

Moreton Christ Church CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105076
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377175
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2011
Reporting inspector	David Byrne

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Cousins
Headteacher	Ian Thomson
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by 15 teachers. They conducted meetings with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body, and a number of parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at records of pupils' progress, evaluated all safeguarding procedures and evaluated samples of the pupils' work. They scrutinised questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and 84 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is the quality of teaching having sufficient impact on the learning of pupils?
- Is there any difference in the performance and progress of any groups of pupils and what is the school doing to tackle it?
- Is the curriculum suitably adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are more-able?
- How effective are leaders at all levels in implementing systems for raising achievement?
- How accurate is the school's self-evaluation and does it inform suitable targets for improvement?

Information about the school

This is larger than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic heritages, including those who speak English as an additional language, is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of staff changes and developments made to parts of the accommodation and in particular to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school gained the Basic Skills award in 2009.

Pre- and after-school provision is available for children. It is managed separately from the school and is subject to a separate inspection, the outcomes of which are available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly under the strong and caring leadership of an effective headteacher. Improvements to teaching, the use of assessment, revisions to the curriculum and significant developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage are contributing to accelerating progress. This improvement is not yet evident in the end of key stage test results but visible in other year groups. Attainment at Year 6 is broadly average. Achievement in recent years has been satisfactory, although more-able pupils are sometimes not challenged enough. Progress is slower in mathematics than in English. The curriculum does not always help girls in particular to excel in mathematics. Strategies to increase the engagement of all pupils in writing, especially boys, are starting to raise attainment.

The large majority of parents and carers rightly think this is a caring school. Much is done to support families and pupils whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable. Effective leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures their full inclusion in school life. Staff place a high priority on pupils' welfare and securing strong levels of safeguarding. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of safety. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes to good behaviour.

Pupils benefit from a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this means their attainment is rising when they join Year 1. Across the school, pupils are willing learners. They do best when they are encouraged to apply their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) independently. Opportunities for working in this way are increasing, but on occasions pupils are still expected to listen rather than become actively involved in their learning. Pupils say they like positive encouragement when their work is marked but they also want to be given clearer guidance about what they need to do to reach their targets.

The headteacher has the respect of pupils, staff and parents and carers. A resilient and determined manner has established a number of essential practices for raising achievement. Rigorous assessment systems now identify underachievement, all staff take responsibility for the progress of their classes and vital monitoring strategies have been established to identify the most pertinent development priorities. However, sharing of good practice to make teaching even more consistent is at an early stage. The senior management team works effectively with the headteacher to ensure all staff are promoting the school's aims. The success of actions to improve

progress coupled with good governance and accurate self-evaluation gives the school a good capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics and English further by:
 - devising and implementing plans that consistently extend more-able pupils
 - refining the curriculum so that the learning needs of girls in mathematics are fully met
 - building on initiatives for engaging boys in their learning so that their improving performance in writing is maintained.

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching on learning by:
 - using the outcomes of the monitoring of teaching to share best practice
 - increasing occasions when pupils use their skills and knowledge independently to answer questions and solve problems
 - embedding across the school current strategies for giving pupils clear guidance about how to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Actions to raise attainment are starting to bear fruit and pupils' learning and progress are improving. In lessons, pupils are willing to listen, share their opinions and work hard. Their enthusiasm for learning depends on the extent to which they are actively involved. When they are allowed to have some responsibility for their learning, for example, by using different styles of writing to compose a 'newspaper report' linked to a book that they had read, pupils thrive and show great enthusiasm. On occasions when pupils are expected to listen for too long and have limited opportunities for them to voice their opinions and explore their own ideas, their interest drops and their progress slackens.

Given the starting points to the Early Years Foundation Stage that are broadly typical for children of their age, the average attainment at the end of Year 6 represents satisfactory achievement. Assessment data held by the school indicate that an increasing proportion of pupils are on track to reach or exceed their challenging targets for reading, writing and mathematics. The leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which has been recently extended to include support for vulnerable families, is having a marked effect on the learning of these pupils. Their satisfactory progress in recent years is accelerating quickly. While more-able pupils progress satisfactorily, their needs are not always consistently met through sufficiently challenging tasks.

The personal development of pupils is good. They make a good contribution to the community. Responsibilities for running aspects of the school are encouraged so that the pupil council is influential in aspects of decision-making. Pupils respond very well

to the recently created set of underlying values for pupils of being 'Respectful, Resilient, Resourceful and Reliable'. As pupils increasingly understand these principles, they are deepening their awareness of the need to respect others. Pupils who received 'Gold Zone' certificates linked to these values during their praise assembly, grew with pride and others applauded spontaneously. Most pupils do their best to apply their good knowledge of living healthily and staying safe to their lives. Pupils have a good understanding of cultures and faiths different from their own. The average attainment and broadly average attendance prepares pupils satisfactorily for their next stage of education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Throughout the school teachers are dedicated and caring. Strong leadership has contributed to a changing culture amongst staff. Better use of assessment is improving the quality of planning, but there are some inconsistencies between classes in the expectations made of pupils. When the pace of learning weakens, for instance in satisfactory lessons, the progress of some pupils, particularly the more able, slows and their attention slips. In the best lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to express their own ideas, and the confidence to apply their skills of numeracy and literacy independently to solve problems. In Year 4, for example, pupils were engrossed using mathematical skills to crack the code that would let them enter the pyramid to discover the 'treasure' inside. Support staff are used productively and are generally confident in their roles to support the learning, particularly, of targeted pupils.

The curriculum is in the process of being overhauled to enable pupils to use their developing basic skills in a wide range of subjects and contexts. New strategies to support pupils struggling to keep up in mathematics and aspects of English are having a marked effect on learning. Well chosen visits and visitors frequently enrich topics. Current provision for ICT limits the pupils' access to computers, although a

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

solution is imminent. Pupils greatly appreciate and readily attend the wide range of clubs and activities that enliven many aspects of their learning.

Adults have strong personal knowledge of each individual pupil. They foster good relationships and a positive ethos throughout the school. These ensure pupils’ good personal development. Good arrangements to support pupils and their families whose circumstances may make them most vulnerable make effective use of well-established partnerships. Well chosen training ensures staff acquire skills to support pupils with learning difficulties or personal challenges. A revised policy for managing behaviour underpins good support for the few pupils who show challenging behaviour, ensuring no significant disruption to learning. Strategies for easing the transition between classes are under review and a target for improvement. Links with the local secondary schools effectively smooth the pupils’ move to their next stage of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher conveys clear ambition for the school and has taken good action to widen leadership. A significant strategy has been the introduction of ‘teams’, where staff work together to manage subjects, taking account of contributions from pupils and the views of parents and carers. An increasingly effective management team is working closely with staff at all levels to improve pupils’ progress and outcomes. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school promotes the inclusion of all pupils in school life and tackles any possibility of discrimination well. The use of assessment to monitor the performance of pupils has been improved significantly and includes a detailed analysis of the relative performance of different groups. However, recent actions have not had sufficient time to have a full impact on removing some of the gaps identified, such as the difference in performance between boys and girls.

Governance is good. Members of the governing body play a clear role in determining the strategic direction of the school and set high expectations for improving achievement in the school. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and good systems are in place to monitor safeguarding matters. Procedures for child protection are rigorous and fully implemented to meet pupils’ needs. Parents and carers are welcome to come into school and learn about how well their children are doing. Some aspects of communication about the school, its events and the curriculum are in the process of improvement and not yet complete. Good and improving partnerships, including with local schools, contribute well to staff development and support pupils’ personal development. The school effectively promotes community cohesion from a good understanding of its own context. There are strong links in the local area and internationally that help pupils to understand others from different backgrounds.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Since taking up post, the impact of the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage on the quality of provision has been marked. The curriculum has been developed to give a good balance between developing children's independence while also benefiting from focused adult-led learning. The accommodation has been upgraded significantly and outdoor provision is much better than at the time of the last inspection. The caring, welcoming and encouraging staff promote children's personal development particularly well; children settle quickly and comfortably into each school day and are clearly happy in their activities. Staff ensure a safe, secure and positive atmosphere that encourages good behaviour. Children are interested in their tasks and many have good levels of concentration. As a result, the children make good progress and attainment is rising.

Staff use comprehensive assessment systems well to gain a clear idea of how well individual children are learning and developing. This tracking information indicates where to target activities and this ensures good support for particular needs, such as in letters and sounds and in personal development. Effective action is taken to ensure that transition to Year 1 is smooth and supports continued good progress. Parents and carers are very much valued partners with the school in supporting their children's education. Information is of a high quality and staff welcome regular contact with families.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned their questionnaires was below average. The large majority of those who responded are happy with their children's experience at school. Many express the view that the school is improving under the current leadership of the headteacher. The vast majority feel that their children enjoy school, are safe and given good guidance about how to live healthily. A small minority express reservations about the way behaviour is managed and the efforts of the school to inform them about their children's progress. Whilst most parents and carers feel that their children's individual needs are effectively met, a few are concerned about the quality of support given for some specific areas of learning difficulty. Inspection findings indicate that pupils are happy at school and that much is improving under the leadership of the headteacher. Behaviour is good and the procedures for managing it have recently been strengthened and are having a good impact on the few pupils with challenging issues. The school is currently working on improving communication with parents and carers. There is daily contact with staff at the school gate and plans are in place to review and improve the quality of information provided for parents and carers. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and the school is willing to work with families to provide the best possible support.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moreton Christ Church CE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 370 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	48	39	46	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	50	60	31	37	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	35	38	45	17	20	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	37	40	48	9	11	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	32	38	44	52	7	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	40	34	40	15	18	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	33	52	62	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	38	35	42	11	13	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	39	38	45	10	12	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	29	43	51	11	13	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	36	41	49	8	10	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	39	46	37	44	4	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	50	31	37	10	12	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moreton Christ Church CE Primary School, Wirral, CH46 0PB

Thank you all for making the inspectors so welcome when we came to your school. I would like to give special thanks to those who gave up time to talk to us about your work and how much you enjoy school. You told us that you think your school is getting better. You behave well and get on really well with each other.

Yours is a satisfactory school. It is very caring and helps those of you who need help with your work or with personal issues. The headteacher and all the staff are good at making sure that you are safe and very well cared for. All staff are working hard to help you learn better. You work best when you are able to get involved in what you do rather than listening. While your attainment is similar to other pupils of your age your rate of learning is getting better.

One reason for our visit was to see how your school can improve. We have asked your school leaders to:

- raise achievement in mathematics and English further by challenging all of you who find work easy, and by helping boys and girls to do equally well
- make teaching even better by increasing occasions when you can work independently and by giving you better guidance about how to improve.

I am sure that you will help by continuing to do your very best in all you do.

Yours sincerely

David Byrne
Lead Inspector

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