



Moreton Say CofE Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 123485
Local Authority Shropshire
Inspection number 292684
Inspection date 17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Graham Sims

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Moreton Say
School category	Voluntary controlled		Market Drayton
Age range of pupils	4-11		TF9 3RS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01630 638465
Number on roll (school)	67	Fax number	01630 638465
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Des Machin
		Headteacher	Samantha Scott
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Moreton Say Church of England Primary School is a small village school, which serves a scattered rural community to the west of Market Drayton. Its pupils are almost all of White British heritage and come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. An above-average proportion of pupils join the school part-way through their primary education. All pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils on roll has doubled, two new extensions have been added to the school building, and a new headteacher was appointed two and a half years ago.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'Confident, happy children ... approachable, caring staff ... great progress in learning ... a lovely atmosphere ... really improved sports provision' – these are some of the comments which are representative of the overwhelmingly positive views of parents about their school and which were aptly summed up by one parent in four words: 'A great little school.' Moreton Say Primary School is indeed a good school. Rising standards and growth in numbers are testimony to the significant improvements which have taken place over the last two years as a result of good leadership and management.

The headteacher has provided particularly good leadership which has enthused the staff and built a strong sense of teamwork. The staff have contributed hard work and commitment. They are becoming much more effective as subject leaders and are keen to take on new initiatives. Governors are supportive and have ensured funding for these initiatives, whilst at the same time improving the school's facilities and resources.

Over the last two years, standards have improved significantly throughout the school. Children make a good start to their education in the Reception year, particularly in their language and personal development. Pupils achieve well in every year group, which has not always been the case in the past, and standards are now above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Key to this progress has been the implementation of a thorough tracking system which enables staff to know how much progress each individual pupil is making. Support is provided for any pupil who is not making sufficient progress, and teachers' planning is adapted to meet pupils' needs. Good teaching and a good curriculum are also crucial elements fuelling the good progress.

Pupils are also making good progress in their personal development because of the good care, guidance and support provided by the staff. The great majority of pupils are polite, well-behaved, thoughtful individuals who show a good awareness of others and a willingness to contribute. The school is preparing them well for their future. Pupils acquire good literacy and numeracy skills, and their information and communication technology skills have developed rapidly since the acquisition of new laptop computers. They work well together and clearly enjoy coming to school. Involvement in initiatives to develop pupils' awareness of health and safety has been very effective and has also provided opportunities for pupils to make a positive contribution to the school's development.

So, how could the school improve further? In order for pupils to reach even higher standards, they need to develop a greater awareness of how they can improve their work and to be given time to make these improvements.

When asked to do things, pupils respond positively and undertake responsibilities willingly, but they still depend on the guidance and support of adults rather than exercising their own initiative or using their own independent learning skills. The school has been moving in the right direction, but now needs to embed the initiatives which have been introduced over the last two years, such as the new assessment and target-setting procedures and the development of teachers' skills as subject leaders, in order to consolidate their impact on pupils' achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils receive clear guidance on how they can improve their work and that they are given sufficient time to reflect on what they have done, make improvements and learn from their mistakes.
- Provide more opportunities for and encourage pupils to use their initiative and develop their independent learning skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with a wide but broadly average range of skills. Some are well advanced, although many display weaknesses in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress, particularly in these two areas, to reach expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of their Reception year. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress for the older pupils, who had marked time after their national tests in Year 2 because of previous, but now rectified, weaknesses in teaching. Although the school's results fluctuate because of the small number of pupils in each year group, the overall picture is one of significant improvement in all subjects since the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well and a significant proportion in almost every year group are working above the level expected for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and are particularly disapproving of the occasional poor behaviour of a few individuals which is such a contrast to the good behaviour of the majority. The school is a friendly, happy community, where pupils feel safe and care for and respect others. The level of attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy taking part in lessons and in extra-curricular activities, particularly those which involve sport. They also enjoy the newly established house system, which provides a means for them to contribute their views about the school. Pupils played a crucial part in putting together a bid for funds to improve the school's playground and outdoor facilities, demonstrating initiative, independence and a willingness to contribute their ideas. However, these skills are under-utilised elsewhere and remain an area for development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The development of good assessment and tracking procedures has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning, as teachers now have a much clearer understanding of what pupils know and what they need to learn. As a result, teachers cater well for the wide range of age and ability in each class. They relate well to the pupils, using a good variety of teaching methods that make learning enjoyable and thereby motivating the pupils to work hard. When necessary, additional support is provided for individuals or small groups of pupils, and this intervention has contributed to the rise in standards. Effective teaching assistants undertake a wide variety of support tasks which contribute to pupils' progress. The school's monitoring shows that there is some teaching which is still only satisfactory, but any weaknesses are rapidly disappearing as the school embeds its initiatives to improve the teaching of writing, number and investigative science in particular.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Provision for the school's youngest children is good, and is much more in tune with their needs and accepted good practice than at the time of the previous inspection. The statutory National Curriculum is enriched through the teaching of a modern foreign language in Years 4 to 6 and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including much-improved provision for sports and a biennial residential visit for older pupils. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and the development of their understanding of healthy lifestyles and safe practices have improved significantly in recent years and are now good. Collaborative planning with staff from other small schools in the locality provides additional expertise which complements existing strengths in physical education and music. Whilst staff provide many opportunities for pupils to write, they do not always make the best of these opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills. More opportunities could be provided within the curriculum for pupils to use their own initiative and develop their independent learning skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's health and safety arrangements have improved significantly since the previous inspection and all of the necessary procedures to ensure that pupils are protected are in place. The school provides good support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff know the pupils well and are seen to be very caring by both parents and pupils. Good transition arrangements help children settle well when they join the school, and prepare them well for moving to secondary school. Academic guidance has improved considerably and staff have a good awareness of how well pupils are doing. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully, but do

not always give pupils enough guidance on how they could improve their work or sufficient time to review what they have done and to make improvements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's perceptive analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses and her very good leadership have been the catalyst for the recent improvements, underpinned by good monitoring and evaluation procedures. A focus on the development of writing skills has seen a dramatic rise in standards at the end of Year 2, as well as improvements in Years 3 to 6. Similar improvements have occurred in science because of a focus on developing pupils' investigative skills. Staff feel that their work is valued and have enjoyed being given greater responsibility as subject leaders. Their skills as leaders are developing well as a result of training and opportunity to work alongside other professionals. The views and opinions of pupils and parents are now taken into account when planning school developments. Since the previous inspection, a new classroom extension and the more recent addition of an office and more secure entrance to the school have improved the learning environment. Governance has also improved and is now good. Although more time is needed to allow all of the recent initiatives to become fully embedded in practice, the last two years have shown that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We really enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for your welcome. You feel that Moreton Say is a good school, and we agree with you. These are our main findings:

- You are all making good progress in your work, and you achieve standards which are above those in most schools by the end of Year 6.
- Your good behaviour, politeness and friendliness help to create a lovely atmosphere within the school.
- You receive good teaching throughout the school, and the way you participate in lessons helps you to make good progress in your learning.
- The school provides a good range of activities in addition to the work you do in class, and you particularly appreciate the range of sports you are now able to play.
- The staff take good care of you, make sure that you are safe in school and know exactly how much progress you are making.
- The governors, headteacher and staff work well together and have made a lot of improvements to the school over the last two years.

We have identified two things which would help you to make even better progress, so we have asked the staff to:

- Provide you with more opportunities to use your initiative and to develop your skills in working independently.
- Provide you with more detailed feedback on how you can improve your work, and sufficient time for you to go back over your work and make improvements.

We hope you will continue your desire to learn and to find out new things, so that you develop into really independent learners.