

# Moorlands Primary School

Kesteven way, Bitterne, Southampton, SO18 5RJ

**Inspection dates** 7–8 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Pupils' achievement is not consistent throughout the school. In some classes pupils' progress is too variable.
- Too few pupils are making the progress of which they are capable in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is not yet leading to good learning for all pupils.
- The sharing of good methods and ideas among teachers is inconsistent.
- Recent initiatives to improve teaching and progress have not yet had enough impact on pupils' achievement.
- Middle leaders are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring the progress made by pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides ambitious leadership and she is supported well by other leaders in the school in a drive to raise standards.
- Teaching is improving steadily and this is leading to better pupil achievement.
- The school is a welcoming community, which encourages all pupils to respect others and behave well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well cared for and make good progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, of which two were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and carried out a thorough examination of their written work throughout the school.
- Inspectors talked with pupils about their experiences in school and heard groups of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff with particular responsibilities, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- A variety of school documentation was examined, including the school's own information about the progress of current pupils, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, behaviour and attendance logs, records relating to safeguarding, and records relating to the management of staff performance.
- Inspectors took account of a questionnaire completed by 22 staff, together with 28 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online questionnaire Parent View.

## Inspection team

Sean Thornton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lucy Williams

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils are taught in nine single-age classes.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that the good features of teaching present in the school, relating to pace, questioning, challenge and supportive marking, are developed consistently by all staff.
- Raise the standards of pupils' achievement by:
  - ensuring that pupils' progress is consistently strong throughout the school and that boys and girls all make this progress
  - increasing the numbers of pupils who reach and exceed national standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Improve leadership and management by strengthening the roles of the deputy headteacher and middle leaders in the detailed monitoring of pupils' progress and in the planning for improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school. Progress varies between classes and rates of progress vary between girls and boys, for example in 2012 boys made better progress than girls in mathematics.
- Children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are below those usually found for their age. In these classes they make good progress in their communication skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. They begin to learn how to blend letters and sounds through a phonics programme that helps them to read.
- Achievement at the end of Year 2 is now good, with pupils making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in the national checks to check Year 1 pupils' understanding of phonics far exceed the national average because this is taught well by staff who are skilled at teaching reading.
- Progress between Year 3 and Year 6 is variable; pupils do not make consistent increases in their knowledge and understanding of English and mathematics. This has resulted in the numbers of pupils reaching the expected standards being below national averages at the end of Year 6. However, the school is addressing this variation. The numbers of pupils making at least expected progress in English increased to a national level in 2012 and evidence gained during the inspection indicates that standards in mathematics are increasing rapidly.
- Pupils' progress is now assessed frequently. Challenging targets are set and when pupils fall behind they are given extra support to catch up quickly.
- Pupils show good ability in expressing their views orally; they use a wide and appropriate vocabulary.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school as a result of the appropriate support that they receive.
- All the pupils who benefit from additional funding through the pupil premium are those who are entitled to free school meals. They make better progress than other pupils in their classes. These pupils gain average points scores in both English and mathematics that are higher than their peers and above national figures for similar groups.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has been too variable between classes and requires improvement. There are examples of good and outstanding practice, but this has not yet been shared effectively so that all pupils are not enabled to make good progress.
- In some lessons teachers' explanations are not clear enough, so that pupils do not understand fully what they are meant to achieve, and the progress of all groups of pupils is not checked frequently.
- The marking of pupils' work is variable in quality. Some provides praise for specific achievements and clear advice on how to improve, but there are also examples of brief marking that lacks detail and gives pupils little useful advice.
- The school's increased focus on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning is becoming established. Teachers are now working in teams to develop joint strategies that lead to improvement.
- Some good and outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. In these lessons pupils responded with enthusiasm to a range of well-chosen activities with varied levels of challenge and assessed their own progress against well-understood criteria for success. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils solved complicated problems that involved the full range of

basic number skills and included the understanding of both volume and length.

- There is an emphasis on helping pupils to become independent in their learning by giving them many choices in the levels of their activities.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage teaching is good and there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Language is developed through play and the phonics programme lays the foundations for the development of reading in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs thrive as a result of good teaching, characterised by appropriate teaching approaches, a supportive classroom atmosphere and effective partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are proud of their school and have good attitudes to their learning. They are polite, friendly and hardworking. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school, that bullying is rare and when it occurs they are confident that the school deals with it promptly. They show a good understanding of the dangers of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and racism.
- Older pupils recognise that in several ways the school has improved recently. Pupils are able to give their views through the school council and their views are respected.
- Pupils speak warmly about all staff in the school and report that there is 'always someone to look after us and help us'.
- Attendance is average. The school is striving to reduce the amount of absence by stressing to parents and carers the disadvantages of taking pupils on holiday during term times.
- Staff, parents and carers agree that behaviour is usually good, that pupils feel safe and that teachers and teaching assistants follow the school's behaviour policy.
- The school provides sensitive support for pupils and families whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Staff work effectively with external agencies to ensure these families receive all the help they need.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- There have been several changes of role within the school's leadership team and these changes have resulted in much improved systems for tracking pupils' progress, assessing the quality of teaching and organising extra support. However, many of these initiatives have not yet had enough time to have had a sustained impact on standards.
- Staffing issues in the school have led to uneven pupil progress but these challenges are being addressed strongly by the headteacher, supported by the school's governors.
- The school's current self-evaluation is accurate and leads to a well-written and detailed school improvement plan that centres on raising pupils' achievement. For example, following disappointing Year 6 results in mathematics in 2012, improving standards in this area have been made a top priority.
- School leaders now check-up very closely on teaching and its impact on learning. Their judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate and they identify where improvement is required. This is leading to better standards. However, the middle leaders are not given sufficient opportunity to check and monitor how well pupils are progressing and they have too little involvement in school improvement.
- Throughout the school pupils benefit from a wide range of subjects and well-planned activities. Pupils appreciate the teaching of Italian in Years 3 to 6, the focus on science and the skilled

music tuition that they receive. There is a wide variety of enrichment activities that take place outside the main school day; this broadens pupils' learning experiences.

- The school promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development effectively. Many opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work, relationships and behaviour are included in their learning. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is broadened by 'global days' and partnerships with schools in Italy and India.
- Parents and carers are fully involved in the life of the school. They are regularly welcomed to take part in school activities and their opinions about the school, as recorded on Parent View, are positive.
- The pupil premium funding is targeted well. It is used to provide small-group support in phonics, reading, spelling and mathematics as well as in strategies to increase attendance. The school demonstrates a strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all its pupils.
- The school and its governors take the safety and well-being of pupils seriously and have good systems in place that meet all safeguarding requirements.
- The system of performance management for teachers is effective and has been updated to respond to government changes. The system is closely aligned with personalised programmes for staff development. Salary progression occurs only when merited by sustained good performance.
- The local authority provides effective support and challenge, for example by providing the headteacher with a wide range of leadership development and confirming the accuracy of the school's assessments.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is reorganising its systems to complement the work of the recently appointed headteacher. Governors benefit from a wide range of training, including the use of Raiseonline, which helps them to understand data about the performance of their school and how it compares with similar schools. They are beginning to challenge school leaders as well as support them. Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and visit lessons so that they can give informed views about the quality of teaching and learning. They are becoming fully involved in the performance management system for all teaching staff so that the financial consequences of all promotions are discussed in detail. Governors manage the school's finances well and check the effectiveness of the pupil premium.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116127
<b>Local authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	401561

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Cooke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Potter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380 464404
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