

Inspection of Morton Primary School

Main Road, Morton, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 6HH

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Inconsistencies in the school's safeguarding arrangements mean that pupils who may require help or protection do not always receive the support they need. Leaders do not deal with some safeguarding incidents effectively enough. It is not always clear what further actions staff have taken when they have concerns about pupils' welfare. Safeguarding records are poor. Leaders do not carry out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively at all times.

Pupils generally behave well. Leaders create a calm and orderly environment in the school. As a result, most pupils concentrate and focus on their learning. Pupils have positive relationships with staff and with each other. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is good most of the time and that staff deal quickly with any incidents of bullying. Pupils say that they feel safe.

Pupils enjoy working hard. However, pupils do not always remember what they have been taught across the curriculum. On occasions, teachers do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how successfully the curriculum supports pupils to know and remember more. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most parents and carers have positive views of the school. One parent, typical of many, said, 'Nothing seems too much for the staff.' Parents appreciate the warm and friendly atmosphere.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The quality of education has declined since the previous inspection. It is not always clear what pupils should be learning and when in the different subjects. In science and art, improvements are already underway. Leaders have identified some of the key content they expect pupils to learn in these subjects. However, leaders have not yet identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn in all subjects. Leaders have not identified curriculum content with sufficient precision so that pupils remember the most important knowledge. This prevents pupils from building their understanding over time. Subject leaders do not regularly check how successfully pupils access the curriculum. Leaders have not ensured that staff use assessment well enough to identify how well pupils are learning or whether they are falling behind.

Reading is prioritised across the school. There is a sharp focus in all year groups on ensuring that pupils acquire a wide vocabulary. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. Pupils build up their phonics knowledge to enable them to read. Staff are trained well. They teach pupils to use decoding skills to sound out unfamiliar words. Books are matched to the letters and sounds pupils are learning. Staff are quick to provide support when pupils fall behind.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned. However, leaders have not agreed on how mathematics should be taught at the school. As a result, they have not ensured that there is consistency across all classes in how teachers teach knowledge in this subject. Teachers' subject knowledge is sometimes not strong enough. This means that they do not always present subject content clearly. Consequently, pupils sometimes confuse mathematical concepts, such as division. Pupils often struggle to remember previous curriculum content. For example, some pupils cannot remember how to calculate equivalent fractions and factor pairs, despite recent lessons in these areas.

Until recently, leaders' work to identify those pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities has not been precise enough. Staff do not always identify well enough the additional needs of those pupils with SEND so that they can provide the right support. As a result, access to the curriculum is variable for these pupils. Some pupils with SEND do not make the progress that they should. Leaders are aware of this and have identified what needs to improve.

Relationships are very positive between children and adults in the early years. Leaders provide an engaging environment inside and outside the classroom. Leaders have started to set out how learning in the early years connects with the learning that pupils will encounter as they move through the school. This is very clear in some areas. However, leaders have not identified the knowledge which children should learn in all areas of learning. Sometimes, children do not remember what they have been taught across the curriculum in the early years.

Pupils understand right and wrong. They understand the different forms that families can take. Pupils know how to eat healthily and keep fit. Leaders have organised the curriculum so that pupils are being prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils discuss current affairs in assemblies. However, pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and different faiths is fragile. Leaders do not consistently check how successfully pupils remember what they have learned, particularly from their lessons in personal, social, health and economic education and religious education.

Governors do not receive comprehensive information from school leaders. Governors support leaders but do not hold them to account sufficiently well enough. Governors do not understand their statutory duties, particularly their duties concerning safeguarding. Leaders engage well with staff and take account of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not fully understand the signs that a pupil may be at risk. They do not always provide sufficient support for pupils about whom they have safeguarding concerns. The procedures for recording and following up on safeguarding concerns are not robust. Leaders do not routinely record the actions they take when concerns are raised. This means that pupils are potentially at risk.

Not all staff have up-to-date knowledge of current safeguarding practice.

The governing body has not ensured that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are secure.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not made sure that the procedures for keeping pupils safe meet statutory requirements. Record-keeping is poor. Staff's training is not sufficient. Staff, including leaders, do not understand the seriousness of some incidents related to pupils' welfare. This places pupils potentially at risk. Leaders must ensure that all the statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. They must ensure that all staff have up-to-date safeguarding knowledge and understand their responsibilities in identifying, recording and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Governors do not meet their statutory duties, including those related to making sure that the pupils are kept safe. They do not receive all the right information that they need to hold leaders fully to account. The governing body should ensure that they meet their legal requirements for the safeguarding of pupils and that they have the right information to be able to hold the school leaders fully to account.
- Leaders are partway through developing a sequenced curriculum. In some subjects, leaders have yet to identify the key knowledge that they wish pupils to learn. As a result, on occasions, there are inconsistencies in what pupils can recall about their learning. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity about what pupils should learn and when across all subjects, so that all pupils, including those with SEND, build their understanding over time.
- Leaders' approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of education in the different subjects is not rigorous enough. As a result, they do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how well pupils access the curriculum in each subject so that they know and remember more. Leaders, including subject leaders, should ensure that their approach to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum is sufficiently rigorous to inform them about what aspects need to improve further so that the school's quality of education is good.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well enough. Leaders have not established rigorous systems to assess and meet these pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that all pupils with SEND receive the support they need to enable them to access the full curriculum and achieve as highly as they should.
- The school's approach to assessment is inconsistent. Staff regularly assess what pupils know. However, staff are not always clear about what they are trying to achieve through undertaking such assessments. It is not always clear when teachers use assessment as to whether they are aiming to help pupils embed knowledge, trying to inform their own teaching, or attempting to understand gaps in learning due to the

pandemic. Leaders need to ensure that all staff understand the rationale behind their use of assessment and that the use of assessment does not place unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.

- Some pupils' knowledge of British values and different faiths is fragile. Although they know to respect difference, some pupils are not as aware as they should be of what these differences may be. Leaders should ensure that pupils have the necessary knowledge and understanding of British values and different faiths.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	112596
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10211639
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sam Watson
Headteacher	Kevin Flint
Website	www.morton.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2017.
- The school joined a federation with Stretton Handley CE VC Primary School in September 2021.
- The school makes use of one unregistered provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspectors deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND and a sample of teaching and support staff.
- The inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, art and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead. They considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- The inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the responses to the free-text service. The inspectors also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Donna Chambers

Ofsted Inspector

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