

Morden Mount Primary School

Lewisham Road, London, SE13 7QP

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Until recently, the school's leaders did not manage the school well enough, so pupils made slow progress in Key Stage 1. Progress in Years 3 and 5 is also comparatively slow.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, with fewer pupils reaching higher levels.
- Pupils do not practise writing enough in other subjects.
- Teaching requires improvement. It is not consistent enough across all classes to ensure that all pupils achieve well. The links between sounds and letters are not taught consistently well.
- Pupils are not active enough in lessons and sometimes have to spend too long listening to the teacher.
- Pupils who can do harder work often do the same level work as everyone else and sometimes become distracted.
- Prior to the new headteacher's appointment, the governing body did not check thoroughly enough that senior leaders were improving the school.
- The school relies very much on the new headteacher at the moment, because other managers, such as those in charge of subjects, are not yet playing a full part in leading school improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher is taking a strong lead to drive rapid improvement in teaching and achievement.
- The staff fully support the leadership team's efforts to take the school forward and understand what is expected of them.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes do very well because teaching is good and promotes children's learning and independence effectively.
- The school has halted the decline in standards and started to improve rates of progress.
- The school is well liked by parents and carers. It provides a caring and safe environment for the pupils, who are courteous and polite and feel safe.
- When lessons are interesting, pupils behave well.
- The governors have the skills to take decisive action to improve the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- The eight responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and senior and middle managers, members of the governing body, including the Chair, and four parent governors, as well as a representative from the local authority. The inspection team took account of the 40 questionnaires received from staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own assessment data on pupils’ recent and current progress, teachers’ planning and monitoring information, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and the minutes of recent meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils during play and lunchtimes and spoke with a good number of them about safety. They held more formal meetings with a group of pupils and listened to some pupils read.

Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Nathan	Additional Inspector
Raminder Arora	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, with the largest group represented being of Black African heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action and the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for some pupils, including children in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above that of similar schools nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has had significant recent staff changes including the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers use the information they have about pupils to plan work that is at the right level, particularly for the more able
 - reducing the time wasted in lessons
 - using marking more effectively and consistently
 - increasing the opportunities for teachers to learn from the good practice of others.
- Improve pupils' achievement in all subjects in Key Stage 1 and in writing across the school by:
 - increasing pupils' ability to work and learn independently
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their writing skills in subjects other than in English
 - ensuring that the teaching of reading, particularly sounds and letters, is of a consistently high quality
 - making sure enough attention is given to the most difficult writing skills for more-able pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Take the next steps in developing the school's leadership and management through making sure:
 - teachers in charge of parts of the school or subjects play a greater part in raising achievement and improving teaching
 - the governing body thoroughly checks on how well the school is doing and puts pressure on leaders and managers to improve it.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate because for several years pupils made inadequate progress in Key Stage 1. As a result, even though pupils enter Year 1 with standards close to the national average, their attainment dropped to below average by the end of Year 2, so there is a gap between their attainment and that of pupils nationally. Only very recently has the rate of progress started to improve quickly and have pupils currently in the school begun to close the gap.
- Low attainment in Key Stage 1 means that pupils have started Key Stage 2 lacking the skills expected. Progress across Key Stage 2 varies, and it requires improvement in Years 3 and 5. As a result pupils have a great deal of catching up to do to reach average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The school's assessments show that currently, as a result of more effective teaching, pupils are now catching up and making faster progress to reach higher standards than previously in most classes in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are lower than expected for their age. Checks on how well they are doing are accurate and regular, and show that they make good progress in most areas of learning. This is due to good teaching and an environment that promotes good learning both inside the classroom and outdoors.
- While pupils reach standards in reading that are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6, pupils' progress has been slower in Years 1 and 2. The school has recently introduced a systematic programme of teaching letters and sounds across the school and raised the profile of reading across all subjects. Assessments show that pupils' progress is improving and they are now developing confidence in using basic sounds and letters to improve their reading and writing. However, the teaching of sounds and letters is not of a consistently high quality, particularly in Year 1.
- Some lively mathematics teaching involves pupils well in learning mathematical skills, so both the higher and lower attainers are now often making better progress in lessons. However, mathematics still requires improvement in Key Stage 1.
- The school has taken steps to improve the progress pupils make in writing, as it is not as good as in reading or mathematics across all year groups. There has been a focus on spelling and grammar, and opportunities to write at length in different subjects have been increased in some classes. This work is beginning to have a positive impact and by the end of Year 6 pupils now reach average standards. However, fewer pupils attain higher levels in writing than in mathematics and reading.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are disabled or have special educational needs have made similar progress to other groups of pupils. Like other pupils, their progress is improving, in their case as a result of better-targeted special activities including one-to-one tutoring in reading, writing and mathematics funded by the pupil premium. This effective support means the school is improving the way it tries to give pupils equal opportunities. There is no difference in the progress made by pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although improving, teaching is not yet good because it does not ensure consistently good progress for pupils currently in the school. Where teaching requires improvement, in Key Stage 1 and parts of Key Stage 2, work set for pupils is too hard for some and too easy for others to ensure they all move on rapidly, or time is wasted in lessons.
- In the weaker lessons, work is sometimes at the wrong level because teachers' planning takes too little account of the range of abilities in the class. In particular, the work planned is not

challenging enough for the more able pupils. In these lessons learning does not get off to a prompt start because introductory activities keep pupils sitting on the carpet for too long listening rather than being actively involved.

- In some classes, pupils have not developed sufficient ability to work independently and show initiative in their learning. If they get stuck they sometimes have to wait too long for help and support.
- In the best lessons, enthusiastic teaching engages the pupils by using a variety of activities and a good range of resources, including information and communication technology. For example, in a Reception class where the children were learning about shape, their engagement and learning were enhanced by the use of a sing-along video and other appropriate and stimulating resources. Pupils were eager to answer the well-directed questions posed by the teacher, which ensured that children were able to share their knowledge and make good progress.
- Teachers' marking has improved and in the best examples good feedback to pupils includes steps that will help them improve their work. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils are beginning to respond to their teacher's comments. However, this good practice is not consistently applied across all year groups and pupils do not always know how to improve their work.
- Teaching contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well because the school's values are clearly understood by all staff and regularly communicated to the pupils. The curriculum allows pupils to find out about other cultures and religions, their local environment and many aspects of art and music.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because pupils are not given enough opportunities to be fully involved in their learning and work without extra support. When teachers talk for too long or when activities are not well matched to pupils' abilities the attention of pupils is not held and this leads to a minority of pupils becoming restless or unreceptive in lessons.
- There is a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the school that is reflected in pupils' regular and improving attendance, which is now above the national average.
- Pupils are polite, helpful and respectful to each other and adults, as demonstrated in lessons where they have to work together in groups or with partners.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree that they are safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that any disruptions in lessons or bullying incidents are dealt with appropriately because teachers consistently apply the school's behaviour management policy.
- Pupils are not always encouraged to develop independence because teachers sometimes tell them what to do too much. In the Early Years Foundation Stage independent learning skills are very well promoted.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The new headteacher is strongly supported by governors and staff and has quickly gained the confidence of parents and carers. She has made a rigorous evaluation of the school to provide an accurate picture of its performance and identify the right priorities. However, leadership and management require improvement because teachers in charge of parts of the school or subjects are not yet fully playing their part in improvement, and governors have not yet established a consistent pattern of challenging the school.
- Improvements to teaching show that the school has the capacity to improve further. The school's leaders and managers demonstrate their commitment and are developing the skills to bring about the rapid improvement required. However, the school is aware that middle leaders

have carried out only limited monitoring of lessons, planning and pupils' books. There have been few opportunities for teachers to learn from the good practice of others, using aspects of the best teaching as models.

- The headteacher has established an effective system to check on pupils' progress. All leaders and managers, including governors, now have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to improve. The school's plans set out priorities and actions for improvement and clearly show what has to be done, who will deal with each action and how impact will be measured.
 - In the past the monitoring of the quality of teaching was inaccurate and as a result, a few teachers are being financially rewarded at a level not connected closely enough to the quality of their teaching. The monitoring process is now more robust and judgements on teaching quality are more accurate. The performance management procedures have been reviewed and strengthened. The school uses the national 'Teacher's Standards' as its benchmark for what good teaching looks like and expects all staff to come up to scratch.
 - Parents and carers say they can see improvements in their children's progress in the short time the headteacher has been in post. The school works particularly well with families whose circumstances are more difficult and parents and carers feel involved in supporting their children's education.
 - The school's curriculum fulfils statutory requirements but the provision the school makes for writing requires improvement. There is limited emphasis on ensuring pupils develop writing skills in other subjects or in topic work, and limited attention is given to developing higher-level writing skills in Key Stage 2. Pupils' learning is enhanced with a good range of enrichment opportunities and extra-curricular visits, which makes learning enjoyable.
 - The local authority has worked closely with the school to speed up the rate of pupils' progress. This has included support with the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), training the governing body, and supporting the new headteacher.
 - **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has the skills and shows a willingness to confront problems and take effective action. It wisely recruited an experienced and high quality headteacher for September 2012. Members of the governing body know the school well and work closely with staff and senior leaders. They are regularly in the school taking part in learning walks or listening to pupils read. Governors have received the necessary training to be able to check that senior leaders are securing rapid improvement. However, governors' minutes show that in the past when they have asked relevant questions to challenge the school, for example, in relation to pupils' achievement, they have not always been given accurate information and as a result failed to react quickly enough. The governing body ensures that the pupil premium is spent wisely to help overcome barriers to pupils' learning. They are now ensuring that teachers' performance management is carried out appropriately. They also ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities, so that all staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100114
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	400391

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	366
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jack Smith
Headteacher	Marcia Crow
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 November 2009
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