

# Moretonhampstead Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113208
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	311155
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Kerly

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	145
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Murgatroyd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nina Newington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Betton Way Moretonhampstead Newton Abbot TQ13 8NA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01647 440482
<b>Fax number</b>	01647 440517

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school is smaller than average and there are relatively few pupils in each of the six classes. Pupils come from the small town of Moretonhampstead and an extensive rural area within the Dartmoor National Park. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average but there are more pupils with a statement of special educational needs than expected in a school of this size. The school moved into a new building on a new site on the other side of the town at the beginning of this school year. The headteacher took up her permanent post in 2007, being the sixth headteacher or acting headteacher in seven years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school and it serves the community well. It has been transformed in the last year, partly because of the move to a new building but more significantly by the excellent leadership of the new headteacher and the positive way the staff team have responded to this. Pupils are now making good progress, although older pupils are having to make up for lost ground following weaker progress in the past. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and their behaviour is outstanding. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good, and they are particularly effective for vulnerable pupils and those with complex problems. Almost all parents appreciate this and the other major improvements. The parent of one such pupil wrote, 'I have been very impressed by the level of care and support offered to my child.' Many parents wrote of the 'approachability' of all staff and one reflected many similar comments received by saying, 'The headteacher leads the staff and children fantastically.'

The headteacher has quickly established effective ways of checking the school's performance. These provide a clear and accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and from the beginning of this year were used very effectively to bring about rapid and substantial improvements. The clarity of direction and sense of purpose are contributing strongly to the school's good capacity to improve further.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, which is built on well as pupils move up the school. Standards are improving: they are above average up to and including Year 4, and broadly average in Years 5 and 6. Many of these older pupils, although now making good progress, made slower progress in earlier years, especially in writing. Pupils are taught well, with work matched closely to their different needs. Teachers are developing a range of ways of involving pupils in assessing their work and identifying next steps in their learning, but these are currently not fully established or applied consistently. Pupils clearly enjoy school and the interesting and stimulating activities in what is becoming an innovative curriculum.

The effective leadership and management, much strengthened since the arrival of the permanent headteacher, carefully promote a balance between academic achievement and personal development. There is a renewed sense of confidence amongst the staff, who are clear about expectations and welcome the opportunity to fulfil leadership roles. Some are still new to these roles and have had relatively little training for the additional responsibilities. The headteacher's clear vision and drive for improvement have ensured that the move to the new school, although a significant step, is not seen as an end in itself but an opportunity to move forward and further improve provision and outcomes for pupils.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children quickly settle into school following a sensitive induction programme, enabling them to begin to explore the environment and learn through play from their first day. They are taught well and make good progress, responding particularly well to the newly introduced programme for learning letters and sounds. In the last few years more have attained or exceeded the national learning goals than normally found. Children's personal development is outstanding, with exceptionally good behaviour and attitudes both indoors and outdoors. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory but not as strong as other areas. Good leadership by the experienced teacher enables practitioners to work well as a team, carefully planning a

balance of activities directed by adults and those initiated by the children. Very good use is made of the outdoor areas in the new school to extend the range of children's experiences.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Embed the developing practices designed to help pupils assess their own learning, and be clearer about their next steps and what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure there is a systematic programme of training and support for subject leaders as they take on increasingly significant roles in leading aspects of the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Standards by the time pupils leave the school are average, but they are rising throughout the school and the progress made by pupils of all abilities, including those who find learning difficult, has accelerated and is now good. Children's attainment on entry is very varied but overall in line with national expectations for their age. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and by Year 4 nearly half the pupils are working at levels expected nationally in Year 6. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 underachieved further down the school and consequently are working below their potential, especially in writing, where some made inadequate progress in the middle years. Much-improved teaching and the deployment of additional support are helping them to catch up but there is more to do. The school is making good use of improved assessment information to track pupils' progress and set challenging and yet realistic targets for them all. This is helping to raise expectations and increase the rate of progress and almost all pupils are on track to attain their targets by the end of the year.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding throughout the school day and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their understanding of modern Britain's cultural diversity is less pronounced. They enjoy school a lot. Attendance is good and pupils arrive promptly, despite quite long journeys for some. The start of their day is exceptionally well managed and enhanced by the presence of the headteacher greeting all pupils and parents on arrival, and all the teachers being on the playground to collect the pupils. One parent wrote of her daughter, 'She literally runs to school in anticipation of the fun she is going to have.' Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of exercise and diet within a healthy lifestyle. The school has received the Activemark and Healthy School awards in recognition of its good work in these aspects. Pupils understand how to take care of themselves, feel safe in school and are confident about the way staff sort out occasional problems. They show concern for the well-being of one another and those less fortunate than themselves, and conscientiously take on responsibilities around the school and in the community as, for example, school councillors or when working on National Park conservation projects. Those leaving school have a satisfactory level of skills needed for the next stage of their education and later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers are embracing a number of new initiatives designed to promote better learning and more consistent practice across the school. They have excellent relationships with pupils and establish a purposeful learning atmosphere in class. Teachers use assessment information well to plan activities which match the needs of different groups, and they ensure pupils are clear about precisely what it is they are learning. This helps pupils of all abilities to learn well. Teachers use good questioning techniques to probe and extend pupils understanding, particularly of those who are more able, and effectively deploy the well-trained assistants to work with individuals and small groups, often those who find learning more difficult. New strategies on involving pupils in assessing their own learning and identifying next steps are being introduced, with teachers trialling a number of practices, but it is too soon for these to have been firmly established in all classes. Good use is made of computers to motivate pupils with high quality images, for example, in religious education when reflecting on pilgrimages, and pupils' readiness to collaborate, for example, when using computers to access information, contributes to their good learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The new building is contributing to a much-improved curriculum, including the large hall, library and computer suite, with easy access to extensive areas outside the Foundation Stage classroom and the extensive grounds. Imaginative materials are used to promote pupils' personal development and the school has begun to implement an innovative approach from an international project, teaching themes that embrace links between different subjects. This approach has not been established long enough to impact on standards, or to clarify how the progression of key skills is covered, but it is capturing the pupils' imaginations. A parent of a pupil who recently joined the school wrote, 'My child is now bursting with enthusiasm for school.' The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils who find learning difficult and there is a coordinated approach to providing for those who are gifted and talented. A wide range of additional activities, including visits, residential trips, sports and musical clubs, significantly enriches pupils' experiences.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The care and support for pupils are very good, with all members of staff playing a full part. A parent of a particularly vulnerable pupil wrote, 'I have found the school's care and thoughtfulness to be excellent.' The school rigorously implements statutory procedures designed to safeguard pupils and the pupils appreciate the extensive closed-circuit television coverage of the new site. Academic guidance has been strengthened by the introduction of targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently, usually with encouraging comments, and often with guidance about how to improve. Other strategies for guiding pupils about ways of assessing their own learning and how they might best prepare for the next steps are being introduced at varying rates across the school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher's outstanding abilities and energy have enabled the school to overcome a sustained period of uncertainty during which the pace of school improvement had slowed. The leadership team and all the staff are inspired by her vision and are committed to implementing the revised school aims and many new initiatives underway. The school is already making good use of the new site, and has plans to develop this even more. There is a comprehensive and well-structured improvement plan guiding developments, and detailed action plans have been produced by individual teachers with leadership roles. Some subject leaders are inexperienced and, although clear about their roles and supported by senior colleagues, have not had sufficient systematic training in how to monitor the work of colleagues and influence practice across the whole school. The much-improved systems for tracking and analysing pupils' progress, and setting targets, in which all class teachers are involved, have been a significant factor in improving progress and the quality of teaching. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The chair in particular provided an element of stability during the recent frequent changes of headteacher and governors worked with great commitment towards acquiring the new building.

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## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	3

### 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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

15 May 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Moretonhampstead Primary School, Bettton Way, Moretonhampstead TQ13 8NA

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing some of your work. We can understand why you and your parents like your school so much and we are pleased to say that you are right to tell us that it is a good school. It has improved a lot recently. Here are some of the highlights we found:

- Your behaviour is excellent and you think carefully about ways in which you can help each other.
- You work hard in lessons and make good progress in all classes. Teachers plan interesting activities for you to do and they are careful to make sure your work is not too hard or too easy.
- The teachers have lots of information about how much you have learnt. They use this carefully when thinking about what would be good targets for each of you in literacy and numeracy.
- We are pleased you all feel safe in school. Everyone who works at the school helps to look after you really well and help those of you who have problems from time to time.
- The headteacher is a great leader and has helped all the staff improve the school. She and the other leaders have plans to make it even better.
- You are lucky to have such a good new building and lots of space all around it. We know you have some good ideas for markings on the new playground surfaces.

We asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on two things:

- Help you to become skilled at assessing your own learning, and be clearer about your next steps and what you need to do to improve.
- Provide support for teachers who lead subjects to help them in their work across the school.

We feel sure you will have your own ideas about how to make the very best use of your new school and grounds and hope you enjoy your first summer together on the new site.

Yours sincerely Martin Kerly, Lead Inspector

**Annex B**

15 May 2008

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