

# Morden Mount Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100114
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	331586
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jane Wotherspoon HMI

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	311
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Veronika Simons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Lewisham Road London SE13 7QP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's tracking data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school improvement plan, governors' minutes, and a range of policies. The team received 98 pupil questionnaires, 22 questionnaires from staff and 40 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which all groups of pupils are making consistently satisfactory, or better, progress to lift standards in the core subjects throughout the school
- how the school is tailoring planning of the Early Years Foundation Stage to meet children's needs, given identified weaknesses in early literacy and numeracy skills
- the impact of changes in staffing, including at leadership level, on improvements to the quality of teaching through better use of assessment information, the consistent implementation of school policies and the capacity to sustain further improvement.

## Information about the school

Morden Mount is larger than the average primary school. Situated on the borders of Lewisham and Greenwich, approximately half of the pupils live in Lewisham. The school serves a culturally and ethnically mixed community. Most pupils come from Black African, other White backgrounds, White British, and Black Caribbean backgrounds. Overall, 23 ethnic groups are represented in the school. A high number of pupils join the school with little or no spoken English. In all, 28 languages are spoken by pupils. A high proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. A high proportion of pupils live in circumstances that make them vulnerable. Historically, high numbers of pupils have joined and left the school at various times throughout the year. This situation has settled in the last year as local housing is redeveloped and fewer pupils are being placed in temporary accommodation. However, this has resulted in falling rolls. A higher than average proportion of pupils has been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. These relate to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. There is a complex picture of admission to Nursery and Reception. Not all children who attend the Nursery go on to join the Reception Year. Children join Reception in September or January and about half join from other settings or having had no Nursery experience.

At the last inspection, the school was judged to require a notice to improve because it required significant improvement in standards and the quality of teaching. Since then there have been several staff changes. In January 2009, the substantive headteacher became seriously ill and is currently undertaking a phased return to full-time work. During this period, the local authority has provided interim headship support.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. After successive years of low attainment, standards are rising. Results in national tests in Year 6 and teacher assessments in Year 2 improved significantly in 2009 and were close to average figures. Importantly, the school's data show an increasing proportion of pupils in each year group reach the levels expected for their age. This is a good basis on which to continue raising standards. Data also show an improving picture of incremental progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress, and some make good progress, as a result of significant improvements in the quality of teaching.

Senior leaders have set about tackling weaknesses in teaching in a systematic and determined way. Thorough systems for evaluating the school's work are based on a wide range of evidence. Monitoring of all aspects of provision is rigorous and analysis of pupils' progress is detailed. Priorities for further improvement are clear and targets are ambitious. There is no complacency about the continuing hard work ahead. Nonetheless, staff are confident and morale is high, giving the school a firm basis for continuing improvement.

The vast majority of teaching is satisfactory. Much is good but not yet consistently so. Teachers' use of assessment information to modify activities to meet pupils' differing needs is not always sharp enough to provide appropriate challenge for pupils, especially those with the potential to achieve more in mathematics. Marking is improving, with some that is exemplary, but not always focused closely enough on the next steps in pupils' learning. Teachers increasingly plan activities that link subjects together. The development of a skills-based curriculum is not yet well enough established to ensure sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills. Pupils respond positively in lessons where teachers provide practical activities or opportunities for them to ask questions, think for themselves and make choices about their learning. However, such opportunities are too few, including for the children in Reception classes. Here too, children need more opportunities for learning to write alongside learning to read. Assessment systems are changing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are not yet fully established.

Pupils recognise that the school has improved. They know that teaching is better and that they are learning more. They say that behaviour is improving with fewer incidents of poor behaviour and little bullying. Racism is practically unheard of. Pupils like the multicultural nature of the school and say that everyone gets on well regardless of differences in their cultural and ethnic backgrounds. They share a strong feeling of belonging to the school community.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching by:
  - making better use of assessment information to provide the right level of challenge and support for pupils
  - engaging pupils in a range of activities that gives them more responsibility for their own learning and develops them as independent learners, for example using information and communication technology (ICT) for research
  - being clear about how pupils can improve their work through focused marking.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - giving children more opportunities to exercise choice and take responsibility for their own learning
  - placing more emphasis on teaching children letter formation alongside letter sounds
  - embedding new systems for observing and assessing children's learning.
- Raise standards further in writing and mathematics by:
  - increasing the frequency of opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects
  - providing greater challenge in mathematics for pupils who are capable of reaching above-average levels of attainment.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Despite significant rises in results in 2009, attainment still lags behind the progress that pupils make as they catch up on years of underachievement. Good learning and progress were seen during the inspection in practical activities where the interaction between pupils and between teachers and pupils was more relaxed. Examples included science, art, geography and design and technology. In all of these lessons, pupils enjoyed opportunities to ask questions and to explore their own ideas. Interest levels were high as a result. Learning was also good in mathematics and English lessons where the level of challenge for more able pupils was high. Frequently, pupils share their ideas with a 'talk partner' but opportunities to work in groups, to work independently or to carry out their own research, for example using computers, are less evident. At times, resources are not sufficient to sustain good learning. Generally, pupils work at a steady pace but sometimes produce too little written work. Errors in spelling and punctuation persist even in Years 5 and 6. However, the school's focus on writing is having a positive impact on improving the content of their written work which is more lively and interesting. Handwriting and presentation are weak throughout the school and a focus for continued improvement.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Data show achievement over time is weaker in Years 5 and 6 where pupils have more to

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catch up. Pupils themselves speak highly of the support they receive from the special needs coordinator. There are no major differences in the learning and progress of different ethnic groups or of those learning English as an additional language.

Pupils recognise that the new system for managing behaviour has reduced incidents of poor behaviour on the playground and around the school. However, not all listen attentively in lessons and some are restless. Good behaviour is too reliant on teachers' management and does not yet come from within the pupils themselves. Pupils, especially the oldest, have a good awareness of dangers within the local community. They generally feel safe in school. Although older pupils say they feel prepared for the move to secondary school, low attainment has a negative impact on how well they develop their basic skills. Members of the school council take their responsibilities to represent the views of others very seriously. Having been instrumental in getting improvements to the building and grounds, they are investigating the feasibility of growing their own vegetables as part of their drive to encourage others to adopt healthy eating habits. Pupils have a strong awareness of world environmental and ecological issues as well as empathy for people living less favourable lives in other parts of the world. Their good understanding of the cultural diversity within their own school stems from opportunities to celebrate one another's differences.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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## How effective is the provision?

Cross-curricular planning is developing securely although there is more to do to develop pupils' basic skills, particularly their writing skills and the use of computers, through other areas of the curriculum. Lesson planning is satisfactory. Some is very detailed. Teachers are clear what they expect pupils to learn in lessons and frequently use what they know about pupils' previous learning to modify activities to meet their needs. However, the extent and appropriateness of such modifications is more variable and not always realised in practice. Occasionally, pupils who find learning difficult have insufficient structured support to complete their work independently. The quality of support from teaching assistants is variable.

Some teachers provide exemplary feedback to pupils through marking their work in a way that leaves them in no doubt about what to do to improve. In the best examples, teachers provide the time for pupils to follow up on such feedback so that they are learning to edit their own work. 'Paired talk' to share ideas is promoted effectively and this is a good platform for extending opportunities for pupils to take more ownership of their own learning, which is a feature not much in evidence. At times, teachers talk too much at the start of the lesson and limit the time available for pupils to complete their tasks.

Pastoral care is effective in supporting pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils feel that staff listen to them. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. New systems for managing pupils' behaviour are followed consistently and are having a positive impact.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team sets high expectations of staff and pupils. Buoyed by recent improvements in standards, staff are committed to meeting those expectations. Training and support from local authority consultants has had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching. The role of subject leaders is developing soundly to ensure they have greater impact on the quality of teaching and learning in their subject across the school. Monitoring of teaching and of pupils' progress is rigorous. Half-termly meetings to discuss the progress of each individual pupil hold teachers to account for the pupils' achievement. Underachievement is identified quickly so that any inequalities can be tackled through targeted support. The school checks the participation of different groups

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of pupils in a range of activities to ensure that no group is disadvantaged in any aspect of school life.

The governing body is led strongly by a chair of governors who is knowledgeable about the school community. New governors receive appropriate training for their roles. The establishment of the achievement committee enables governors to keep a firm handle on standards in the school. Safeguarding requirements are met. Procedures for recruiting and vetting staff are robust. Regular training in child protection ensures that staff are alert to potential signs of concern. The school has good systems in place to identify quickly, and liaise effectively, with external agencies to provide support for pupils who may be vulnerable. Systems for identifying possible risks to pupils' health and safety are secure and issues are remedied within the constraints of a tight budget. Some statutory policies are due for review.

Community cohesion is promoted well within the school, based on a good analysis of the make-up of the community. The global awareness of pupils shows that themes in the curriculum are opening their eyes to an understanding of wider-world issues. Links with a school in rural Leicestershire have been established recently to promote cohesion in a different context beyond the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children start Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding below that expected for their age. Many have speech and communication difficulties or find it difficult to socialise with others. Progress is satisfactory but stronger in some areas of learning. By the end



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of Reception, there are strengths in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Weaknesses in children's literacy and numeracy skills are leading to an emphasis on these aspects in the Reception class but causing a tension in the balance between activities directed by adults and opportunities for children to exercise choice and gain independence in learning. Phonics sessions are taught soundly but there is not a sufficient focus on learning to write alongside learning to read.

Much of the interaction between staff and children is effective, but occasionally, too much time is spent managing social behaviour rather than developing children's learning. Plans to replace the poor Nursery accommodation with a new building are at an advanced stage. Although staff work hard to brighten the environment, the cramped conditions indoors hamper learning. The lack of cover outside limits opportunities for outdoor learning in bad weather. Many resources are old and due for replacement as part of the new development.

The new leader is developing her role. She is establishing new systems for recording observations and assessments of children's learning, which at present, use a mixture of old and new systems. Observations are satisfactory in quality, with many that are detailed and accurate, but not frequent enough in all classes to underpin planning. A good start has been made on engaging parents in their children's learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents responding to the questionnaire are generally positive about the school's work. Several spoke with inspectors about the improvements in the quality of provision. They are confident that their child likes school, and is well looked after. Parents are less positive about how they are helped to support their child's learning. The school acknowledges that there is more to do to involve parents in decision making and to provide guidance on supporting their child's learning. Negative views on how well the school manages behaviour were not borne out by the inspection.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Morden Mount Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	60	15	38	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	50	20	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	45	21	53	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	43	18	45	4	10	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	17	43	20	50	2	5	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	35	20	50	4	10	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	35	24	60	2	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	9	23	24	60	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	35	22	55	3	8	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	25	21	53	6	15	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	28	23	57	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	25	26	65	1	3	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	48	18	45	2	5	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



13 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morden Mount Primary School, Greenwich, SE13 7QP

My colleagues and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting you when we came to inspect your school. Thank you for coming to talk to us. Some of you told us about the changes you have seen at the school. You told us that it is improving and we agree with you. Your school is now satisfactory and we have confidence that it can continue improving.

You told us that behaviour is improving, that there are fewer incidents and not much bullying. Sometimes, though, we noticed that you rely on teachers to tell you how to behave rather than doing it well yourselves. We were pleased to see how well all of you get on with each other regardless of differences in your backgrounds and cultures. Indeed, it was positive to see how you celebrate those differences. Staff look after you well so you feel safe. It was good to hear that the school council takes its role seriously. Members told us about some of their plans to grow vegetables to support healthy eating. We were impressed by how well you know about other places in the world and understand how others live their lives.

We saw for ourselves that you are making progress and your work is improving. We think that you can do even better, especially in writing and mathematics, so that you are ready to meet the challenge of each new year. We have asked the teachers to use everything they know about your work when they plan activities and teach you in class. When they mark your work we want them to tell you clearly what to improve. We think that you need more opportunities to practise your writing skills in other subjects and some of you need harder work in mathematics.

We think that all of you, from Nursery to Year 6, should be given more opportunities to take responsibility for your own learning and develop as independent learners. We have asked the school to help you do this, for example, by teaching you how to find things out for yourselves using computers. We know that all the staff in Nursery and Reception are really looking forward to having a new building and new resources. We want them to look carefully at what the youngest children are learning and give them more opportunities to practise in writing too.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon

Her Majesty's Inspector

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