

Inspection of Morda CofE Primary School

Morda, Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 9NR

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Morda Primary is 'a small school with a big heart'. Everyone is treated as an individual. One parent said, 'My child is accepted for who he is.' This is because the school's values of courage, compassion and fairness are celebrated by everyone.

Pupils behave well. They are kind, polite and respectful of the views of others. They understand what bullying is, and teachers deal with it straight away. Pupils always have someone to talk to if they have any worries.

Pupils love to learn. This is because leaders have made sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have access to a broad, rich curriculum. Pupils learn to read as soon as they start school. They celebrate books through 'reading cafes' and 'book blasts', as well as sharing stories in class.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the world beyond their village. The 'Morda Marvellous 50' curriculum promotes their resilience and confidence. They climb hills and visit museums, farms and art galleries to learn about important ideas and famous people. Pupils passionately care about the environment.

Staff feel part of the team and are proud to work in the school. Parents appreciate the care and support staff provide.

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

Leaders and governors have focused on the right things to improve the school. They have raised expectations of what pupils can achieve by making sure there is an ambitious curriculum in place that starts from the early years. They have identified the important concepts and knowledge they want pupils to learn in every subject.

Reading is a high priority. All staff are early reading experts and quickly provide extra help when pupils need it to make sure they do not fall behind. This means pupils gain the skills they need to become confident readers from the start.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They check what pupils know and then plan to make sure that they address any misconceptions. Teachers recap on previous lessons and use quizzes and mind maps to check what pupils have learned. Generally, this is successful. In a few cases, teachers do not quickly spot that pupils have gaps in their learning. Some subject leaders have not had time to identify these issues in the implementation of the curriculum. This means that some minor issues are not picked up quickly. For example, in mathematics, some teachers move pupils too quickly on to reasoning problems when pupils need more time to develop their number skills.

Pupils are attentive in lessons. Teachers make good use of drama to help pupils explore more complex ideas, such as settlement and invasion. Pupils have a depth of knowledge about local history and talk about a local leader, Caractacus, who fought against the Romans. They have thoughtful discussions and debate interesting ideas, such as whether humanity always 'gets better' over time. This means they learn more and remember more over time. However, teachers do not always have high expectations of how pupils present their work in all subjects. This means that pupils do not improve their handwriting and spelling well enough.

Staff in the early years build strong relationships with families, and this means children get off to a good start. The curriculum provides rich experiences to develop children's language and communication skills, as well as their independence. Children love to talk about their ideas and develop their confidence in preparation for Year 1.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about different faiths and visit places of worship. They try out new experiences, including unusual foods, through 'Daredevil Challenges', and they work with inspiring people, including a wheelchair explorer. 'Living Well weeks' support pupils' mental and physical well-being. They volunteer in the local community, sing at the local hospice and carry out litter picking. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the many clubs on offer, including sports, art and dance.

Pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life. Teachers swiftly identify pupils' needs and use learning plans to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs in class. When extra support is needed, staff work with external services and monitor the impact of this work closely. This means that pupils get the help they need. They work sensitively with families to access additional support at home.

All staff work together as a team. They appreciate that leaders listen to them and make changes to help with their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders make sure that staff are safe to work with pupils. They ensure that everyone is well trained. Staff know how to identify any signs of abuse and report their concerns. Leaders take action quickly.

Staff work closely with external agencies to make sure that vulnerable pupils get the help they need. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of this school, and staff make sure that pupils have everything they need to thrive. Pupils learn how to keep safe online and in their relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have had limited time to carry out their roles effectively. This means that they have not checked that the implementation of the curriculum in their subjects is consistent in all classes. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders get the time and support they need to fulfil their roles effectively.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations for handwriting and presentation. They do not consistently address errors in punctuation and spelling. This means that some pupils do not make improvements in their work and learn from their mistakes. Leaders need to make sure that teachers have consistently high expectations for handwriting, presentation and spelling in all subjects.

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.

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	123484
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10256937
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Harry Pickavance
Headteacher	John Eglin and Helen Chapman
Website	www.morda.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the leadership structure has changed, and the school is led by two co-headteachers.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.
- The school's last section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character was on 23 January 2023.
- There is after-school childcare managed by the governing body on the school site.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This is 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.

- Inspectors met with the co-headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority school improvement advisor. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Lichfield.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, mathematics and geography. 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. Inspectors also observed pupils read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation to consider safeguarding, including the school's single central record, policies and training records. Inspectors spoke to pupils, parents, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors also spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.

Inspection team

Johanne Clifton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mike Cladingbowl

Ofsted Inspector

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