

Moredon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131376
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	315794
Inspection dates	5–6 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Cooke
Headteacher	Lauren Connor
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Moredon Road Swindon SN2 2JG
Telephone number	01793 600344
Fax number	01793 608195

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

The school was opened in September 2006, and was the result of an amalgamation between Moredon Infant School and Moredon Junior School. The school is much larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are from a White British background. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. In recognition of its work, the school has received Basic Skills, Artsmark Silver, Healthy School and Eco Schools Bronze awards.

The school is in a federation with a neighbouring primary school, with the headteacher of this school being headteacher of both schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, where pupils make exceptional progress. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They enjoy school and their behaviour and attitudes to work are exemplary. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school's care, guidance and support for its pupils are also of the highest order. In particular, through the targets they are given, pupils are provided with very detailed advice on how to improve their work. Parents hold very positive views about the school. One said, typically, 'I think this school is one of the very best.'

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is outstanding. When children start in the Nursery their knowledge and skills are below those expected for their age, particularly in relation to language and literacy. During their time in the Foundation Stage the children achieve very well, reaching, and on occasions exceeding, the goals set for them. Pupils continue to achieve very well in Years 1 to 6, with the result that standards at the end of Year 6 are above average, and very high in science. Overall, however, pupils perform slightly less well in writing than in other subjects.

The excellent teaching is the key to the pupils' progress. Teachers have the highest expectations of them, and continually challenge them to develop their work still further. The careful assessment of pupils' work clearly identifies the 'next steps' to be taken, and the work provided, sometimes in small groups, has a significant impact on pupils' ability to achieve so well.

The curriculum contributes well to both pupils' enjoyment of school and to their learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is interesting and varied, and in particular, helps to make pupils very aware of the need to lead a safe and healthy lifestyle. The school routinely reviews its curriculum, and recognises that links between subjects have been limited, especially in relation to the use of literacy and numeracy. An initiative has now been put in place to address this issue, aimed in particular at further developing writing skills.

The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior members of staff are a dedicated and passionate team, providing outstanding leadership and management, and are totally committed to doing the best they can for their pupils. Self-evaluation is effective in pin-pointing where improvement is needed to move the school forward. For instance, the lower standards achieved by boys in Years 1 and 2 in 2007 were noted, and remedial measures were rapidly, and very successfully, put in place. Governors support the school well, and they also hold the school rigorously to account for its performance. The improvements that have recently been made, the quality of provision currently being provided and the progress being made by pupils all show that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children settle happily into school, and the adults provide them with a very appropriate balance between teacher-led activities and those which the children choose for themselves. The children behave very well, and they readily share with others. An excellent range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area being used very well to enhance learning. The staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment, and the children enjoy school and develop very good social skills. As a result of

outstanding teaching, the children make exceptional progress, attaining and sometimes exceeding the standards that are expected by the end of Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards overall are above average and pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage and they reach and sometimes exceed the early learning goals. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve very well and by the end of Year 2, standards are now above average, and in reading they are particularly high. Pupils perform slightly less well in writing than in the other subjects. In 2007 boys did not attain as well as girls. The school quickly identified this weakness, and through carefully targeted support and the introduction of topics and resources that are suited to the interests of boys, the issue has been successfully addressed, with boys now performing as well as girls.

By the end of Year 6, although the pupils' performance in writing remains a little lower than in other subjects, standards are above average overall, and high in science. As a result, pupils have made exceptional overall progress in relation to their below-average starting point in the school. The school makes outstanding provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this enables them to make rapid progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding, and is firmly based on the school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour, and their great enthusiasm for learning, are important reasons why they achieve so very well. They are courteous and polite to each other and to adults. Pupils play happily together and they say that bullying is not a problem. Consequently, they feel both safe and well cared for in school. Pupils love coming to school, as shown by their satisfactory, but much improved, attendance. Pupils use their initiative very well when carrying out responsible jobs, such as being playground buddies. They also sit on the governing body, where they represent the views of other pupils. Pupils raise money for charities, and they are regularly involved in a wide range of activities in the local area.

Pupils have an exceptional understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles. They eat fruit and healthy meals and benefit greatly from the opportunities provided for physical activity. The school very successfully develops in its pupils a range of personal skills, such as confidence and independence, and the excellent progress that pupils make in basic skills prepares them exceptionally well for their next stage of education, as well as for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers provide very interesting lessons for pupils, using a wide range of resources and strategies. One pupil reported that, 'Teachers make lessons fun.' Classes are very well managed and relationships are a significant strength. As a result, pupils behave exceptionally well, and are keen to learn and ready to work hard. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to motivate pupils and develop their understanding. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to promote learning, especially that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This ensures they are able to join in all class activities and make rapid progress. Teachers make good use of paired discussions to help pupils clarify their ideas. This develops their understanding of the work and also helps promote their language skills.

Teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils' work is a particular strength, resulting in pupils' clear understanding about how to improve. Their involvement as learners in self-assessment is exemplary. Planning is very good, providing challenging tasks well matched to pupils' interests and competences. Pupils therefore achieve exceptionally well in their academic work and become responsible, mature young people.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils to study a broad and interesting range of subjects and topics. Good use is made of the school's outdoor environment, for example, in science. Some cross-curricular links are already in place, but the school recognises that these links have not always been used adequately, especially in relation to further enhancing writing skills. In the Foundation Stage, there is a very good balance between independent learning and more directed tasks. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully identified, and they are provided with a most suitable range of relevant work. There is a strong emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills.

The curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles. There is also an exceptional range of educational outings and extra-curricular activities, which the pupils support with enthusiasm. Music is a strong feature in the school, and the provision of French enhances the curriculum still further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff are highly committed to ensuring the best possible academic and pastoral care for all pupils. Learning environments are safe, as well as stimulating. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust, with potential risks properly assessed. Outside agencies are used most effectively to support pupils when a need is identified. Safety checks and risk assessments are routinely carried out. Pupils are taught about the importance of healthy living and they are regularly reminded of the need to take care, for instance, when doing physical education. A few parents expressed concern about the car parking outside the school grounds. Evidence shows that the school is working closely with outside agencies to try to resolve the issue.

Exemplary practice exists in assessing pupils' learning and progress. Teachers provide pupils with challenging targets, and they understand clearly how to reach them. This is a major factor in their outstanding achievement because they develop excellent insight into their strengths and weaknesses. Pupils of all abilities can therefore contribute an unusually strong element of self-assessment, which they use very effectively to move themselves forward in learning. Although there is some inconsistency across the school, most teachers also add comments on how to improve when they mark pupils' books.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher leads with enthusiasm, expertise and a very strong commitment to improvement, and in this she is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who has charge when she is working at the federated school. They have contributed very significantly to the outstanding provision that is now made for pupils. Together with other staff members, there is a shared and clear sense of purpose, to improve still further both the overall provision for the pupils, and the standards they reach.

The school has good systems for finding out how well it is doing, including seeking the views of parents. Self-review accurately identifies strengths and areas for improvement. For example, actions to remedy the performance of some younger boys were a direct result of such evaluation. The school's overall view of itself, however, is modest. This is because it is always striving to improve further. The subject leaders demonstrate a very clear understanding of the strengths in their subjects, and they have actively initiated and supported strategies for making improvements. Governance is outstanding, with the governors being fully involved, for example, in producing the budget and school development plan. They also monitor very closely the work of the school, and provide well-informed challenge when necessary.

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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Dear Pupils,

Moredon Primary School, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2JG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and it was a pleasure talking to you. My colleague especially liked talking to a small group of you, and we really enjoyed joining you in assembly. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good, and what we think could be made better. Overall, you are in an outstanding school, where you are doing exceptionally well with your work.

These are some of the strengths of the school:

- Teaching is excellent, and you are provided with interesting and informative lessons.
- You have a very clear idea about how to improve your work.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are excellent.
- You really enjoy the wide range of activities that the school provides, such as visits and different clubs.
- You know how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take very great care of you.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

This is what the school has been asked to improve:

- Provide you with more opportunities to develop your writing skills, through the work you are given in other subjects.

You can help too, by trying your hardest with your writing, whichever subject it is in.

We wish you all good luck for the future.

Best wishes,

Martin James Lead Inspector

7 February 2008

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