

South Moreton School

High Street, South Moreton, Didcot, OX119AG

Inspection dates 5–6 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's clear focus on consistently raising pupils' achievement and aspirations is shared by staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body.
- Good leadership of teaching and learning together with effective management of teachers' performance has ensured that teaching is consistently good.
- Over the past three years standards have risen year-on-year at the end of Year 2 and standards at the end of Year 6 have remained consistently above the national average.
- All groups of pupils make good progress because work is set at the right level of challenge and good partnerships with parents and carers have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The school's caring ethos ensures that everyone is included, pupils feel safe and behaviour is consistently good.
- Members of the governing body are knowledgeable about the school and play an active part in making important decisions which drive the school forward.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The proportion of teaching which is outstanding is not high enough to ensure all pupils learn exceptionally well.
- Pupils are not enthused by writing when they do not understand the purpose for writing and opportunities are sometimes missed to extend pupils' vocabulary.
- Teachers do not always make sure pupils know how to improve their work or have the time to make those improvements.
- Pupils' awareness of the skills they need to help them learn is not as well developed in some classes as it is in others.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, 12 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- All 12 observations of teaching and learning were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority, staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspector listened to pupils read.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers and took account of two letters and the 62 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' workbooks and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, minutes of meetings of the governing body and planning documents.
- The inspector took account of the 16 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- South Moreton School is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from a White British background; very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. This is well below the national average.
- Very few pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is extra funding provided for looked after children, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of service families. This is well below the national average. There are no looked after children in the school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action and those who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well below average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in 2012.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club for its pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan purposeful opportunities for writing that will increase pupils' vocabulary and extend their understanding of new words
 - make sure pupils know how to improve their work and have time to make the improvements
 - develop pupils' appreciation of the skills they need to help them learn exceptionally well
 - share the best teaching practice within the school and learn from outstanding practice beyond the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- As this is a small school, children's levels of skills, knowledge and understanding on entry to the Reception class can cover a wide range and also vary from year to year. Therefore, although all groups of pupils make rapid progress, standards at the end of Year 6 can also vary. However, over the last three years, as a result of improvements in teaching, standards in reading and writing have been above the national average. For the past two years they have been significantly above the national average in mathematics.
- Children in the Reception class benefit from well-planned activities inside and outside the classroom and this ensures that they make rapid progress. Most children reach a good level of development and are well prepared for work in Year 1.
- Pupils in Year 1 do better than all pupils nationally in their check on letters and sounds (phonics) because they are taught in small groups and work is at the right level of challenge for each pupil. If any pupil makes slower progress they are given tailor-made support to help them catch up.
- An online reading club for pupils in school, which can be followed up at home, has raised standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. It has helped to quickly close any gaps in learning that pupils may have. As a result, Year 2 pupils in 2013 reached standards in reading and writing that were above those expected. Standards in mathematics were also above those expected.
- There were only eight pupils in Year 6 in 2013. However, as a result of good teaching across Key Stages 1 and 2 all groups of pupils made rapid progress from average standards at the end of Year 2 to above the expected levels in reading and writing and significantly above in mathematics.
- More-able pupils made rapid progress in 2013 to reach standards above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although there are very few pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding and there were none in Year 6 in 2013, extra support is carefully planned to ensure that these pupils achieve well. Checks on pupils' progress show that the large majority who received focused support for reading and writing made rapid progress to reach levels that were above those expected and in line with their classmates.
- The school places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. There is no discrimination. All teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. If any pupil is seen to underperform, extra help is quickly arranged.
- Parents and carers recognise that their children make rapid progress and appreciate the high level of communication. They enjoy being partners in their children's learning as they see the positive impact this has on helping pupils to do their best.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and are very enthusiastic. They are all well-trained and their good subject knowledge is evident in the way that they question pupils to deepen their understanding and clarify any misunderstandings. They have a good relationship with their pupils. This means that pupils want to do their best, make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Pupils in a Year 5/6 class made rapid progress in a lively literacy lesson focused on writing a character description. The enjoyment of their learning was evident in their eager responses and the good level of their achievement was reflected in their accurate application and use of punctuation, such as the correct use of ellipsis. All pupils found the activity interesting and the teacher used his own good subject knowledge well to ensure that learning was secure.

- Excitement was also evident in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where the work was planned at the right level of challenge for all pupils, enabling all groups to make rapid progress. Good support from the teaching assistant helped lower-achieving pupils to use large dominoes as a way of strengthening their knowledge of how to double numbers one to 10. A more able pupil, working in a group with the class teacher, showed that she had a secure understand of how doubling works when she gave a very good explanation of how she knew that double 40 was 80.
- This level of excitement and enthusiasm for learning is not always found in writing. Pupils across the school do not always understand the purpose behind a piece of writing and as a result their work is not always of such high quality.
- Pupils know and understand how to link letters and sounds to make words because teachers use their own good subject knowledge well to ensure that pupils reach above the expected levels in reading and writing. However, although pupils can often read complex words, they do not always understand their meaning and this slows progress.
- Where teachers give pupils helpful comments on how to improve their work their rate of progress accelerates. However, teachers do not always identify what pupils must do to improve or give pupils the time to make corrections and learn from their mistakes. As a result errors are sometimes repeated and this slows progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning. They enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the above average rates of attendance. They work and play harmoniously. They are polite and are keen to learn.
- Pupils quickly settle to their work and respond to their teachers' high expectations of good behaviour. However, when pupils' interest wanes their concentration can waver. Pupils know that there are some pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour but say that the teachers are very good at dealing with these situations and learning is not interrupted.
- Where their teachers give pupils the necessary skills and strategies, pupils are confident to undertake independent learning. The school has worked hard on this aspect of learning and has made significant improvements since the last inspection when it was a point for improvement.
- Pupils are keen to point out that 3B4ME means that they have to go through three steps to solve a difficulty themselves before resorting to the teacher. In some classes the teacher has raised pupils' awareness of what makes a good learner. One pupil said it had made him a better listener, while another said it had made him more confident. However, not all classes have the same raised awareness and because their skills are less well developed progress is not quite as rapid.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and gives pupils a clear set of personal values. These help to ensure that behaviour is good. However, behaviour is not exemplary when teaching does not motivate the whole class and pupils' attention wanders.
- Pupils say that bullying does not exist. They know about the different sorts of bullying and how to deal with it. They are knowledgeable about how to stay safe on the internet, in school and at home. They say they feel safe in school and know that there will always be someone who will listen to them if they have any concerns.
- A very large majority of those parents and carers who responded to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to another parent or carer and that their children were happy and felt safe.
- Parents and carers appreciated the benefits of the school's breakfast club and pupils enjoyed the companionship and games so much that the school now operates a successful after-school club.

The leadership and management are good

- The dynamic leadership style of the headteacher has united the staff, senior leaders and

members of the governing body in an enthusiastic quest to constantly improve. As a result there has been a consistent commitment to continuous improvement since the last inspection.

- The local authority rightly provides 'light touch' support for this good school. Staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas in need of development because communication is good. Rigorous checks on the school's performance against local and national levels ensure that the school works successfully towards challenging targets.
- Teaching is consistently good as a result of leaders' effective checks on teaching and learning, which identify key areas for teachers to improve their practice. Teachers say that support from a group of local schools, together with good quality professional development, has helped to improve their teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- All staff check regularly on pupils' learning and record the progress each pupil makes. This good practice leads to open dialogue for school improvement among all staff, and is influential in driving up standards.
- Teachers' performance is managed effectively. Personal targets are set for all staff and any support needed is identified and provided. Reviews of staff performance tackle weaknesses and recognise and reward improvements in teaching.
- The school has carefully planned how to spend the new primary sports funding wisely. Gymnastic and dance specialists have been booked to train staff to ensure that the benefits of the funding are sustained after it ceases. Taster days are to be organised to widen pupils' experience of different sports. Lunchtime activities are to be increased and the variety of after-school clubs extended. Pupils already enjoy the benefit of swimming lessons which ensure that most pupils can swim confidently by the end of Year 6.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The members of the governing body play an active part in the strategic direction of the school. They have an accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and how pupils' test results compare against national data and those of pupils in other similar schools. Clear reports from the school and governors' own observations ensure that they understand that more work has to be done to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. They fulfil their responsibility in rewarding teachers' performance only when justified by pupils' achievement. Governors ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed well. For example, they know how many pupils are eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium, how well they are achieving and the impact of the extra help provided by the money allocated.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123064
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426608

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeremy Howland
Headteacher	Susan Gopall
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2008
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