



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MOOR ALLERTON SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Moor Allerton School
DfE Number	352/6001
Address	Moor Allerton School 131 Barlow Moor Road West Didsbury Manchester M20 2PW
Telephone Number	0161 4454521
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Email Address	office@mas.gemsedu.co.uk
Head teachers	Mr P S Millard & Mrs Ruth Adams
Proprietor	Global Education Management Systems (GEMS) UK Ltd
Age Range	3 - 11
Total Number of Pupils	224
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (124 boys; 100 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 74 5-11: 150
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 224
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Victoria Conway
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	01 May 2012 to 04 May 2012

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed through the following link: www.legislation.gov.uk. Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

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

- (i) The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and disability).
- (ii) The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning 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, although inspectors 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.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Graham Nunn

Mrs Philippa Foster

Mr John Tranmer

Mrs Ann Richards

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Former Head teacher, IAPS School)

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Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Moor Allerton School is an independent co-educational preparatory day school for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years. It was founded in 1914 as an independent preparatory day school for boys. Girls were first admitted in 1981 when nursery and infant classes were also started. The first four head teachers each owned the school and lived on site. The school is now part of the Global Educational Management Systems (GEMS) UK Limited group, which has responsibility for the governance for the school. .
- 1.2 The school is located in West Didsbury, a suburb of Manchester, having moved from its original site a short distance away. It is based around a Victorian house, and the premises have been substantially extended and altered over the years. Since the last inspection in 2008 the senior management team has been restructured and interactive white-boards have been introduced into almost all classrooms.
- 1.3 Children may join the nursery part of the school in the term that they are three. They remain in the nursery until they are four and then move into the Reception class for their final year in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Pupils then join the infant section of the school before transferring to the junior section at the age of seven.
- 1.4 The school aims to provide a holistic approach to education, encouraging the pupils to achieve excellence and to become lifelong learners. It also seeks to encourage and enable its pupils to think for themselves and to be confident in their own abilities.
- 1.5 The school caters for 224 pupils, of whom, 124 are boys and 100 are girls. Within the overall total, 74 children attend classes in the EYFS, 79 are in the pre-preparatory department (Years 1 and 2) and 71 are in the preparatory department (Years 3 to 6).
- 1.6 Most pupils live within a five mile radius of the school. They mainly come from homes that have above-average socio-economic circumstances with parents working predominantly in business in the city and in other professional occupations. The school has an ethnically diverse pupil body.
- 1.7 Seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), four of whom receive additional help with their learning of English. Ten pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The ability profile of the school is judged to be above the national average although there is a broad spread of ability within that overall judgement. National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Moor Allerton School fulfils its aims very well. Pupils' achievements, including those of children in the EYFS, are good overall, and their attitudes to learning are excellent. The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is excellent, successfully achieving its aim to provide a stimulating, challenging, positive and enjoyable atmosphere. Almost all pupils reach the Early Learning Goals by the age of five, with the majority exceeding them. In the main school, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding develop well across the areas of the curriculum. They are most articulate and use their literacy and numeracy skills very well in different subjects. The use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills is also very good. Pupils' creativity is of high quality and they reason and investigate for themselves with enthusiasm. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Consequently they reach good levels of achievement. Such progress is largely the result of the good teaching overall. However, on a small number of occasions, the pace of lessons is slow and pupils are given work that is not sufficiently well matched to their abilities. Pupils with SEND and EAL make good progress because they often receive individual work and support in their lessons. The provision for pupils with SEND is particularly good: the programme is well structured and records and assessments are efficiently kept and well used. Provision for those who are gifted and talented is also good, although in some lessons the work they are set does not always match their abilities. The pupils' behaviour is excellent as also are their attitudes to learning. The broad and well balanced curriculum, together with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, support pupils' learning well.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent and is well supported by the excellent arrangements for their pastoral care and good arrangements for their welfare, health and safety. The pupils respect each other and work very well together. They are able to reflect on the non-material aspects of their lives and show great compassion for those who are less fortunate than themselves by fund-raising for charity. Appropriate checks are carried out for any health and safety issues, risk assessments are detailed and the safeguarding of pupils is secure, although a minor anomaly was noted in the process of carrying out Criminal Records Bureau checks, but this was corrected immediately and did not place any pupils at risk.
- 2.3 Governance is sound at an overarching level but the governing body, operating at the level of the company running the group of schools, lacks a sufficiently detailed insight into the working of the school. Governors are therefore not sufficiently effective in exercising their monitoring role and in providing support, challenge and the stimulus for growth and improvement. The governing board keep themselves informed by reports from the headteacher and through contact with him. Sound strategic planning and school improvement planning are in place but are short term. The school recognises that more detailed planning, with committed support from the governing board, over a longer period of time is necessary. The leadership and management of the school are good at all levels. Good strategies are in place to monitor the work of the school and a well-structured and systematic approach is taken. Policies to cover aspects of school life are regularly reviewed and are implemented appropriately by staff. Links with parents are excellent and they are most happy with their involvement with the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:

- ensure that an enhanced criminal record check is made by the proprietor on all staff and that the resulting enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practical after the person's appointment in accordance with Part 4, paragraph 19 (c) of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Governors should ensure that they have an independent view of the school, including ensuring that their procedures and policies are implemented correctly.
2. Extend the scope of strategic and school development planning to cover a longer time, and to include appropriate resource provision.
3. Ensure that the excellent teaching practice found in many lessons is reflected in all lessons.
4. In the EYFS, further develop the use of ICT in learning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are particularly well educated in accordance with the school's aims of encouraging and enabling its pupils to achieve excellence and to become lifelong learners. Pupils' develop their skills, knowledge and understanding very well in subject areas and particularly so in their extra-curricular activities.
- 3.3 Pupils are articulate and talk very well on a variety of topics. They listen to their teachers and one another carefully, read to a high standard and are becoming highly skilled in writing expressively. Their numeracy skills are excellent and they are well able to apply them to other curriculum areas, such as geography and science. In the EYFS, the outcomes for the children are excellent. By the end of their Reception year, most children can write independently showing a good understanding of word sounds, and can recognise and order numbers to 20. Throughout the school many opportunities exist for pupils to express their creativity and these are evident in some first rate displays and in subjects such as music and art. Skills in ICT are good amongst older pupils, and are used adequately across the curriculum. However, children in the EYFS are insufficiently familiar with such technology as a result of a lack of adequate equipment. Pupils' reasoning skills are very good, particularly when discussing a particular topic or asking relevant questions of their teachers. High quality creative skills are displayed in pupils' work from the EYFS onwards. The excellent level of participation in physical education, and games in particular, increases pupils' physical skills. Pupils' levels of achievement are supported well by the good and, on several occasions, excellent teaching they receive as well as their own highly positive attitudes to learning.
- 3.4 By the age of 11, pupils' achievement overall is good so that almost all transfer to their first choice of secondary school; this includes places gained through stringent entrance examinations. Given the size of the school, pupils also achieve very well in individual and team games. In music, speech and drama, the school has a history of high standards being reached in various examinations. These successes make a significant contribution to pupils excellent personal development, giving them a greater understanding of team work as well as developing a respect for pupils' differing abilities.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available during the inspection, it is above expectations; in mathematics and English it is well above this level.. Pupils study a strong curriculum which is very well applied in order to enable them to achieve much of their potential. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND and EAL also achieve at a level that is commensurate with their abilities, largely because staff ensure they are given tasks in their lessons that are appropriate to their level of ability. In addition, staff are well supported by the special needs staff of the school, who offer in-class as well as withdrawal support for the pupils. Pupils who are gifted and talented also make good progress in many lessons and are well supported by a challenging curriculum. Extension activities for such pupils are common and effective in catering for their needs. In the EYFS good and sometimes excellent progress is made towards the Early Learning Goals with most children achieving them by the age of five and with many children exceeding them.

3.6 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They approach tasks with much enthusiasm and concentrate very well. They know how to apply themselves in lessons and persevere when the task is challenging. Pupils work very well together and have the same level of interest and determination when working individually. The presentation of their work is of a significant quality. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they clearly enjoy learning. The excellent relationship that they have with each other and with their teachers has a highly positive impact on their achievement.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision

3.7 The overall quality of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.

3.8 This overall provision effectively supports the school's aims in this area. The curriculum is well supported by an excellent and wide ranging programme of extra-curricular activities. This is a similar situation to that found at the previous inspection. The curriculum, which is broad and well balanced, covers more than the requisite areas of learning by including French from Year 4, as well as additional creative and sporting subjects. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in a number of subjects from nursery onwards. From Year 4 all subjects are taught by subject specialist teachers. Planning for continuity of learning right across the school is strong, as each subject co-ordinator is responsible for the curriculum throughout Years 1 to 6. The ICT lessons also provide pupils with skills to support their work in other subjects. A personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme encourages all pupils to gain understanding about themselves, other people and the wider world. The curriculum is suitable for pupils of all ages and abilities. This effectively structured and very well planned curriculum greatly enhances pupils' progress and the standards they attain.

3.9 Pupils with SEND are very well supported. These pupils have individual education plans (IEPs) which are regularly reviewed. Outside agencies are consulted when their advice is deemed appropriate. Provision for the gifted and talented pupils is enhanced by specially designed activities held during the weekly activity afternoon. These activities enrich pupils' learning, promote greater understanding and enhance their skills. However, provision for the most able during class lessons is in some cases more limited. Year 6 pupils are very well prepared for 11+ entry examinations and the majority of pupils gain entry to the secondary school of their choice.

3.10 Pupils are given very good opportunities to express their creativity in art, drama, dance and music. Art work displayed widely throughout the school is of a very good quality. Individual instrumental lessons and choirs provide pupils with opportunities to perform together at formal and informal occasions. The physical education and games programme provides exceptional opportunities and specialist teaching in a wide range of sports. All such well-planned activities greatly enhance the breadth of the curriculum offered to the pupils.

3.11 The quality of the provision for the EYFS is excellent and includes the required six areas of learning. Planning is of a high quality and adults give children activities that are closely matched to the needs of the individual. Such planning ensures that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experience provided.

3.12 The academic curriculum is supported by an excellent extra-curricular programme, either at after school clubs or during the weekly activities afternoon. Pupils, from the nursery onwards, can choose from a range of creative and general interest activities,

in addition to sport. Horse riding is a particularly valued activity. Pupils attend the activities with great enthusiasm. An excellent range of educational visits enhance the pupils' learning experience and, in addition to this, each year group in the junior section has the opportunity to attend a residential visit where the acquisition of life skills is an important feature. Pupils benefit from participating in several local sporting and performing arts events and competition. An extensive range of educational visits and visiting speakers enhances learning in many subjects.

- 3.13 The school has many good links with the local community that are of great benefit to the pupils. These include the local university, arts festivals, the local museum and a nearby athletics club.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The quality of teaching that pupils receive is good.
- 3.15 Pupils' good levels of achievement are attained largely as a result of the good and, on occasions, excellent teaching they receive. The teaching is most effective in promoting pupils' good progress. In addition, such teaching helps pupils to achieve individual excellence, which is in line with the aims of the school. The standards of teaching found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and in some areas have been significantly built upon.
- 3.16 Good opportunities are offered to pupils to enable them to discuss their work in subjects such as art and English. This has a significant positive impact on developing pupils' self-confidence and oral communication. Basic skills are emphasised in English and mathematics and this means that pupils are able to attain the high standards they do in these subjects. Pupils' creative skills, which are notably good in subjects such as music, drama and art, are similarly well promoted by the high quality teaching they receive.
- 3.17 Teachers' subject knowledge and lesson planning are very good and, in the best practice, lessons are clearly planned taking into account an assessment and understanding of each pupil's needs. The best lessons are also characterised by lively and enthusiastic teaching, appropriately demanding tasks and by the use of questioning techniques that challenge pupils' thinking. In such teaching, the tasks set are varied and well matched to pupils' abilities. Praise and encouragement are well used and this adds to pupils' learning and progress. On those occasions where teaching is less effective, the pace of the lesson is slower and the work is not sufficiently closely matched to different pupils' abilities. Consequently, the pupils have more limited opportunities to think for themselves or take some responsibility for their learning.
- 3.18 In the EYFS, adults provide first rate targeted support for the children, allowing all to make good and, on occasions, excellent progress. Good questioning encourages creativity and critical thinking skills in adult led activities. High quality planning ensures that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experience provided. Planned activities are based on thorough and accurate observations and assessments matched to the full range of children's needs. Staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour.
- 3.19 Work for pupils with SEND is well planned by individual teachers in order to provide individual help for them in their lessons. Such planning is based on high quality IEP's which provide very good information about each individual pupil's needs. This enables teachers to be able to adapt their teaching even more appropriately for

these pupils. Pupils with EAL are well catered for in individual lessons or in some cases through withdrawal support. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are met in most lessons, although on occasions, they are not given work that is suitably matched to their individual needs.

- 3.20 Classrooms contain resources of sound and, in some cases, good quality which teachers use appropriately to motivate their pupils. An interactive whiteboard is available in most classrooms and this helps to produce stimulating lessons, thus enthusing pupils and maintaining their interest.
- 3.21 In the EYFS, observations, photographs and assessments of work allow staff to build up an accurate picture of each child's learning and development which is summarised in 'learning journey' folders and books. These are shared with parents regularly.
- 3.22 In the rest of the school the marking of pupils' work is of sound quality. All work is marked and in the very best practice the marking contains encouraging words, suggestions for improvement and appropriately set targets for pupils to achieve. However, practice in this area is variable as in some cases few helpful comments or targets are added. Pupils also say that they are, on many occasions, given verbal feedback, so that they know what they have to do to continue to improve. In addition, assessment data are compiled effectively to monitor pupils' progress in many subjects. This information is then well used to enable teachers to plan more closely, further work for their pupils.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The personal development of the pupils from the EYFS onwards is excellent.
- 4.2 The school has a welcoming, caring ethos in accordance with its aim providing a stimulating, challenging, positive and enjoyable atmosphere, conducive to learning, where everyone is valued and achievements are celebrated. Pupils' display high levels of self-esteem due to the constant encouraging messages they receive. They are happy and confident young people who face the challenges of school life very optimistically and constructively. Children in the EYFS are happy, enthusiastic and positive learners. They learn about sharing and being kind in circle time and take turns when playing games. Throughout the day, there are many opportunities for developing independence and making decisions, for example, when accessing their own learning resources.
- 4.3 The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. In their discussions in lessons and interviews, pupils of all ages show they have an appreciation of non-material aspects of life. Pupils are emotionally mature relative to their age. Assemblies play an important part in promoting spiritual awareness, presenting the pupils with moments for quiet reflection. The school prayer heightens pupils' awareness of the precious gift of life and the importance of valuing the many wonderful opportunities and experiences which life presents them. Pupils display high levels of self-esteem due to the constant positive messages they receive. They listen to and are aware of the needs of those around them and demonstrate considerable enthusiasm for school life. The whole school community regularly work together on 'Leaps of Faith' projects designed to promote an awareness of the need to look after our planet and to demonstrate how much can be achieved when people work together with a common aim.
- 4.4 The pupils display excellent moral development. They listen carefully to, and value the ideas and opinions of others and are willing and confident to articulate their own views. Pupils have a clear idea of good behaviour and develop a sense of right and wrong from an early age. The various rules and codes of behaviour are well known and respected by all members of the school community. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility towards others through charity work and participating in a number of fund raising events for local and national causes. Pupils' behaviour is excellent.
- 4.5 The social development of the pupils is excellent. They are encouraged to accept responsibility and are happy to do so. Older pupils contribute in many ways to the life of the school such as hearing younger pupils read and assisting at sports day, swimming galas and open days. Pupils are polite, they greet and converse with visitors warmly and are very proud of their school. They are always willing to help one another and enjoy and appreciate friendships across the age groups. From the EYFS onwards, pupils have the opportunity to take on roles of responsibility. Personal responsibilities are developed in later years when pupils are appointed as house captains, sports captains and monitors. All responsibilities are taken seriously and are seen as important stages in pupils' development.
- 4.6 Cultural development is excellent. In assemblies and subjects such as religious education, history, English and French, pupils consider their own culture and those of others. Recent topic work on the Olympics has broadened the pupils' knowledge of a wide range of different cultures. Pupils demonstrate a well-informed

understanding of other faiths and cultures and have a keen appreciation of visits to different places of worship. Pupils are sensitive to the enrichment provided by the creative work on display and the opportunities to participate in concerts and performances. Dance in particular plays an important role in the life of the school. The programme of educational visits to museums and other places of cultural interest helps pupils to appreciate their own and other traditions and cultures.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

- 4.7 The arrangements for the pastoral care of pupils are excellent.
- 4.8 The school's arrangements make a strong contribution to pupils' excellent personal development. The school is successful in providing a positive and enjoyable atmosphere. Throughout it is evident that staff are aware of pupils' pastoral needs and provide very effective support and guidance for those in their care. In accordance with the school's aims, all children are encouraged to value every member of the school community and to celebrate the achievements of others. In many respects, the outcomes for pastoral care are very similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection.
- 4.9 Relationships between the staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are excellent. Pupils expressed confidence in the staff, stating that they felt comfortable to turn to a variety of staff if they had a problem. They appreciated the genuine interest shown by staff and expressed the view that this quality was one of the key strengths of the school. Pupils treat each other with respect and courtesy and there are suitable opportunities for older pupils to support the welfare of the youngest pupils.
- 4.10 Adults working in the EYFS are well deployed to provide support for children's welfare. Relationships are very positive and pupils' behaviour is managed extremely well. In the nursery classes children have high quality, sensitive pastoral support from a key worker who liaises with parents and carers to ensure that information and advice are shared, thus effectively promoting good levels of care. Such a role is fulfilled by form teachers elsewhere and opportunities such as circle time and PSHE lessons are successfully used to address issues relevant to the wellbeing, development and care of all pupils.
- 4.11 The school encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils. Meals are nutritious, a vegetarian choice is provided daily and options for pupils to eat salad and fruit are available. During the school day and in extra-curricular activities, pupils acquire the habit of taking regular exercise; the grounds and play areas offer modest but well-used opportunities for activity and fun. Pupils receive regular reminders regarding personal hygiene such as hand washing, and show an understanding of the need to follow routines and rules. Pupils are also able to use tools and equipment safely and sensibly, readily following instructions and advice given by staff.
- 4.12 There are effective procedures to promote pupils' excellent behaviour and to guard against bullying and harassment. Pupils confirm that there is no serious bullying and that staff deal quickly and fairly with minor disagreements between pupils. Opportunities such as assemblies and carpet time are effectively used by staff to reinforce courtesy and consideration, with acknowledgement and praise regularly given for examples of good citizenship. The relatively few incidents of unacceptable behaviour are handled appropriately and due account is taken of the circumstances.

- 4.13 The school has an appropriate plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.
- 4.14 Through the pupil council the school provides a suitable opportunity for pupils to express their views on the running of the school; pupils also gain an understanding of the work of a representative body and an opportunity for requests to be considered by staff. The generous staff to pupil ratio also helps to ensure that the staff have a good understanding of the pupils' concerns and priorities.

4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.15 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.16 All staff, including those in the EYFS, are dedicated and, in keeping with the school's aim of providing a positive and enjoyable atmosphere, successful in ensuring that pupils are happy, feel safe and gain enjoyment from their experiences at school. This is a similar situation to the one found at the time of the previous inspection. The staff clearly know the pupils well and there is a relaxed and respectful rapport between members of the school community. Welfare, health and safety issues are given due priority and staff are diligent in their monitoring of the pupils' well-being and the eradication of potential hazards.
- 4.17 Staff recruitment procedures are almost always appropriately followed and any lapses swiftly addressed. Staff have received suitable child protection training and this has been updated in accordance with regulatory requirements. The safeguarding policy and procedures are well understood within the school and are reviewed and evaluated by senior staff. Suitable risk assessments are in place for facilities and resources within the school and those that pertain to external trips are of a high standard.
- 4.18 The physical safety of pupils is a high priority and all staff are proactive in maintaining a safe environment. The site manager works closely with the head teachers to ensure that appropriate precautions are in place to minimise potential hazards.
- 4.19 Fire safety is taken seriously and is guided by the school's detailed policy with effective arrangements in place. Fire practices are regularly implemented and a proper log is maintained. Regular evacuation practices and other necessary checks, such as the testing of call points, are diligently carried out. Alarms and fire extinguishers are well maintained and comprehensive records are kept.
- 4.20 The excellent relationships between staff and pupils help to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety. Pupils respond quickly to staff instructions and they move about the school with good levels of self-control. There was no evidence of anti-behaviour and the attention shown to matters such as hand washing are effective in helping to prevent the unnecessary spread of infection.
- 4.21 Pupils who become ill at school or who require emergency aid receive immediate attention. A significant number of staff have appropriate first aid qualifications including paediatric first aid training for many of the EYFS staff. The school's attendance and admissions registers are suitably maintained.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of the governance of the school is sound.
- 5.2 The proprietorial company is successful in its administration and in helping the school to achieve its aims. A number of the company's representatives, who make up the governing board oversee and take responsibility for various aspects of the management of all their schools through a committee structure. The committees' responsibilities also cover all the schools within the company. Consequently, whilst they have an overview of all schools in the company, their specific knowledge of Moor Allerton is more limited. This has been recognised and plans are in hand to identify and meet the school's specific individual needs more closely. Most of management of the school is delegated to the head teachers. As a result of this limited local knowledge, the governing board's ability to offer strong and effective support to the educational direction of the school is limited. Reports from the head teachers have traditionally been prepared for the board. These provide information about the school's successes and, where necessary, solutions to particular issues. Consequently, board members are generally well informed about aspects of the school reported to them, although their knowledge of curriculum developments and knowledge of the EYFS is less thorough. On occasions, members of the governing board attend the school for special events. With such a small number of board members with a country wide brief, it is difficult for them to get into the school during the working day to effectively see its work at first-hand, and to set challenging targets for the head teachers and staff.
- 5.3 Strategic and financial planning are sound and the board makes adequate provision of human and material resources, although certain areas of the school, for example the ICT provision in the EYFS, are limited. At board meetings, the minutes indicate that they discuss general issues from across the company's schools, with individual schools being discussed when the need arises. Strategic developments are discussed although detailed school improvement planning is left to the individual school. Consequently, the governing board give sound support to the school but do not provide sufficiently-focused challenge for its future development. The board fulfils its responsibilities for welfare, health and safety, as well as safeguarding, adequately, through its welfare and safeguarding committee. An annual review of safeguarding policies and practices is broadly undertaken, although the efficiency with which these are carried out is not always thorough at an individual school level. Appropriate training for the board members is maintained. Their monitoring of regulatory compliance is adequate..

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.4 The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good.
- 5.5 The leadership and management of the school are most effective in enabling the school to achieve its overall aims. Since the previous inspection the good quality of leadership and management found at that time has been maintained and in certain areas built upon. Performance management has been established and systems to assess and monitor pupils' progress are significantly more rigorous. In addition,

individual pupils' needs are generally more closely catered for within lessons. Good progress has been made in developing the role of subject co-ordinators although the school is well aware that some work still remains to be done in order for the curriculum and its implementation, to be even more rigorous and so have an even further impact of the quality of pupils' learning. The head teachers, ably supported by the senior management team, are most efficient, effective and highly approachable. The leadership and management of the EYFS is also strong particularly as a result of the excellent support given, in terms of knowledge and expertise, by one of the joint head teachers. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires and in interviews, pupils reported that they really enjoy being at the school and that they were very proud of it. Parents were equally supportive.

- 5.6 Those in senior leadership positions play a significant part in raising pupils' achievement levels and in extending their personal development. Sound school improvement planning is in place with an appropriate number of objectives clearly identified. However, such planning is based in the short term of approximately one year and lacks a rolling programme of curriculum review and the on-going review of all aspects of school life. The school rightly recognises that, with the support of the governing board, such planning needs to be extended to a two- or three-year detailed overview. Effective strategies to monitor the work of the school are carried out thoroughly by the senior management. The school takes care to select good quality staff. Appropriate strategies for the induction of new staff are in place. Professional development is adequate and staff are effectively trained in their roles, particularly in relation to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Policies and procedures for various areas of school life are regularly updated and these are of good quality. Teachers, classroom support assistants and non-teaching staff are deployed effectively and make a significant contribution to pupils' welfare and learning. Staffing levels are good and first rate support is given to all pupils. In the EYFS the provision of limited resources in ICT has a negative impact on the development of children's skills in this area. Inclusive practice is effectively promoted to ensure that the needs of all the children are met. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school and these are regularly monitored.
- 5.7 Senior managers are generally diligent in ensuring that those working with pupils are suitably checked through appropriate recruitment procedures. However, at the time of the inspection not all staff, including the EYFS, had an enhanced criminal record certificate before or as soon as reasonably practicable after they had been appointed. When this was pointed out the school corrected the situation immediately. The central register of appointments is now completed accurately and fully and all staff are trained in safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- 5.8 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. From EYFS onwards there is open, easy communication and personal interaction on a daily basis if that is required. Staff are readily available to speak to parents and aim to deal with any concerns as soon as they arise.
- 5.9 In the pre-inspection questionnaire parents indicated an overwhelming satisfaction with the school and the way it takes care of their children. Almost all said they would recommend the school to another parent. A small minority felt that the school does not give appropriate support to very able pupils. Inspection findings show that overall, adequate support is given to such pupils and that the school is continually seeking ways to further its provision.

- 5.10 Many opportunities are in place for parents to be involved in the life of the school. They are invited to weekly class assemblies followed by coffee with the head teachers and staff. Parent volunteers often accompany pupils on school outings. An enthusiastic Parents' Association raises money for the school and sponsor "Leap Days" where the whole school as well as parents are involved in innovative investigations such as a recent day on bio-mimicry and another involving space rockets. A 'School Development Group' set up by parents discusses proposed developments of the school and grounds and its members have met with representatives of the proprietorial company to discuss these issues.
- 5.11 Detailed information is readily available to parents and prospective parents through the prospectus, school's website notice boards and regular, comprehensive newsletters are produced covering aspects of school life. Parents are well informed about events and issues by good quality letters, email and text messaging. Helpful leaflets are available outlining the school's support for both SEND and gifted and talented pupils. New parents and children are welcomed into the school at any age. Any complaints or concerns raised by parents are dealt with most adequately and promptly and in accordance with the school's compliments and complaints procedure.
- 5.12 Reporting to parents is particularly good. Well-produced, detailed reports on academic achievement and progress including targets for improvement are provided regularly. Parents' evenings and open afternoons give parents the opportunity to discuss their child's progress formally. Parents indicated that they are very happy with these arrangements as well as the 'open door' policy the school has for any parental concerns. Parents also commented on the supportive, "family atmosphere" of the EYFS and throughout school.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.