 204 pupils. Of these, 127 are boys and 77 girls, and 75 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for pupils up to age five. Pupils live in the surrounding area and come from families with a variety of social, ethnic and economic backgrounds.
- 1.3 The school does not select by ability. Invitation to join the school is based on an evaluation that the school has the facilities and the expertise to meet the needs of each applicant. The analysis of standardised test scores shows that the ability profile of the school is above the national average, with a notable proportion of pupils having an ability that is far above average, and very few pupils having an ability that is below average. Thirty-two pupils receive support for learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Two pupils who do not have English as their first language receive support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used in the Early Years and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence is shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Kittens	Nursery
Squirrels	Nursery
Foxes	Nursery
Hedgehogs	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills

- 2.1 The breadth and quality of pupils' achievements is good. They are well educated in line with the school's aim to equip all children with appropriate skills, values and attitudes with which they can fulfil their potential in every area of school life. Pupils successfully develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across a wide range of subjects, helped by a strong grounding in basic numeracy and literacy. They develop good use of language, expressing themselves clearly in discussion, for example about the difference between mass and weight. Pupils write well-constructed stories and apply their mathematical skills, such as when using six-figure grid numbers to identify locations on a map. They use their wide range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively. Almost all pupils are fully engaged in their work, cooperate well with their peers, respond well to questions and are prepared to think for themselves. In this academic year, a large proportion of pupils have been awarded scholarships, including all-rounder, academic, music and arts scholarships, some to competitive senior schools. Other awards won reflect the diverse activities on offer. Pupils achieve highly in sport, including district or county area representation at football, cricket, netball, rugby, diving, karate, cross-country running and equestrianism. Pupils have attained first place in poetry competitions, and had roles in both a West End production and a television series. Some have sung with the National Children's Choir and others have played with the National Children's Orchestra.
- 2.2 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be above national age-related expectations. The pupils follow a curriculum which goes well beyond the National Curriculum, and which is enriched by the provision of personal, social and health education (PSHE), French, Latin and Spanish for Years 7 and 8. In addition, the Moorlands Diploma is a unique initiative attracting national interest emphasising leadership, teamwork and critical thinking. All pupils in Year 8 have obtained places at their first choice of school. Inspection evidence, including observed performance in relation to national targets, confirms this evaluation of the pupils' attainment. Pupils make good progress when compared with those of similar above average ability. Overall the progress which children make in the EYFS is at least good and often outstanding.
- 2.3 The teaching is good overall. The best teaching is engaging, lively and has realistic aims and success criteria. It uses good questioning to develop pupils' thinking and exploits simple resources well. Specialists have excellent knowledge of their subjects. Occasionally tasks are over directed and teaching lacks pace. Helpful marking provides pupils with feedback as to where they have made mistakes and where they have done well. Teachers' written targets help pupils to focus on areas of improvement and development. However, such support and focus are not evident for all pupils. The school continues to develop an excellent whole-school approach to recording assessment data to track pupils' progress and this is useful in identifying and responding to pupils' current strengths and weaknesses.
- 2.4 Learning support is extremely effective with careful screening and good use of individual educational plans. In all years, pupils profit by being in small classes and in Years 4 to 8 benefit from being taught by specialist teachers. The extensive

range of activities, the valuable links with local communities and involvement in charity work are stimulating for pupils.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.5 Pupils' personal development is excellent. It is central to the school's aim to 'provide every boy and girl with a happy learning environment which fosters warmth, confidence, independence and a sense of purpose and direction.' Almost all pupils responded in the questionnaire that they were encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently. Pupils learn about tolerance and, in discussion, they demonstrated understanding of issues relating to disability.
- 2.6 Pupils are confident and articulate and are a pleasure to talk to. They engage well with adults. They are polite to one another and also to their teachers, for whom they have great respect. They flourish in an atmosphere of encouragement and praise. Pupils are proud of their school and have a keen sense of identity and community; they undertake a range of fund raising activities for local charities and sing in a number of old people's homes at Christmas.
- 2.7 Pupils display an excellent sense of social awareness. One strength is the excellent care and support offered by older pupils to the younger members of the community. This was evident in a 'Moorlands Diploma' lesson in which Year 8 pupils taught punctuation to Year 3 pupils using their own presentations. Pupils believe they are all viewed as equals, and that everyone is everyone's friend.
- 2.8 Pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own is developing well through their study of other faiths and through visits to places of worship, including the local synagogue. Parents are invited into the school to speak about their beliefs and traditions. In addition, visitors come to the school; for example an officer from West Yorkshire Constabulary worked with Year 1.
- 2.9 Pupils relish their responsibilities and they have the opportunity to become form captains, prefects and heads of school. In addition, representatives from all classes sit on the school council and take pride in discussing new initiatives which are having positive effects within the school community.
- 2.10 Arrangements for pastoral care and for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent. Policies and procedures strongly support pupils' personal development. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils is excellent. Pupils know to whom to turn if they have a concern; a message box enables them to communicate in writing if they prefer. Safeguarding and anti-bullying policies are comprehensive and detailed. All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire are in place; regular fire drills are held and appropriate records kept. Educational visits are planned with great care. School meals are 'very healthy' and the pupils particularly commented on the range of desserts.
- 2.11 Staff have undertaken appropriate training for safeguarding and a governor has a responsibility for this area. A number of staff are qualified first aiders and the well-equipped medical room is easily accessible in the centre of the school. The attendance and admission registers are well maintained and any unexpected absence is carefully checked. The school has devised and effectively implemented a three-year plan to improve accessibility for those with disabilities. Recruitment procedures are robust and all checks are properly carried out prior to any new staff appointments being made.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.12 The quality of governance is excellent. Governors bring a broad and valuable range of experience and expertise to their support and oversight of the school. All governors are well known at the school, both at formal occasions and also through sampling the pupils' curricular experience. Governors receive feedback from the director of studies and have regular reports from the headmaster, and bursar. They monitor school policies carefully, an improvement since the last inspection. As a result, governors have a strong sense of identity with the rest of the school community and a clear conception of the school's aims and the issues for future development. They are committed to financial planning for the maintenance and development of accommodation, resources and the recruitment of high quality staff. Governors, including the trained governor who has oversight of child protection, very successfully oversee financial, welfare and health and safety issues. All governors attend training to ensure that they are aware of new initiatives.
- 2.13 School leadership by the headmaster and senior management team is excellent. It is hands on, practical and responsive. It combines a clear vision of what the school should become with a willingness to involve all staff in its implementation. Arrangements for monitoring and managing both the pupils and staff are developing well. Staff appreciate opportunities for team teaching and cross-curricular observation. However, the informal system of these observations lacks rigour to ensure improved communication and sharing of best practice. Many matters are usefully discussed at whole staff meetings, with subject leaders and other staff contributing to effective development planning. The five-year plan provides a valuable focal point for future development. Pupils benefit from committed and capable teaching and non-teaching staff. All recruitment checks on staff and volunteers are completed and recorded correctly on the centralised register.
- 2.14 The school's links with its parents, carers and guardians are excellent. It has an effective, close and cooperative relationship with parents, which has improved since the last inspection. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, some parents answered that the school did not encourage them to become involved and some disagreed with aspects of the school's management. Inspection findings do not support these views.
- 2.15 Parents are provided with all the necessary information and receive frequent informative newsletters. They receive regular reports which give information on the pupils' attitudes and their progress. Workshops have been held for parents on reading, internet safety and drug awareness; parents comment that they have found these events informative and useful.
- 2.16 The Moorlands School Association of parents is strongly supportive; it acts as an invaluable social network which helps new parents to integrate. The Association helps with charity fund-raising and the purchase of additional resources. The installation of floodlights for the games field was generously funded by the Association. The complaints policy is appropriate and records are well kept. There have been no formal complaints from parents.

3. ACTION POINTS

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Establish a formal system to share best practice and to develop teaching methods which raise standards even further.
 2. Ensure that all teachers provide clear written targets for pupils to enable them to progress further.
 3. Further develop the EYFS provision for knowledge and understanding of the world by providing more opportunities for independent investigation.
 4. Develop the outdoor area to include more opportunities for imaginative play, particularly for Reception children.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

4.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good with some outstanding aspects. Staff are wholeheartedly committed to meeting children's individual needs. The children respond to this carefully planned and nurturing environment with a growing awareness of their own individual talents and interests. Children of all ages and abilities receive carefully constructed support with their learning, enabling them to make at least good or in many cases excellent progress. They enjoy their time at school and delight in their learning. Processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning are developing, but are not yet sufficiently detailed.

4.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.2 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good overall and outstanding in some areas. Staff have a clear vision for the development of the setting; however, the development plan lacks detail and a clear focus on how the improvements would benefit outcomes for children. Each child has an equal opportunity to succeed, supported by a wide range of appropriate resources. Stringent policies and procedures work well to safeguard children and ensure their well-being. Staff are suitably qualified and well deployed. Links with parents are quickly and effectively developed and they are highly supportive of the school, particularly the care given to their children. Helpful links with local agencies and a high staff to pupil ratio ensure that children's needs are fully met.

4.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.3 The quality of the provision is good. Children from the Nursery through to Reception learn and develop well through active learning. Detailed and thorough planning is used flexibly to encompass spontaneous learning, and it allows for the interests of the children to be a focus. Children are exposed to a language-rich environment in which adults model language well and encourage children to both ask questions and give explanations. Thorough initial and ongoing observational assessment identifies what children can do and what children must do to progress further. All staff guide and support children well, providing safe and clear routines for them. The older Nursery and Reception children build on these sure foundations. They use resources well and imaginatively. Children enjoy the healthy snacks provided for them and the sociable nature of snack time and lunchtime.

4.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.4 Outcomes for the children are good with some outstanding aspects. From Nursery through to Reception, children enjoy their learning. The youngest Nursery children begin to learn phonics and the older Nursery and Reception children build on this to excellent effect in both their reading and writing. Younger Nursery children are confident in counting to ten and by the end of Reception, they use numbers spontaneously in everyday routines and apply their growing mathematical knowledge to their chosen pursuit. Children speak confidently in Nursery and in Reception talk about their learning activities with exuberance. In both younger and older Nursery, role-play demonstrates strong social skills, co-operation and a high level of linguistic competence. However, opportunities for role play are not as available for Reception children. Knowledge and understanding of the world is developed through first-hand experiences, though opportunities for independent investigation, particularly for Reception children, are limited. Children from both Nursery and Reception learn endeavour and perseverance in their weekly swimming lessons. Excellent personal, social and emotional development is clearly apparent at all stages of the setting. Behaviour is exemplary and is effectively managed through gentle reminders and through the underlying rules and expectations. Children develop an awareness of personal safety and they comply with the simple rules that relate to this.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 4.5 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Complaints since the last inspection

- 4.6 Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required any action to meet national requirements.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Sybil Warner

Reporting Inspector

Miss Penelope Kirk

Head, IAPS school

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Early Years Lead Inspector