

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Ms Susan Russell
Morton Primary School
Main Road
Morton
Alfreton
Derbyshire
DE55 6HH

Dear Ms Russell

Short inspection of Morton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in October 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Morton Primary continues to be a school where everyone is valued and decisions are made based on the needs of each pupil. The leadership team and staff have focused well on identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. This has led to improvements currently seen in the teaching of mathematics and writing, and in pupils' attitudes to learning, particularly their resilience. Two of the pupils summed this up well during my visit; one saying, 'If we are struggling, the teachers help us and we can just have another go', and the other adding, 'We have a saying in this school that we can't do it... yet!'

This shared commitment and enthusiasm between leaders and staff to improve teaching has ensured that teachers plan a wide range of learning opportunities across subjects. Teachers set high expectations for learning and pupils know the non-negotiable requirements as well as the specific learning that they must strive to achieve in each lesson.

The visits we carried out together to several classes provided good examples of the way in which the improvements to teaching, particularly in mathematics, are now embedded. In the mixed Year 2 and 3 class we saw how pupils had collected information using a tally chart of pupils' fruit preferences, with some pupils then drawing a bar graph to illustrate their findings. In the mixed Year 4 and 5 class some pupils were using recent learning to help them to make conversions between fractions and decimals. Teachers modelled the learning effectively so that pupils had

a good understanding of what was required of them. They also encouraged pupils to help each other if needed, which gave pupils the confidence and motivation to do their best. This is common practice across the school and helps pupils to make good progress over time.

Governors have a good overall knowledge of the school. They are supportive of your leadership. They have also provided appropriate challenge to ensure that the impact of, for example, the spending of the pupil premium grant has been fully evaluated and had the desired impact on improving the learning and personal development of these pupils. Governors value the effective parental relationships that all the staff have. Several of the parents spoken to during the inspection stated that they valued the sense of community they felt as a parent at the school.

The information on the school's website about the curriculum, the 2016 key stage 2 assessment results and information about the governors does not meet the requirements set out by the government. This needs to be addressed quickly so that parents have access to the correct information.

Improvements to pupils' reading has been a focus for the school and supporting pupils to have a greater understanding of inference and deduction when reading texts which challenge them is still an area for improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that the arrangements for the care and protection of pupils are thorough and meet requirements. The single central record indicates that all required checks are made and this is regularly audited to ensure it meets best practice. Frequent and appropriate training for staff and governors has taken place, including that related to the 'Prevent' duty. Pupils' welfare is a high priority for the school and the care and support of vulnerable pupils and their families is clearly a strength. Records kept by leaders about concerns and support for pupils are systematic. Governors regularly monitor safeguarding, focusing on a different aspect each half term. Effective feedback is provided to the full governing body and recommendations for improvements are discussed with the headteacher.

Pupils were unanimous in saying that they feel safe and well cared for in school. They are confident that adults will help them if needed. Pupils talk with secure knowledge about the ways that they can stay safe, for example when online. Parents spoken to during the inspection are very happy about all aspects of safety and behaviour, including how well the staff deal with any issues they raise. However, of the very small sample of parents who responded to the Ofsted online Parent View survey, some expressed a concern about bullying at the school. Records of behaviour and bullying, and other inspection evidence, including a survey undertaken previously by the school which included a much larger sample of parents, found no evidence to support these concerns. All the staff who completed the online survey agreed that any cases of bullying were dealt with well.

Inspection findings

- You are providing good leadership. Your vision is shared by staff, governors and pupils and so pupils make good progress, enjoy their learning and behave well.
- Recent training for all staff has improved the teaching of mathematics across the school. Pupils of all abilities, including the most able, are challenged effectively through tasks to improve the fluency of their basic skills in number, improve their ability to solve problems and provide explanations in their reasoning.
- Teachers know pupils well and keep careful track of pupils' knowledge and skills, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. This helps them to identify gaps in pupils' learning when they are planning lessons. Often teachers use short check-ups to help pupils and teachers identify exactly how well recent learning has been understood.
- Feedback provided in lessons and through marking of pupils' work consistently follows the school's policy. It provides pupils with insights about the errors they have made and how, for example in mathematics, a more efficient method could have been chosen. Pupils are often provided with additional challenges as part of the school's feedback policy, which help them to make further gains to their understanding of new learning. Pupils of all ages are also encouraged to self-mark their own work so that they can quickly identify any errors and make the necessary corrections.
- Pupils read widely and often, choosing from both fiction and non-fiction texts. Most have an obvious love of reading. These pupils can talk about books they have read in detail, and offer opinions and insights into their choice of authors and different genres. They are increasingly encouraged to tackle more complex texts in reading lessons, although their ability to make inferences and deductions from texts which challenge them is still an area for development.
- Outcomes in phonics are strong and younger pupils demonstrate their ability to use their phonic skills to help them to read unknown words well. There is a clear culture of regular reading at home and in school, including for pupils with special educational needs and those who may be disadvantaged.
- Teachers are taking full advantage of strong links with local schools. In turn the staff have benefited from working to improve the teaching of mathematics and training for governors with an associate headteacher who is also the school's local authority school improvement partner. This work has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching in this subject and on improving the knowledge and skills of the governing body. However, you have also been responsible for leading this group on several areas of development, including the moderation of teachers' assessments.
- Since the previous inspection, you have improved outcomes in pupils' writing, particularly at the end of key stage 2. Pupils are clear about how to write well. A recent initiative has been to help pupils to talk and discuss their writing ideas more extensively before they write. This has improved pupils' use of appropriate vocabulary, the amount of detail they include and their focus on specific aspects of grammar and punctuation.

- Leaders have now refined the identification of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities. In lessons, these pupils have work which challenges them at the right level so that they make good progress. This includes those pupils who need to work in particularly small steps at a level below that typically expected for their age. Leaders have ensured that the right emotional support is provided where this is a barrier to learning for some pupils.
- When considering support for disadvantaged pupils, each pupil's individual needs are considered carefully. Thus, you have made different decisions about the use of the pupil premium grant each year, as the needs of those eligible pupils has changed. The impact of interventions is carefully monitored and leaders have worked closely with parents to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.
- There have been good opportunities for staff to develop their teaching and widen the curriculum so that pupils' personal development now has a greater focus on learning about different religions and cultures through carefully designed topics and through first-hand opportunities to mix with children from backgrounds that are very different to their own.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff continue to develop pupils' skills in inference and deduction when reading texts which challenge them
- the school's website has all the required information that parents need about the curriculum, the key stage 2 results, and the governors.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derbyshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, you and I regularly met throughout the day. I also met with your senior teacher, pupils, three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from Derbyshire local authority. We conducted a tour of the school together and visited all classes to see pupils and staff at work. We visited some classes more than once. I looked at the quality of displays and looked at work in pupils' books, taking account of pupils' different starting points when considering their progress. I listened to three pupils read and considered the views of 16 parents, using the Ofsted online Parent View survey. There were no text responses,

but I also spoke with parents at the start of the school day and considered the outcomes from the school's most recent parent survey which was undertaken in April 2016. I considered the responses of four members of staff. I evaluated a range of documents provided by the school, including school improvement plans, governors' visit reports and assessment information.