

Mora Primary School

Mora Road, Cricklewood, London, NW2 6TD

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Standards are not rising fast enough in Key Stage 1.
- Some lessons do not meet the needs of the most able learners and those who are at early stages of learning English.
- Teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in, and take greater responsibility for, their own learning.
- Pupils are not always encouraged to respond to teachers' comments in order to improve their work.
- Although attendance is improving, it is still below the national average.
- Middle leaders do not have enough opportunities to observe the quality of teaching.
- The governing body is not sufficiently knowledgeable in understanding the school's performance data or how effectively resources are used to overcome barriers to learning.
- Governors do not know enough about the systems for managing the performance of staff or how it is linked to raising pupils' achievement or to salary progression.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are relentless in their drive to bring about improvements and their vision is shared by other leaders. As a result, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are improving.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school and teaching helps children make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' phonic skills (associating letters and sounds) are well developed, as seen in their higher than average phonics screening scores at the end of Year 1. As a result, pupils show confidence and enjoyment in reading.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good, as are their attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are well cared for and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 25 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior leaders.
- The inspectors met with two groups of pupils, four members of the governing body, senior leaders and managers and a representative from the local authority. In addition, the inspectors also spoke to parents and carers in the playground at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own monitoring and performance data, school development plan and self-evaluation, and records relating to behaviour, safety and safeguarding. Pupils' books were also scrutinised to look at progress, the quality of marking and feedback and curriculum coverage.
- The inspectors considered 12 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors took account of 26 responses received from parents and carers (Parent View).

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Ridding	Additional Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the extra funding from the government (the pupil premium) is well above the average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language are well above average. Most of these pupils are also eligible for free school meals.
- A high proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not make alternative provision for any pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and increase pupils' progress rates more rapidly, particularly at Key Stage 1, by improving the quality of teaching so that teachers consistently:
 - ensure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in all lessons
 - ensure pupils who are at early stages of learning English as an additional language are always supported effectively in lessons to develop their language skills further
 - give pupils more opportunity to write at length in order to develop their ideas
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in, and taking, greater responsibility for their own learning
- Encourage pupils and provide them with further opportunities to respond to teachers' written feedback to improve their work further and develop their self-assessment skills.
- Improve attendance further so that it is at least average or better by:
 - maintaining stronger links with parents and carers, particularly those who have recently arrived, so that they fully support the school's efforts to improve their children's attendance.
- Strengthen the impact of middle leaders by:
 - providing more opportunities for middle managers to observe the quality of teaching across the school in order to identify good practice and then build on it.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Rates of progress are variable across the school and are not rapid enough in Key Stage 1 to enable pupils to reach the standards expected in Year 2.
- Pupils' achievement in school is affected by the high and frequent turnover of pupils. The progress of pupils who join and leave at different times is not as good as that of their peers due to the disruptions in their learning.
- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress by the end of Reception but their attainment is still below average when they join Year 1.
- Pupils did particularly well in the end of Year 1 phonic screening check in 2012, reaching higher standards than those seen nationally. Pupils' phonic skills are well developed, as seen in the progress pupils make in their reading across the school, including the weaker readers who are able to blend sounds to read unfamiliar words. As a result, there is a real enjoyment of reading.
- Pupils make good or better progress in Key Stage 2. Progress in 2012 was stronger than previous years, particularly in writing and mathematics. The school's data show that pupils make rapid progress in Year 6, particularly in reading. Although pupils attained better results in both English and mathematics in 2012 compared to the previous year, they are still below the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good quality support from skilled teaching assistants, both in and out of lessons. This enables many to make good progress.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils eligible for the pupil premium do well and start to catch up with their peers. In Key Stage 2, the attainment of this group of pupils is much lower than that of other pupils, as seen in their average point scores in the Year 6 national tests. These scores are greatly affected by the high proportion of these pupils who join the school during Key Stage 2, often at the early stages of learning English. These pupils are supported well by additional teachers, booster classes and extra-curricular clubs and visits.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language in Key Stage 2 made better progress in English in 2012 than the previous year. However, they still do less well than other pupils, particularly in writing. This is because some of them do not always get the support they need in some lessons across the school to improve their speaking and writing skills, particularly those at early stages of learning English.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time is not of a consistently high quality, especially at Key Stage 1, to bring about the required rapid improvement in pupils' attainment.
- The headteacher, together with senior leaders, has had a strong focus on monitoring and improving the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children are appropriately assessed and challenged to meet their needs, with good opportunities to develop their language, communication and number skills through appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.
- Pupils' attainment data and an examination of their work show that teaching over time is stronger in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1.
- In lessons, teachers make good use of their questioning skills to test pupils' understanding. They model sentences for pupils, reinforce the correct use of vocabulary and provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to talk with their talking partners. However, in some lessons there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write their ideas at length because they spend too much

time jotting notes on their mini-whiteboards before moving on to write sentences in their books independently.

- The quality of marking of pupils' work has improved since the previous inspection and pupils are given good feedback on how to improve their work. However, pupils are not always encouraged to respond to teachers' comments to further their understanding.
- In some lessons, there is too much teacher talk. As a result, pupils are not always actively involved in their own learning. This applies particularly to the most able pupils who have to wait too long for challenging tasks to enable them to reach their potential.
- Teaching assistants are effectively used in and out of classrooms when they work with small groups of pupils, particularly those who are of lower ability, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. This helps them to make similar progress to that of other pupils.
- Reading skills are taught well and pupils are effectively supported by their teachers and teaching assistants to become confident readers. Pupils enjoy reading, and weaker readers are taught effectively to use their phonic skills through blending sounds to read difficult or unfamiliar words.
- Some pupils who are at early stages of learning English do not always get sufficiently targeted support in the classroom to accelerate the development of their speaking and writing skills.

Mathematics is taught well overall, with tasks which meet the needs and interest of most learners. Pupils in a Year 1 lesson were taught well to use their mental mathematics skills to work out numbers on a number line. A Year 2 lesson focused well on using counting skills to solve real-life money problems, while a Year 4 lesson helped pupils develop their everyday life skills in measuring for 'do-it-yourself' work around the house.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good because they know the school rules well and take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and friendly and relate well to adults, including visitors. They say behaviour is good and they feel safe in the school. Pupils learn about road safety and know about the different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe from the potential risks of the internet, including cyber-bullying. As one pupil commented, 'They teach us to be respectful and how to keep ourselves safe.' All parents and carers agree that their children feel safe.
- Most parents and carers agree that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved and that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and respect for cultural diversity, which are promoted through the citizenship curriculum. Inspectors' observations of playtime show that boys and girls from different ethnic backgrounds get on well with each other.
- Pupils feel that they can easily turn to their teachers and support staff if they have any concerns. The school also has a programme of 'place 2 be and place to talk' to support pupils who may have any concerns about behaviour and their well-being.
- Occasionally, a small minority of pupils find it difficult to maintain good behaviour in lessons, particularly in lessons that are not so engaging. As a result, they become a bit restless and lose concentration with their learning.

Although attendance has improved since the previous inspection due to the school's successful strategies, it is still below average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The leadership and management have yet to ensure that the quality of teaching over time is consistently good in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment, especially at Key Stage 1.
- The headteacher, supported by a highly capable acting deputy headteacher and a strong senior

team, has been effective in improving the quality of teaching and progress of pupils. The headteacher inspires staff, and morale is high in the school.

- The quality of the work of middle managers has improved since the previous inspection. They are well supported in their roles and are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. As a result, they have a good picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, some of them have too few opportunities to observe the quality of teaching across the school and this restricts their potential to make improvements.
 - The headteacher has considerably strengthened the performance management system, with a stronger link with pupil progress. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved. There is also a closer link now between the quality of teaching and teachers' progression on the salary scale.
 - The school has quite rightly identified the main priorities in its school improvement plan, including raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching. However, the success criteria are not always specific enough or linked to deadlines and this makes it difficult for senior leaders and governors to monitor outcomes effectively.
 - The school has rigorous systems to identify and target those pupils falling behind so they can be helped to close the gaps in attainment and to ensure there is equality of opportunity for all pupils. However, the impact of the use of the pupil premium on outcomes for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is not routinely assessed.
 - The curriculum is broad and balanced and has improved since the last inspection, particularly through the introduction of the International Primary Curriculum, which promotes good links between subjects, for example in science and humanities, and includes opportunities for writing in a range of contexts. However, the school's curriculum does not always meet the needs of all the pupils, particularly the higher attainers and those at early stages of learning English.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and is promoted through music, singing, dance, sport, extra-curricular activities, visits to different places of worship, learning Spanish and respect for cultural diversity.
 - The local authority has provided some support for the school on improving the quality of teaching. This has had a positive impact.
 - The school, through the work of the governors, has been successful in developing stronger links with parents. However, parents and carers of pupils who are new arrivals are not always fully engaged with their children's education and the school. Nearly all parents and carers in the Parent View agreed that the school responds well to their concerns.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement because governors have not had enough training to enhance their skills in the use of pupil performance data, and do not know enough about the performance management of staff or its link with improving the quality of teaching, raising achievement and salary progression. In addition, governors lack understanding of how pupil premium funding is used and its impact on the outcomes for pupils eligible for this funding. Nevertheless, governors are committed to bringing about improvements. They know the school's main strengths and areas for development, including the impact of mobility on pupils' attainment. They have made a positive contribution to the development of policies and initiatives, including homework, stronger links with parents, after-school clubs and developing the playground. Through the support of the local authority's school improvement officer, governors are fully involved in the performance management of the headteacher. Governors have set up meetings to look at future planning and vision for the school; this work informs the school improvement plan. The governors ensure that arrangements for safeguarding fully meet statutory requirements.
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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	101530
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	400486

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	439
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Carter
Headteacher	Nicola Denton
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 November 2009
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