

Morda CofE Primary School

Morda, Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 9NR

Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in the school's overall effectiveness. In parts of the school and in a variety of subjects, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good enough.
- Recently, leaders have introduced a range of appropriate initiatives to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. However, these strategies are not yet embedded well enough throughout the school.
- Teachers, other than in the early years and Year 6, do not take enough account of what pupils already know and have low expectations of what they can achieve. Consequently, they do not plan activities to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Although improving, disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The teaching of phonics, other than in the early years, is not consistently good. Time is not always used effectively to ensure that lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have a secure understanding of letters and the sounds they make.
- Across the curriculum, some subjects, including science and humanities, are not planned in a logical sequence. This means that pupils do not build their subject-specific knowledge and skills in order to gain a deep understanding of what they are learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher ensures that pupils' personal development and welfare is a high priority. As a result, pupils are happy to come to school, where they feel safe and well cared for.
- Leaders have significantly improved attendance.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They make strong progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils are polite, kind and respectful. They have a good understanding of the school's Christian values and model these well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - teaching is consistently good or better across all year groups and in all subjects
 - leaders make more rigorous checks on the initiatives they have introduced to improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - leaders further develop the quality of the curriculum so that the sequence of learning better develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across all subject areas.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils achieve as well as they can by ensuring that:
 - all teachers share high expectations of the work that pupils can produce
 - the teaching of phonics and early reading, particularly in key stage 1, is better matched to the needs of lower attaining pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND so that these pupils improve their reading accuracy and fluency
 - plan tasks in subjects across the curriculum that build on what pupils already know and can do
 - teachers address pupils' repeated spelling and punctuation errors in independent writing tasks
 - in mathematics, pupils practise how to show reasoning skills in their work so that they deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts
 - they increase the opportunities that pupils have to practise and refine their writing and mathematical knowledge and skills through applying them in a range of subject areas across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection in November 2018, leaders have worked together to respond to the weaknesses in the school. They have introduced a range of new initiatives, including the ways mathematics and some aspects of reading are taught. A new approach to the organisation of the wider curriculum has been implemented. These changes are considerable and are not yet sufficiently embedded throughout the school. As a result, there is an inconsistency of approaches and expectations in several classes.
- Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning through visits to lessons, looking at pupils' books and talking to pupils about their work. The headteacher has organised additional support to improve weaker teaching, but it is too soon to see sufficient impact of this action on pupils' progress.
- There is a much tighter focus on reviewing the work and progress of all pupils who are not making enough progress to reach the standards of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders use this information to provide additional interventions to help these pupils to catch up. School assessment information about current pupils and work in pupils' books shows that this is beginning to have a positive effect. However, pupils' progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, is not yet good in all aspects.
- Staff morale is high. Almost all staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire reported that they are proud to work at the school and that they are well supported by leaders. Staff appreciate the training opportunities they receive and share leaders' determination to bring about improvement at the school.
- Leaders have improved attendance this year. Persistent absence has significantly decreased, and no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by poor attendance.
- The leadership of teaching for pupils with SEND is good. There are clear systems to identify pupils' additional needs and appropriate support is put into place. The leader of SEND provides support with planning and closely monitors the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders have a thorough understanding of the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils at the school face. Highly effective support is provided through the school's learning mentor for pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Leaders are now making more rigorous checks on the impact that funding is having on pupils' academic achievement.
- Leaders ensure that they use the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to enable pupils to access a wide range of sports, including swimming. Pupils enjoy the range of lunchtime sports opportunities and after-school clubs, including football, multi-sports, dance and athletics.
- Leaders have very recently introduced a new way of teaching the wider curriculum that intends to develop pupils' expertise through interesting topics with subject-specific links. However, the sequence of learning is not planned well enough so that pupils build knowledge and skills in order to gain a depth of understanding.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported. Pupils learn about a wide range of religions and cultures and they are respectful of differences. Everyone at the school has a shared understanding of the school's Christian values and this complements the school's work on British values. As a result, pupils are personally, socially and emotionally ready for the next stage in their education.
- Most of the parents who met with an inspector and those who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are positive about the work of the school. They agree that their children are safe, and that staff are friendly and approachable.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to the school and determined to bring about improvement to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. They have an accurate overview of the school. Recently, governors reviewed the way they organise visits to the school to ensure that they find out for themselves what is working well and what needs to be improved. Governors commissioned a review of how the pupil premium grant is used so that they can evaluate the effect of this funding more closely. As a result, governors are in a much stronger position than in the past to hold leaders to account. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and mindful of the well-being of all staff.
- Governors receive training to ensure that they have the necessary skills to fulfil statutory responsibilities and to be effective. This includes working with governors from local schools to share good practice. All governors have completed training about child protection and safeguarding. Governors make checks on the single central record and the school's procedures for the recruitment and induction of all staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff receive regular, up-to-date training to ensure that they are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters and that they understand their responsibilities to report any concerns about pupils' safety and well-being. School records show that leaders respond quickly where there are concerns and that they readily seek professional advice and act on it.
- The headteacher ensures that keeping children safe is a high priority of the school and that there is a high level of pastoral support available to pupils who need it. The school's learning mentor is held in high regard by pupils, families and staff.
- Staff who completed Ofsted's online staff questionnaire are confident that pupils are safe in school. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe in school and they are confident that if they were worried about anything a member of staff would help them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 is not good enough overall. Teachers' expectations of the quality of work that pupils can produce is not always high enough. In some classes, teachers accept pupils' work when it has been completed to a lower

standard than they are capable of. For example, pupils repeat basic errors with spelling and punctuation, some pupils demonstrate inconsistency in the care and presentation of their work and others produce limited amounts of work in the time they are given to complete a task. This hinders the progress that pupils make in a variety of subjects across the curriculum.

- Pupils' mathematics books show that they regularly practise and refine calculation strategies linked to all aspects of number work and when solving problems. However, pupils' books in some year groups show limited practice of reasoning skills in mathematics. This means that they are not able to reach a deep understanding of what they are learning about.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge of the standard of writing that pupils should produce in each year group. Through lively discussions, teachers model how to use a wide range of vocabulary that is well matched to the subject pupils are expected to write about. Pupils are also taught about grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, pupils are not encouraged to apply this knowledge well enough in independent writing tasks and many make repeated errors.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read every day. A wide range of books by traditional and modern authors are available in each class and in the school library. Pupils told inspectors that adults help them to choose books they will be interested in and that the school will also purchase books that pupils are keen to read. However, the teaching of reading skills is not good enough because there are different approaches in each class. It is not clear from pupils' workbooks that teachers have coherent plans to build on what pupils already know to develop the more complex reading skills of comprehension.
- The teaching of phonics is not good enough, especially in key stage 1. This is because it does not meet the needs, in particular, of less able pupils and pupils with SEND well enough. As a result, pupils who need to catch up quickly are not able to do so.
- A new topic-based approach to teaching the wider curriculum was introduced earlier this year. Pupils demonstrate interest and enthusiasm for the topics and are able to talk about their learning. However, pupils' books show that in some classes they are not building subject-specific knowledge and skills in a range of areas of the curriculum. In addition, although there is growing evidence of this in some classes, pupils are not practising and refining their writing and mathematics skills enough across wider areas of the curriculum
- Relationships across the school are positive. Pupils know that it is 'okay to ask for help', and they are happy to contribute to class discussions without fear of making a mistake. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with SEND in small group interventions or with one-to-one support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff know pupils and their needs and interests well. Relationships are positive, and pupils'

well-being is a high priority. Pupils are encouraged to talk to an adult if there is anything that they are worried about. Consequently, pupils are happy to come to school, where they are well looked after.

- Pupils are proud of their additional responsibilities, for example as elected school councillors or as circle-time leaders. Pupils say that they are listened to by adults and that their ideas are included when decisions are made. They are particularly pleased about the installation of a climbing wall, which was a school council request.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take. They say that bullying is rare at the school and they are confident that if it did happen an adult would stop it.
- Pupils develop a good understanding about how to keep safe. They know how to stay safe when using the internet, when crossing the road and when they are around water. Leaders ensure that pupils learn age-appropriate information about the changes that occur to their bodies as they grow up and what makes healthy relationships with others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered and are welcoming to visitors. They have a good understanding of what is expected of them and told inspectors that most pupils follow the rules all the time.
- Pupils socialise well together. They behave particularly well at playtimes and lunchtimes. Occasionally, in some lessons where the teachers' expectations are not clear enough, a small number of pupils do not follow instructions as well as they should.
- School records show that where more serious incidents have occurred, these are managed well. Leaders ensure that pupils who have difficulty regulating their own behaviour are provided with additional support. Records show that there is a reduction in the occurrence of further incidents once this support is in place.
- Leaders monitor attendance closely. There has been a significant improvement in overall attendance and reduction of persistent absence this year. Attendance so far this school year is at a similar level to the national average in previous years.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2018, there was a decline in the rates of progress made by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average in 2017, and there was a further decline in 2018.
- Leaders' actions to strengthen their checks on the progress that current pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics have halted this decline. However, throughout key stages 1 and 2, rates of progress are inconsistent. While some of the identified pupils are now beginning to make better progress, other pupils are not

making strong enough progress to reach the standard of which they are capable.

- The rates of progress of disadvantaged pupils vary across the school. Progress is now tracked more carefully, and interventions are put into place to prevent pupils from falling behind. However, over the last two years the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics has been smaller than the proportion of other pupils achieving that standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check was below the national average. Less able pupils and some pupils with SEND do not make enough progress to catch up with their peers quickly enough. Consequently, they find it very difficult to read with accuracy and fluency.
- Pupils' achievements in a variety of subjects across the curriculum are variable. This is because most teachers do not plan learning that sequences the knowledge and skills that pupils need to understand each subject well enough.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. She uses this knowledge well to ensure that her development plans are well matched to further improve the quality of education that children receive.
- Adults in the early years carry out thorough assessments of children so that they have an accurate understanding of what each child knows and can do. This information is used to plan learning that is well matched to children's needs and interests. As a result, children make good progress across all areas of learning.
- In 2018, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was below the national average. Analysis of children's achievement showed that children did not develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics as well as they did in all other areas of learning. The early years leader responded swiftly to address this. Assessment information and evidence in children's workbooks and learning journeys demonstrates that children regularly practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills to good effect.
- The learning environment is well organised, bright and stimulating, with resources that are easily accessible and attractive to children. Adults make excellent use of the outdoors, particularly the beautiful woodland area, to provide opportunities for children to be creative, to explore and to investigate. During the inspection, children were highly engaged on a 'bug hunt'. They were excited by and inquisitive of what they found. It is evident that children thrive in this environment.
- Phonics is taught well in the early years. Adults support children well to apply their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make through carefully planned reading and writing tasks.
- Adults know the children well and care about them. Children respond well to praise, and encouragement and relationships are very positive. Children get on well with one another and are happy to take turns and listen to each other. Most children follow

instructions and have a secure understanding of the routines and what is expected of them.

- Additional funding is used effectively, particularly to provide additional support for children with SEND. Children receive interventions to develop their speech and language skills. Children with SEND make good progress often from very low starting points.
- Relationships with parents are positive. The early years leader ensures that transition arrangements include several opportunities to meet with parents to find out as much as possible about their children. In addition, adults have organised workshops to provide guidance for parents on how to support their children's learning at home.
- Safeguarding is effective and all welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	123484
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10091032

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harry Pickavance
Headteacher	John Eglin
Telephone number	01691652025
Website	www.morda.shropshire.sch.uk
Email address	admin@morda.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2018

Information about this school

- Morda Church of England primary school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A section 48 inspection took place in May 2015.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and eligible for the pupil premium is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have education, health and care plans is also above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with pupils from key stage 2 and heard pupils from key stage 1 read. Inspectors observed and had discussions with pupils from all year groups at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the senior leadership team, including the leader of provision for pupils with SEND and the early years leader. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors, alongside school leaders, scrutinised pupils' work from a variety of subjects.
- The lead inspector looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. She also considered information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- The lead inspector spoke to parents to gather their views and took account of the 38 responses, including the 27 free text messages, to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The lead inspector also took account of the 12 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire and the 27 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jo Evans, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Blackburn

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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