

Moorlands Primary School

Kesteven Way, Bitterne, Southampton, SO18 5RJ

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and governors have built a strong team of leaders who, together, have successfully improved teaching and raised standards since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have created a culture in which teachers readily collaborate and share ideas so they continuously improve their work. This has raised standards for pupils.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their relative starting points to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are broadly average at the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs progress well because staff are skilled at adapting activities and setting work at the right level for these pupils.
- The subjects taught foster a love of learning and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Pupils behave well in class and as they move around the school. They are polite and helpful and trust and respect each other and adults. They feel safe because adults provide good care for them.
- Phase leaders play a key role in raising standards. They have a good grasp of how well pupils are doing and take steps to improve teaching.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes. They make good progress because teaching is good.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the performance of the school. They provide a good balance of support and challenge to school leaders.
- Governors and senior leaders fulfil their responsibilities for ensuring that pupils are safe in school. They have commissioned an external review of their procedures so they can be sure they meet all statutory requirements

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. A few teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do. They do not all provide work that is hard enough for pupils, particularly those who are most able, to stretch them to achieve even more.
- Not all teachers provide opportunities for pupils to correct and improve their work when it has been marked.
- Although school leaders have robust short term plans for development, they have not yet established a plan showing how the school is to develop and raise achievement further over the longer term.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. They observed eight jointly with school leaders. They looked at pupils’ work in their books and on display in classrooms and around the school. Inspectors listened to pupils reading in Year 2 and Year 6 and attended one assembly. They observed pupils’ behaviour in class and as pupils moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with four governors, including the two Co-Chairs of Governors, groups of pupils and school leaders. Inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Among the documents scrutinised were school improvement plans, minutes from governors’ meetings and school records of pupils’ attendance, attainment and progress. Inspectors took into account external reports about the school and records relating to pupils’ behaviour and safety.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 53 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and two letters received from parents. Inspectors spoke informally to parents during the inspection. The views of staff were taken into account by analysing 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Stephanie Praetig

Additional inspector

Bryan Meyer

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to the average-sized primary school and pupils are taught in single age classes. The school is expanding to become a two-form entry primary school by September 2017. Currently there are two forms in Years 1, 2 and 3 and one form in each of Years 4, 5 and 6.
- There is provision in the early years in the two Reception classes. These pupils attend full time.
- Most pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a wide range of ethnicities, although very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are entitled to the pupil premium funding is above average. The number of eligible pupils varies considerably between classes and there were very few in Year 6 in 2014. Pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support those pupils who, in this school, are eligible for free school meals or who the local authority looks after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been a number of changes to the staff team since the previous inspection. The leadership team has re-structured with the appointment of two new assistant headteachers.
- There are two Chairs of the Governing Body who share the responsibility for this role.
- School leaders and governors have managed a recent building programme to accommodate the increasing pupil numbers as the school expands.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement further by making sure that teachers:
 - ensure that all pupils correct and improve their work when it has been marked
 - provide work that is of the right level for all pupils, especially those who are most able
 - have the highest expectations for what pupils should achieve.
- Improve leadership and management by creating a plan showing how the school is to develop in the longer term to ensure that pupils achieve even better as they move through the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher sets high expectations for staff and pupils. She leads a strong team of ambitious teachers who seek to provide the best for every pupil. They are creating a school that is a lively, caring place where learning is exciting and stimulating. Consequently, teaching has improved rapidly, pupils make good progress and they behave well.
- School leaders know what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Their plans for improvement tightly focus on those priorities most in need of improvement. However, there is no longer term view of how the school is to develop. There are no long term targets and goals for pupils' achievement and, consequently, it is difficult to check milestones for their success.
- School leaders have implemented a programme of training to help staff at all levels to develop their teaching. Teachers observe each other's lessons and share their best ideas. They visit other schools to find out how they can be more effective. Leaders visit classrooms and provide coaching and feedback to help teachers improve. As a result, teachers reflect on their practice and seek new ways to become even better.
- Phase leaders have a clear overview of the year groups for which they are accountable. They use information about how well pupils are doing to check robustly on pupils' progress each half term. In discussion with class teachers, they identify those pupils at risk of falling behind and what action needs to take place to get them back on track.
- The school values every individual, regardless of background. Teachers ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. They promote British values including freedom, respect and tolerance, and do not tolerate discrimination on any grounds. Pupils learn about cultures and beliefs different to their own and this promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The range of subjects taught is broad and balanced and provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to learn about the world and prepare them for life in modern Britain. A wide range of experiences successfully enhances their enjoyment of learning. Pupils are thoughtful in their responses to ethical questions. During an assembly about fair trade, pupils reflected on aspects of society around the world where an imbalance of power creates unfair societies.
- Leaders use the additional funding, known as pupil premium, to provide support for those eligible pupils so they achieve well. Apart from providing help in classrooms, the school subsidises school uniform and the cost of school visits. Consequently, these pupils grow in confidence and have the same chances to succeed as their classmates.
- Pupils enjoy sports and games and know how important it is to stay fit and healthy. Leaders have used the additional funding for sports effectively. They have employed specialist coaches to help teachers to develop their skills in teaching gymnastics and other aspects of sports provision.
- The local authority has been providing a medium level of support to this school. New leaders have responded by acting on this help and guidance so the level of support reduced as the improvements were made. Most parents who responded to the survey agree that leadership and management are good.
- Leaders take their responsibility for protecting children seriously and ensure that all staff are fully aware of the steps to be taken should a concern be raised. Leaders asked an external agency to carry out a safeguarding audit to confirm that their procedures are robust.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors know the school well. They are ambitious and determined to see the school improve. They visit school regularly to check how the school is performing against the school improvement targets. Governors know that teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. They challenge school leaders by asking probing questions to check for themselves that information provided by leaders is accurate. They know that pupils achieve well in comparison with other schools because they have a thorough understanding of published information on pupils' achievement.
- The governors check that leaders manage all statutory responsibilities and that finances are used well to provide a good quality of education for pupils. Governors take into account the performance of staff when considering pay decisions, so that only the best practice is rewarded. They support school leaders to tackle underperformance quickly. Despite managing a significant building project, leaders ensured the quality of teaching did not suffer and maintained good teaching.
- Governors ensure that all statutory requirements to keep pupils safe are fully met and are effective. They ensure that all staff and governors are fully aware of their responsibilities to ensure that pupils are safe and secure at school.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are happy and they enjoy school. Their attendance reflects this. It has improved and is above average. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning and poor behaviour rarely disrupts lessons. Just sometimes, if pupils do not have enough work to do, they chat among themselves and this is why their behaviour is not outstanding.
- Pupils settle quickly to lessons that start briskly and on time. Staff apply the school's systems to manage pupils' behaviour consistently and so all pupils understand what is expected of them. They behave well in class and when moving around the school.
- Pupils trust and respect each other and adults. They are friendly and considerate and will go out of their way to help each other. They say that adults are always on hand to help should a problem arise.
- Lunchtimes are busy, but calm and orderly. Pupils queue sensibly and enjoy eating healthy meals while chatting with friends. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions and well-trained supervisors ensure that pupils move safely to the playground when they have finished their meal.
- Parents, staff and governors agree that pupils enjoy school and behave well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe because they know that adults care for them. They are aware of different forms of bullying, including that relating to race, faith and name calling. They say it is rare, but taken seriously should an incident occur.
- Pupils are very well informed about dangers relating to computers. They know that they should not give out any personal information, and that it is wrong to say anything nasty about other people when using computers.
- Pupils know how to stay safe outside school from dangers associated with roads and railways. They know that tobacco and some non-medicinal drugs can be dangerous.
- Most parents feel that the school deals well with bullying, but a small minority thought leaders could manage it better. They generally feel that the school's systems and procedures for dealing with issues are thorough. This is why safety is good rather than outstanding.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection owing to the determination of school leaders. Teachers have benefited from high quality training, so that teaching is now good and increasingly outstanding. Older pupils make accelerated progress because teaching is especially good in Years 5 and 6.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are expected to work hard. They usually present their work neatly, reflecting the pride they take with their work. Most teachers have high expectations and they provide work that challenges pupils. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils used coordinates, including negative numbers, to rotate shapes in four quadrants.
- In mathematics, most teachers check pupils' work in lessons and move pupils on more quickly when they show they have understood what they are learning. However, sometimes the most able pupils have work that is too easy for them. This slows their progress and causes them to chat among themselves.
- Teachers have established targets for the skills that they expect pupils to master in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are encouraged to assess for themselves where they have succeeded and what they need to do to improve further. Pupils are very clear about what they are learning because they discuss these targets with their teachers.
- Teachers' marking helps pupils to make good progress in writing. Teachers typically provide helpful comments to pupils to inform them of what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work further. Where this is most effective, pupils progress rapidly; but, on occasions, pupils do not respond to teachers' comments and so they repeat their errors and do not make enough progress.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to both pupils and teachers. Sometimes assistants work successfully with individual pupils, such as those eligible for additional funding, whilst at other times they might provide specialist help to a small group of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved and is now good. From their relative starting points, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Owing to improvements to the quality of teaching, leaders have effectively addressed a legacy of underachievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. The special needs leader has targeted resources very effectively. Sometimes qualified teaching assistants provide special programmes of work. At other times the teacher works with them in class by adapting the activity or resources to each individual's needs.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was about two terms behind other pupils in the school according to the national tests in 2014. The results also showed a similar picture when compared to pupils nationally. Most of these pupils have complex learning or behavioural needs and made good progress from their relative starting points. The school's own assessment information shows that, currently, disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others in reading, writing and mathematics. This shows that the gap is rapidly closing.
- Although teachers generally provide work that is at the right level for most pupils, there are occasions when the most able are not moved on rapidly enough. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, in most classes, the most able pupils are reaching high standards and are on course to meet their challenging targets.
- Pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading and are developing a range of skills, including using letters and sounds (phonics) to read unfamiliar words. Pupils in Year 6 say they love reading. They read fluently and confidently and with good expression.
- Pupils achieve well in writing. They build their skills securely as they move through the school, so by Year 6 they write at length both in literacy and other subjects. Their handwriting is neat and legible and they have developed a wide vocabulary and use of imaginative language to interest the reader.
- Many pupils say that mathematics is their favourite lesson. They enjoy learning number facts and using them to solve problems. Teachers provide pupils with work that links to what they have previously learned and this helps them to make good progress.
- Parents who responded to the online survey and who spoke to inspectors agree that teaching is good and that pupils achieve well.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the school with a wide range of different experiences, skills and knowledge. Overall, these are typically below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language. Caring adults make expectations very clear, so children quickly become confident and secure. By the end of the Reception Year, children have the confidence and skills that prepare them well for Year 1.
- Teachers have created a stimulating and attractive setting, both indoors and outside. Although there are opportunities for children to select their own activities to learn and develop through play, adults sometimes over-direct these. Children then do not develop good learning habits such as resilience and perseverance.
- Children enjoy working and playing together and will go out of their way to help each other. They behave well and respond to staff's instructions. They cooperate and share and listen to each other and adults. They feel safe in this happy atmosphere because they know that staff are on hand to help. All staff are well trained to keep children safe and secure.
- Staff have a good understanding of children's need and levels of development. There are times when adults provide structured lessons for children so they learn to count and to read simple words and phrases. The learning journeys (collections of children's work and adults' comments and observations) maintained by staff show that children progress well from their relative starting points.
- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. She has an action plan for improvement that links closely to the overall school improvement plan. This reflects the high priority given to this part of the school by leaders. Adults carefully consider how to provide the best opportunities for children to learn well and they keep a close check on children's development.

What inspection judgements mean

School

Grade	Judgement	Description
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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	116127
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	453507

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Primary
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Geen and Louise Rankin
Headteacher	Caroline Potter
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2013
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