

Moorside Primary School

Chester Road, Moorside, Consett, County Durham, DH8 8EQ

Inspection dates

15–16 October 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

- Too few pupils make more than expected progress in English and mathematics because, in some classes, the pace of learning is too slow. Pupils make variable progress from their starting points.
- Teachers do not always set work that matches the different abilities of pupils, particularly the most able, and this slows progress.
- The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is not strong enough to enable pupils to improve their reading at a good rate.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to work independently in mathematics or use their skills to investigate and solve problems.
- There are too few opportunities to write at length in English and across other subjects.
- The tracking of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not always accurate.
- Senior and subject leaders are not yet fully effective in supporting the headteacher in her drive to quicken the pace of the school's improvement.
- Subject leaders are not fully confident in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Governors do not challenge the school sufficiently well to secure consistently good teaching and progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has correctly identified weaknesses. Developments are already underway to accelerate the pace of improvement in the school.
- Teachers' training and new resources are beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning in phonics.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They feel happy and safe.
- Good relationships between pupils and adults are reflected in pupils' enjoyment of school.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents are happy with the school and confirm that communication between home and school is good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. The inspector listened to readers from Year 1 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs, and subject leaders for English and mathematics. The inspector also held discussions with pupils, parents, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to allow results to be shown. However, the inspector took account of the results of the school's own questionnaire to parents (May 2013), and held discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- The responses to 17 staff questionnaires were considered.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence relating to the school's view of its own performance and plans for improvement. Work in pupils' books, school tracking data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, the school website, records relating to behaviour and attendance and information relating to safeguarding arrangements were also examined.

Inspection team

Kate Pringle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and those children in local authority care or from service families, is more than twice the national average.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus is twice the national average but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- An above average number of pupils enter or leave the school other than at the usual time.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standard in 2012. This sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- A new headteacher took up post in September 2012 and, since then, there have been a significant number of staff changes. Of the six teachers, three joined the school in September 2013 and two teachers have changed the key stages in which they teach.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to good or better in order to accelerate progress, by:
 - ensuring that the teaching of letters and sounds has good pace, meets individual needs and gives pupils good opportunities to link listening, reading and writing skills
 - increasing the pace of learning by giving pupils more time to practise their skills
 - planning to match closely the learning tasks set by teachers in order to provide appropriate levels of challenge to pupils of different abilities, especially the most able
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to work independently, explore ideas and solve problems, especially in mathematics
 - providing pupils with meaningful opportunities, linked where possible to their targets, to write at length in English and in other subjects.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - making sure that those in senior management positions work more effectively to support the headteacher and governing body in order to increase the pace of improvement of the school
 - ensuring that subject leaders fully develop their skills in order to check learning and progress in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that the tracking of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is accurate
 - improving governors' ability to support and challenge the school, by undertaking an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills well below those typical for their age. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics for several years although, in 2013, pupils in Year 6 achieved average standards in these subjects.
- The small numbers in each cohort make it difficult to make comparisons between the performance of different groups of pupils. However, it is clear that, in 2012, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by pupil premium funding attained less well in reading and writing than other pupils, but outperformed their peers in mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs made similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- Most children make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Even so, they leave the Reception Year with skills that are below those expected.
- There was a dip in attainment at Key Stage 1 in 2012 but current school data show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making faster progress. Nevertheless, their attainment is still below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The rate of pupils' progress fluctuates across classes in Key Stage 2 and accelerates in Year 6. Increasing numbers of pupils in Key Stage 2 make expected progress from their individual starting points but too few make more than expected progress. More-able pupils mostly make the expected rate of progress in line with other pupils; for many of these brighter pupils, this is not fast enough.
- In the 2012 and 2013 phonics screening check, carried out at the end of Year 1, too few pupils reached the national average standard for six year olds. This weakness is reflected in pupils' reading and writing skills. The teaching of phonics is relatively new to the school and is beginning to show some positive impact. However, pupils are not yet given sufficient opportunities to practise writing and reading the sounds they learn.
- New reading books have increased interest in reading across the school but pupils' limited phonic knowledge hampers fluency. Younger pupils are beginning to blend sounds, but too few confidently sight read common words. Year 6 readers lack confidence in their reading. They sight read common words but lack the blending strategies which would help them to tackle new vocabulary.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, overall, it requires improvement because teachers make insufficient use of pupils' previous achievement as a starting point for learning. As a result, most pupils make no more than expected progress.
- Throughout the school, teachers provide too few problem-solving opportunities for pupils to understand when, and how, mathematical skills are used in real-life situations.
- In some lessons, teachers plan introductions which are overly long. At these times, some pupils become restless as they would prefer to be working on tasks by themselves or in groups.
- In writing, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length and in different subjects. Although activities may vary for different groups of pupils, teachers' expectations of what pupils should aim to achieve are not always made clear and this means some pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. In other subjects, opportunities to write at length are limited. In addition, teachers do not ensure that pupils pay close enough attention to their English targets to support the development of their writing skills in other subjects.
- There are very good relationships between adults and pupils. Good behaviour means that pupils

engage very well and pupils are eager to please, happily working through activities.

- Teachers plan activities for pupils which enable them to practise their skills. The best of these engage pupils in tasks which challenge them to think and to use their knowledge. In mathematics, for example, pupils were challenged to use their mental agility to convert centimetres to metres and millimetres.
- Pupils know they have targets for improvement. A new marking system is in place and marking is regular and consistent across classes. Pupils understand the feedback codes and teachers provide some opportunities for pupils to return to work that has been marked and to amend or improve this. Increasingly, teachers are sharing next learning steps with pupils and so challenging them to reach higher levels in their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that they enjoy school. They behave well as they move about the school. Pupils are polite and show respect for adults and pupils alike. Pupils are confident and happily take on responsibilities.
- In classrooms, pupils usually demonstrate good attitudes to learning. However, in lessons where teachers' introductions to activities are lengthy, pupils can become restless because they want to start working on tasks.
- The start to the school day is calm as pupils enter without fuss. The breakfast club enables pupils to receive a healthy breakfast and to be ready and keen to learn.
- Levels of attendance are average. However, because of increasingly supportive links with parents and the school's higher expectations, attendance is improving.
- The school curriculum offers a range of additional activities for pupils across the school day and pupils are keen to participate. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their visits and visitors to the school, which extend their experiences and understanding of the world beyond their locality.
- Pupils feel safe coming to school and their parents agree. Pupils recognise the different forms of bullying and know that these include name-calling. When bullying or poor behaviour does take place, pupils report that staff deal with it rapidly and effectively. The use of the 'traffic light' behaviour system is consistently applied across the school and its effect is positive because pupils understand it well.
- Parents are confident that their children are happy. They say that their children enjoy coming to school because it is friendly. Their children settle quickly and newcomers are made to feel welcome. A number of parents commented that communication with the school was much improved and that there were more opportunities to feel part of their children's learning.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although the headteacher has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school, other leaders are not yet sufficiently trained to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning.
- There have been few opportunities for staff to see good practice in other schools or to work closely with other schools and external colleagues. Teachers indicated to the inspector that they would welcome such opportunities.
- Changes in staffing have given teachers new responsibilities and they have not yet had time to play their part in quickening the rate of improvement for the school. Professional development to support and guide their understanding of their roles is now in place and expectations are linked to their performance management.
- The checks that leaders make on the progress of children through the Early Years Foundation Stage are not accurate.

- The school receives a substantial amount of pupil premium funding which has been used to improve pupils' basic skills, particularly in mathematics. There is a commitment to promoting equal opportunities and to tackling discrimination.
- The headteacher has carried out a thorough audit of the school and has a very clear plan of what needs to be improved and how this will be achieved. Actions have already resulted in an increase in the number of pupils making expected progress, better attendance and the improving teaching and attainment in phonics in Year 1. She has the full support of staff and governors.
- Performance management of teachers is in place. The headteacher has an accurate view of teaching and learning across the school. More robust targets for teachers and leaders put in place this year clearly identify higher expectations which are set to raise the quality in lessons and achieve better outcomes for pupils, especially with regard to matching tasks to individual learning needs.
- The new primary sports funding from the government has been allocated to extend additional provision of sports activities during out-of-school hours, training for teachers, coaches to demonstrate excellence and more opportunities for pupils to join with other schools in sporting competition.
- The curriculum is varied and provides more opportunities for pupils to engage in a range of activities, both in and out of school, which contribute much to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements.
- The local authority has carried out its termly meetings with the school. Some changes to its personnel over the past year have not helped to quicken the pace of improvement since the last inspection. More recently, school adviser visits have ensured more focused support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the school. As a body, they recognise that, for a number of years, they have not held senior leaders to account for the quality of teaching and subsequent progress of pupils within the school. Performance management arrangements have not been robust enough and this is reflected in not enough good teaching and too few pupils making good or better rates of progress. There is a developing awareness among the governing body of what needs to be done. A number of governors are new to the role and are using their individual expertise to challenge the school as they take up their responsibilities.

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	114050
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	425800

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	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Hird
Headteacher	Helen Louise Templeton
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2012
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