

Morley Place Junior School

Old Road, Conisbrough, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN12 3LZ

Inspection dates

26–27 March 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		Requires improvement	3
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

- There is insufficient good teaching for pupils to achieve well throughout the school.
- Teachers do not always provide work that is an accurate match to pupils' capabilities. This is especially the case for more-able pupils.
- Marking does not consistently tell pupils what they have done well and how to improve it. It is not regularly linked to clearly worded targets.
- Pupils' work is often not neat and well laid out.
- Pupils do not have regular opportunities to build-up their reading, writing and spelling skills through their knowledge of phonics (the sounds made by letters). They have limited opportunities to improve their vocabulary through speaking and listening activities and longer writing tasks.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise specific literacy and especially numeracy skills are not routinely incorporated into other subjects.
- Behaviour in lessons is not always good. Not all teachers have the same high expectations of pupils' behaviour or use the behaviour management policy in the same way.
- Data about pupils' progress are not collected regularly enough by teachers. Leaders are not consistently checking that this information is used accurately in lessons to speed-up pupils' progress.
- Leaders at all levels are not consistently checking in enough detail the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The gap in the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium compared with other pupils in the school is narrowing due to the effective use of this funding.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school.
- There are good systems to improve pupils' attendance which has risen for the past three years. Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors know what further steps are required to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' achievement.
- Performance management is improving teachers' skills.
- Governors are knowledgeable and give good support to senior leaders.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors watched 15 lessons. Two were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also listened to pupils read, watched pupils at break and lunch times, and attended an assembly.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and subject leaders, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.
- There were no recorded responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) so the inspectors analysed the school's very recent parental questionnaire. The findings from the 24 staff questionnaires were also taken into account.
- The inspectors looked at the school's work, including its information about the progress of groups of pupils in each year, records of the quality of teaching and the school development plan. They also looked at samples of pupils' work, policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils, and attendance records.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Dina Martin

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after pupils, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well above the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught in mixed-age classes.
- There have been several staffing changes from September 2012, with two teachers, five support assistants and some subject leaders new in post.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better and pupils can make at least good progress, by making sure that:
 - tasks are an accurate match to the levels at which pupils work, especially for the more able
 - marking tells pupils what they have learnt well and how to make further progress, and makes links to clearly worded targets
 - pupils' work is always neat and well laid-out.
- Raise standards in literacy and numeracy by making sure that pupils:
 - have regular opportunities to practise, in a range of subjects, the specific literacy and particularly the numeracy skills they have learnt
 - are able to build-up their reading, writing and spelling skills through their knowledge of phonics
 - improve their vocabulary through regular opportunities for speaking and listening and longer writing tasks.
- Make sure that pupils always behave well in lessons by ensuring that:
 - staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour
 - staff use the behaviour management policy.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels by ensuring that:
 - data about pupils' progress are collected more frequently by teachers, and leaders ensure their accurate use in helping to speed-up progress
 - the headteacher reviews more regularly the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils are not making quick enough progress throughout the school because teaching is not regularly good.
- Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. The school's information about the achievement of pupils in all year groups, evidence from lesson observations and from pupils' work over the year, show that most pupils are making the progress expected of them from their starting points. This has been supported by the local authority's checking of pupils' levels when they join Year 3, which vary from below average to average.
- A far lower proportion than nationally reach higher levels. Pupils' work is not planned carefully enough to enable them to develop and secure deeper levels of knowledge and understanding in English and mathematics and to use their skills to solve problems. For that reason, a lower proportion of pupils than nationally make better than expected progress.
- Leaders know that too many pupils do not have the vocabulary skills that they need to strengthen their speaking, reading and writing. Teachers are concentrating on doing this and there are pockets of stronger practice. However, opportunities are being missed in some classes for speaking and listening activities and longer writing tasks. This is aggravated by phonics not being regularly used as a way of building-up reading skills to enable pupils to broaden their vocabulary.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other groups of pupils. Teaching and support enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to have equal opportunities to make progress.
- The school has used pupil premium funding appropriately to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. All classes now have at least one support assistant and pupils are strengthening their reading and writing skills through small-group work and one-to-one tuition. In English, the standard (average point score) achieved by pupils in the school known to be eligible for free school meals is lower in both English and mathematics than it is for other pupils. However, this gap in attainment has narrowed to two terms in English and one term in mathematics. The funding is also being used successfully to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem through extra activities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Not enough teaching is good and therefore it is taking longer than it should for standards to rise. While there is some good teaching, there is too much inconsistency across the school to accelerate pupils' progress.
- In particular, teachers are not always using the school's reliable data to plan lessons that provide work that is an accurate match to pupils' levels of attainment. Therefore, it does not enable them to produce their very best work, especially for those capable of reaching the highest levels. In a few lessons, pupils of all abilities spend time doing the same work, including in mixed-age classes, which is too difficult for some and too easy for others.
- However, in an effective mathematics lesson, pupils added good value to their understanding of 'rounding' up and down decimal numbers because pupils were challenged well by a range of tasks and the teacher constantly checked their progress towards their goals.
- Some marking is very helpful in telling pupils what they have learnt well and how to make further progress. It is variable, though. It is not always linked closely to pupils' targets, which are not always stated clearly enough. Many pupils take pride in presenting their work well but, again, teachers' expectations of the layout and neatness of pupils' work are inconsistent, as is the correction of wrongly spelt words.
- Staff enthuse pupils to want to do well. When lessons have a brisk pace and pupils have plenty

of chances to learn for themselves, they become engrossed in learning and make good progress. In some classes, teachers encourage pupils to check their classmates' work, which makes them more aware of the quality of their own work and how to improve it.

- Pupils who find learning difficult receive extra support. When it is carefully planned, pupils make quickening progress. Support in lessons is not always given from the start and assistants are not always involved enough in guiding pupils and making sure that they understand what they have to learn.
- Pupils' literacy development is being supported by increasing chances for pupils to practise their skills in other subjects, such as in science. The tasks on these occasions are not consistently linked to the literacy skills that pupils have just learnt and which they need to practise. There are few opportunities for pupils to practise numeracy skills in other subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Many pupils show good attitudes towards learning and behave well in lessons, but when teaching does not interest them, some become restless and distract each other.
- In lessons where the behaviour policy is used consistently and staff's expectations of behaviour are high, behaviour is good.
- Behaviour around the school is good and pupils are courteous to visitors and to each other.
- Pupils and their parents say that the school is a safe place. Pupils know that there are various types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and racist bullying. They are confident that the staff will deal with any hurtful words or actions quickly.
- Pupils enjoy helping to improve the school and told inspectors they would like more opportunities to help to do this, for instance, through being monitors. A few pupils who spoke to the inspectors said they would like to help amend the behaviour policy so that it works better.
- There are regular opportunities, including in assemblies, for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, and through art, music and historical themes.
- Attendance has risen for the last three years, helped by the school's good strategies, and is now above average.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders and managers at all levels are striving to improve teaching but they have not had sufficient impact to ensure it is good. Their checking of teaching is not sufficiently detailed to identify promptly where teaching needs improvement and to support pupils' good progress over time.
- All of the staff, led by the headteacher and the governors, are committed to improving the school's effectiveness. Data give them all the information they need and teachers are being given more responsibility for acting on what this information tells them about pupils' progress. However, the information is not collected often enough to ensure an up-to-date picture of pupils' progress and not all staff use data accurately in setting work for pupils.
- Leaders monitor the school's work and are very focused on improving pupils' learning. They have, for example, identified the importance of strengthening pupils' vocabulary. They know that their monitoring is not yet sufficiently systematic or wide-ranging. For example, they do not gather enough information by checking pupils' exercise books and the level of challenge in their work. Although the headteacher monitors teaching, learning and progress, this is not within a planned cycle.
- Improving teaching is, rightly, the school's main priority. The school improvement plan identifies the issues but is not specific enough in stating exactly what needs to be done to improve teaching. By contrast, teachers' performance management targets are matched closely to what they need to improve, which is resulting in the improving practices of individual teachers. No

teachers are awarded pay rises unless there is good evidence, over time, that they have met their targets.

- The school is equally determined to ensure that pupils are safe in school. They are well cared for and this is supported by safeguarding procedures which meet the statutory requirements.
 - Pupils say that they like the half-termly themes which are interesting and give them chances to learn in different ways. Their learning is broadened by regular visitors such as authors and a local member of parliament. After-school clubs are popular and provide a good range of activities. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities, such as through pupil premium funding, but work set for pupils does not ensure that pupils can always make the progress of which they are capable.
 - Parents support the school's work and opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. Other partnerships, such as with agencies and organisations, add to pupils' opportunities to broaden their learning.
 - The local authority continues to support the school through, for example, checking the accuracy of the levels at which pupils work. It regularly checks the headway that the school is making.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors make an effective contribution to leadership of the school. The governing body is well informed about the school's performance. This is helped by its understanding of national data. Governors understand the importance of checking the progress of all groups of pupils, including those entitled to pupil premium funding. Governors, who carry out occasional observations of teaching and have links with leaders, know that teaching needs to improve further. They only agree to award pay rises if they are fully satisfied that teachers have met their targets in improving their teaching and pupils' progress. The governing body is not involved enough in checking the school's self-evaluation, although governors do challenge the work of the school regularly.
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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	106711
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	400855

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Loy
Headteacher	Alan Littlehales
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2009
Telephone number	01709 863400
Fax number	01709 863010
Email address	admin@morleyplace.doncaster.sch.uk

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