

# The Morton Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 120531           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | LINCOLNSHIRE LA  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 313655           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 27–28 March 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Ian Jones        |

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>                    | Voluntary controlled   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 134  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Joan Plant   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mr Gordon Kind   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 18 November 2002   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Station Road<br>Morton<br>Bourne<br>Lincolnshire<br>PE10 0NN |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01778570389  |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01778 571902   |

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|--------------------------|------------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The Morton Church of England (Controlled) Primary School is a smaller than average primary school serving the village and its surrounding area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and the percentage with a statement of special educational need are above the national average. The school has gained the Activemark for sport, and the Healthy School award.

## 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. The headteacher sets a clear direction for establishing a caring and supportive community. The school uses its small size to advantage by promoting a strong family ethos. Consequently, pupils are extremely happy. A strong set of values underpins the school's work and leads to the outstanding personal development of its pupils. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning which they find 'fun' and 'interesting.' They respond well to the high expectations of teachers, and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils' good attendance reflects their considerable enjoyment of school life.

The headteacher and governors have successfully led a transformation from a satisfactory school at the time of the last inspection. Central to this has been improving the quality of teaching and learning, which is now consistently good and occasionally better. This has been achieved by introducing a range of effective strategies throughout the school. Achievement has improved consistently over recent years so that it is now good. Standards are above, and often well above, average. Improvements to provision in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection mean that most pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities above those expected for their age. This strong start is built upon effectively in Key Stage 1, and pupils over the last two years have moved to Key Stage 2 with standards that are well above average. Improvements in mathematics and science have been considerable across the school, especially in the last year, but improvement in reading, particularly for the more able, has been slower.

Teaching usually reflects a careful match between learning and pupils' needs although there are occasions, particularly in English, when the most able pupils are not as well challenged as they might. The school has established good systems throughout to set targets and track progress. These have been a significant factor in raising standards and pupils have responded well to the challenge of target setting. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but the marking does not always provide sufficient feedback to pupils on the progress made towards their targets or the lesson objectives.

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. For example, considerable developments in information and communication technology (ICT) and music have helped enhance learning and contributed effectively to pupils' enjoyment of school. Classrooms and corridors display a rich and impressive array of pupils' work in a wide range of subjects, and the school provides a stimulating learning environment in which many pupils thrive. The school has established effective links with its external partners to enhance the opportunities that this small school is able to offer. Partnerships with parents are very strong and parents are very positive in their evaluation of the school's work. They value the 'happy and friendly school', and the 'strong sense of belonging' that is promoted.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage gets children off to an impressive start. Children feel safe and happy, because the staff are extremely caring, and they provide a warm and friendly environment. The varied and well-planned activities ensure that children make the best possible progress in all areas of learning. They enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding broadly in line with those expected of their age. Staff provide an effective blend of direct teaching and independent work by allowing children time to explore and be creative. As a result, children

make rapid progress and attain above average standards by the end of Reception. They enjoy enormously the varied opportunities to extend their learning through the very good facilities both indoors and outdoors. The Foundation Stage is effectively led and managed, and parents have the highest respect for the staff and their work.

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

- Ensure that work fully challenges the most able pupils of all ages, especially in reading.
- Improve the quality of feedback given in the marking of work on each pupil's progress towards learning objectives and individual targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

There has been a steady improvement in standards at Key Stage 1 over the last two years. They are now well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, with the greatest improvement being in mathematics. Mathematics and science have been recent foci for school improvement, and this has led to greater achievement at Key Stage 2. As a result, in 2007, Year 6 pupils made very good progress. Improving achievement in English, particularly reading, over the same period has been slower, but the school has correctly identified the reasons for this, particularly the development of higher order reading skills, and has plans to improve this aspect.

Consequently, pupils currently in Key Stage 2 classes are making good progress overall. All groups of pupils, including those who need additional support or those who find learning more difficult, make good progress. In English the most able pupils attain above average standards and make steady progress. However, there are a few occasions when their work does not fully challenge them and they achieve less than they might.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding because they respond very positively to the many opportunities provided to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is excellent and pupils really enjoy school, as reflected in their good levels of attendance. Pupils show outstanding social development; for example, in the caring way older pupils help younger ones, organising and leading activities in the playground, and supporting investigations in problem solving and other lessons. Pupils act responsibly without supervision when carrying out a range of duties independently. This makes a valuable contribution to the school community. Pupils are prepared well for their future economic well-being. They are confident and articulate and respond well to opportunities to implement their own ideas. The school has acted on pupils' concerns about a lack of activities at playtimes by training Year 5 pupils as play leaders and by developing playground activities, including the planning of a new 'trim track.' Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and lifestyles. They take part enthusiastically in a wide range of physical activities throughout the day. They feel safe at school and are confident that adults will help them with any problems that arise.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. Lesson planning is thoughtful and includes a wide range of activities that sustain interest. Good partnerships in classrooms between teachers and learning assistants lead to effective support for pupils, particularly those who need additional support or find learning more difficult. Teachers set clear learning objectives so that pupils are aware of what they are learning and why it is important. In the best lessons, learning objectives are reinforced effectively throughout the lesson. Teachers assess pupils' progress well and use their findings to plan lessons to suit the varying needs of groups and individuals within the class. Questioning techniques are often used effectively to reflect the mixed ages and abilities of the classes, although some more able pupils are not always well challenged in their English work. Most pupils have a sense of their personal learning targets. However, marking does not always give a clear view of what pupils need to do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it provides a rich and well-balanced experience within mixed-age classes without repeating themes. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned across all years and contributes directly to the very positive outcomes in personal development. The school is developing its curriculum to provide a wider dimension to learning, based on extending pupils' skills by increasing the opportunities for creative development. Take-up is high for the many varied extra-curricular activities, and the curriculum is supported by the wide range of visits and visitors to the school. Pupils enjoy participating in the themed weeks, and the school has plans to develop these in the future. Recent improvements to ICT equipment are leading to rapid acquisition of associated skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The effective care and support provided for pupils are rooted in the strong relationships between staff and pupils. Parents speak highly of the school's caring atmosphere, 'All staff are approachable and caring and the atmosphere in school is very friendly.' The inspection findings support their view. Pupils who need additional help or find learning more difficult are supported well. Provision is strengthened by the school's effective collaboration with a range of external support agencies that further supports learning for these pupils. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are appropriately implemented. There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. This leads to effective additional support when pupils are not meeting their targets. There are good links to help transition to secondary school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher leads effectively with a clear focus on raising standards and improving achievement within a caring environment. He has implemented a number of initiatives that are having a significant effect. For example, providing each classroom with a well trained teaching assistant has improved the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring appropriate additional support for those who need it. He is effectively supported by the assistant headteacher, who provides additional direction for the school in the next stages of its planning. Procedures for school improvement are good and are effectively informed by self-evaluation procedures, such as the regular monitoring of the school's work. This, and the good rate of improvement since the last inspection, indicate that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

Governors provide good support. They effectively ensure that they know the school's strengths and priorities well by monitoring the work of the school and by asking challenging questions. This enables governors to hold the senior management team to account for the school's progress.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### 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   | 1   |
| 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   | 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?                                  | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 1 |
| 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 |

<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**

31 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Morton Church of England (Controlled) Primary School, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 0NN

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly on my recent visit. I would like to share with you what I learned about the school.

- You belong to a good school. It has improved a great deal since it was last inspected.
- You make good progress in your work and reach standards that are above average.
- You are very happy at school and enjoy learning. Older pupils care for younger ones particularly well and make a valuable contribution to the school community.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- Staff care for you and support you to do your best. As a result, you feel safe in school and that there is always someone to help you should you need them.
- You enjoy the interesting lessons that are taught and taking part in the activities that are on offer. You understand about healthy eating and know how to keep fit.
- You find your targets helpful and most of you know what level you are aiming for. I think some of you could manage more of a challenge to achieve higher levels in some of your work so I am asking teachers to make sure that this happens. I am also asking them to give you more information when marking your work on what you need to do to improve.

I am sure you will help your teachers keep your school as good as it has become and to put in place the plans which will make it even better.

Good luck in the future.

Ian Jones

Lead inspector