

Mortimer Primary School

Mortimer Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 0RW

Inspection dates 18–19 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Mortimer Primary is outstanding. This includes the pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding across the school. Teachers have high expectations, are very enthusiastic and bring out the best in the pupils. Learning is a real partnership between the teachers and their pupils.
- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards that are consistently above those found nationally.
- Teaching assistants provide outstanding support, so that those pupils who have additional needs make outstanding progress.
- This school is an exciting place to be where everyone respects each other. Extensive and attractive wall displays celebrate the pupils' work and everywhere you go pupils are busy and purposefully occupied.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The mature way in which they work together in lessons is a major factor in their successful learning. Pupils genuinely celebrate the successes of others and promote safety extremely well.
- The school provides an extensive range of additional opportunities to enhance learning and this promotes exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have many meaningful cultural experiences, especially in music and the arts. They have, however, fewer opportunities to deepen their understanding of variety of cultures that exist in the United Kingdom today.
- Leaders work together very effectively and they have been instrumental in bringing about many improvements since the previous inspection, such as pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Governors are very knowledgeable and highly involved with the school. They have helped the school to improve by holding it to account extremely well, keeping leaders on their toes.
- Parents think very highly of the school. One parent told the inspectors that the school deserves '10 out of 10'.
- Pupils say there is nothing that they would change about their school. As one pupil put 'It's a privilege to be here'.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 24 teachers teaching 28 lessons. Two observations were conducted jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, and carried out analyses of pupils’ books and other work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read individually and talked to them about how much reading they do, as well as observing pupils read in class.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, development planning, the quality of teaching and information about teachers’ professional development.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors analysed 48 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alison Thomson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Wendy Richardson

Additional Inspector

Barbara Waugh

Additional Inspector

Timothy Nelson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mortimer is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is lower than average
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Deepen pupils' understanding of cultures, other than their own, particularly those represented in the United Kingdom today by:
 - providing the pupils with more first-hand experiences of other cultures
 - building links with other schools that have a different ethnic mix of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the Nursery with skills that are generally slightly below those expected. They make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because provision is outstanding. Between Year 1 and 6, pupils continue to make outstanding progress and leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in writing in Key Stage 2, because of outstanding leadership and management, improved teaching and extremely rigorous checking of each pupil's progress.
- During the inspection, pupils made outstanding progress in many lessons seen and it was never less than good. Pupils learn extremely well together and they rise to the many challenges given, whether it is Nursery children designing a fantasy world, Year 2 pupils writing instructions for making a Christmas cracker or Year 6 pupils using their knowledge of the equivalence of fractions to solve the problem of maximising the portion size of Mars bars.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils eligible for pupil premium also make outstanding progress. This is because of the excellent support they receive from teaching assistants directed extremely well by the teachers. They provide excellent support in class, in small groups and also on a one-to-one basis.
- Pupils' progress in reading is outstanding. This is the result of frequent reading sessions throughout the school and by additional sessions to help those less able to keep up with the others so that they do not fall behind. Pupils develop a real love of reading. Inspectors observed small groups of pupils who chose to read outside in the playground at break and lunchtimes.
- Pupils' literacy, numeracy and communication skills are outstanding and prepare them extremely well for their future. This is because the pupils have plenty of opportunities to practice these skills as they are seamlessly integrated into many lessons. Pupils eagerly told the inspectors of their engineering project designing courses for robots and business enterprise project to run a healthy tuck shop.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The majority of teaching is outstanding and it is never less than consistently good. Teachers are extremely enthusiastic and make learning really fun. They plan lessons in detail with work that is matched precisely to the different needs of their pupils.
- Teaching assistants very effectively support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs by carefully adapting the work and by expertly questioning the pupils to check their understanding. This was often seen during the inspection, both in classes and also in small-group work.
- More-able pupils are catered for extremely well too, with plenty of activities that provide extra challenges. The inspectors saw this many times, for example in a Year 4 mathematics lesson on constructing tangrams (a Chinese geometric puzzle), to make up nativity scenes.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent and the way teachers organise their classrooms helps pupils to learn really well. Teachers fully involve pupils in their learning, continually making sure that their pupils know how well they are learning. For example, pupils use checklists, often drawn up by themselves. Pupils' work is displayed in very imaginative ways and this generates a real sense of pride in their achievement and buzz among the pupils. It was a treat to see Christmas celebrated so well in the pupils' work, such as, displays of the cards they had made with personalised messages written inside. This is just one of the ways that teaching promotes the pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers mark pupils' work very thoroughly. As well as giving praise and correcting mistakes, teachers make many comments which help pupils to know exactly how they can improve their

work and there are many examples of pupils responding to their comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and school records indicate that it has been so for some time. Parents, staff and visitors to the school all compliment the pupils on their model behaviour. The pupils set very high standards for themselves. They rate their behaviour as nine out of 10, as they say there is always room to improve even further.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes have a highly positive impact on their learning. They are enthusiastic and keen to do well in lessons. This was shown particularly well in a Year 6 English lesson where 'miners', 'maids' and 'factory workers' confidently gave persuasive speeches to Mr Gladstone about the need to reform children's working conditions in Victorian times.
- Pupils say that they feel extremely safe at school. They have a very keen awareness of the different forms that bullying can take and say pupils rarely fall out. Pupils who perform roles as 'school mentors' work very proactively at lunchtimes to seek out others who may want a friend to talk to or play with. Pupils describe their school as a very friendly one and a place where people respect each other. This was well illustrated during an assembly where pupils eagerly applauded other pupils who had been awarded house points for excellent work or attitudes.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. Many pupils have special jobs and all are proud to do them. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils were observed enjoying reading to Reception aged children the books they had created using PowerPoint. It was very touching to see the Reception children listening so attentively to their Year 5 partners.
- The school council represents pupils very well. They say they always have safeguarding on their meeting agendas and are particularly proud of their notices instructing people to walk on the right, not only to consider safety, but also because the right hand side of the double doors open more easily.
- Attendance of all groups of pupils is consistently above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school's leadership team, including those who are in charge of different subjects, is outstanding. The headteacher delegates responsibility extremely well and always brings out the best in the staff. Leaders complement each other extremely well and have brought about many improvements since the previous inspection. There is, however, no sense of complacency and everyone is keen to keep on improving.
- Systems for checking how well pupils are learning are very thorough. Any pupil who is in danger of not progressing as well as they might do is identified early and helped to catch up well. As a result, there are no significant gaps between the performances of different groups of pupils. This reflects the inclusiveness of the school and its intolerance of discrimination.
- By regularly observing the quality of teaching in lessons and by providing staff with feedback on how they can improve and any necessary training, leaders have very successfully improved the quality of teaching so that it is never less than good and most is outstanding. A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted, which is linked to the pay scales. Teachers are held to account for the progress of their pupils extremely well. They feel that their strengths are valued, know exactly what they can do to make their teaching even better and are extremely well supported in doing so.
- The responses to staff questionnaires show that staff are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. 'It is a pleasure to work in this school where people co-operate and work as a team for the benefit of the children' is typical of many staff comments.
- The curriculum is skilfully adapted to the interests of the pupils and there are many occasions

where it is extended beyond the classroom. There is a wealth of clubs, visits and visitors. Pupils say these are some of the reasons that they like their school so much. They talk excitedly of singing at Durham cathedral, helping to create sculptures in the playgrounds, and the visits of their local Member of Parliament and the 'X-Factor' winner to their assemblies. Many of these opportunities also promote pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Pupils have a good understanding of some other cultures. Nursery children, for example, recently had a visitor to tell them about Eid. Their understanding of cultures, other than their own, however, is not yet fully developed because the pupils do not have enough first-hand experiences or close enough links with other schools that are different to theirs in terms of the ethnic mix and backgrounds of pupils.
- The school's safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides good support for the school and has helped the school to improve, particularly in developing the effectiveness of leadership and management.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very closely involved with the school and there is no doubt that they, too, have helped the school to improve. Governors are frequent visitors and have an excellent knowledge of the quality of teaching through observing lessons, helping teaching and learning to become outstanding. They are very well trained in many areas including understanding about pupils' attainment and progress. The latter is an aspect that has improved and has helped the pupils' attainment to rise. Governors are fully involved with the allocation of the school's finances, including the funding for pupils eligible for pupil premium. They ensure that teachers' pay is linked closely to their performance. They hold the school to account extremely well and say that they are determined that the school should continue to be even better and better.

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	108673
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	403070

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	631
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeremy Cripps
Headteacher	Geoff Seagrove
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
Telephone number	0191 4554504
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