

# South Moreton School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123064
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314474
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Dawson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	112
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mike Wigg/Mrs Kate Holburn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Gopall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	High Street South Moreton Didcot OX11 9AG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01235 813110
<b>Fax number</b>	01235 813110

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small primary school serves pupils from South Moreton and surrounding villages. Most pupils have attended the independent pre-school, which shares a purpose-built Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit with the Reception class. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their primary language. Few pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and none has a statement of special educational needs. The school has the Eco Green Flag Award, the Healthy Schools Standard and Activemark. A new headteacher has been in post since September 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

South Moreton School provides pupils with a good education. The new headteacher has swiftly built good relationships with the staff, governors and parents. She knows the school well and has relevant plans for development. Staff are committed to school improvement and have appreciated the constructive feedback from the headteacher's monitoring. Parents express great appreciation of the way the school is evolving. Governors support the headteacher very well. They are involved in school improvement and deepening the already effective links with the community. The school is in a good position to improve further.

This is a school where pupils are respected and are set high moral and social standards to live by. As a result, their personal development and well-being are outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school and attendance is high. Their behaviour is impeccable. They execute their range of responsibilities conscientiously and have a clear understanding of the needs of others through their support of national and international charities.

By the end of Year 6 standards are generally well above average in all subjects and pupils have made rapid progress from the end of Key Stage 1. In the 2007 national tests the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 for English, mathematics and science far exceeded the national average. The school's records show that pupils' achievements from Year 2 remained very good in 2008, although overall standards were lower because there were more pupils with learning difficulties. Standards in the Year 2 national tests are generally above average, but in 2008 no pupil attained Level 3 for English. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are now making good progress, with some working at higher levels than average for this time of the year. However, there are too few opportunities for younger pupils to take responsibility for improving their own learning or deciding which skills to use when solving problems. The excellent independent learning in the EYFS is not built on sufficiently when pupils join Year 1.

The very good relationships between pupils and teachers ensure that pupils learn well throughout the school. Teachers who have more than one age group in their class plan effectively for the different year groups. A lot is expected of the oldest pupils, who have plenty of challenge, enabling all ability groups, including the more able pupils, to make rapid progress. Pupils throughout the school know what they are learning in each lesson, and what is expected of them. However, teachers do not make enough use of pupils' eagerness to learn by involving them in setting their own personal targets for improvement. The school's recent focus on improving teachers' marking is beginning to involve pupils more in their learning, but comments are sometimes too imprecise for pupils to respond to them. There is a good curriculum and links between subjects ensure pupils develop their skills across the curriculum. There are very good opportunities for pupils to gain knowledge of other cultures. Pupils' knowledge of the Japanese people, customs and religions, for example, is impressive because of the impact of a Japanese week in school. The wide range of clubs, with an emphasis on sport and music, make a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children's attainment on entering the Reception class is above the expectations for their age. They make very good progress in the EYFS, achieving and exceeding expectations in all areas of learning. This represents outstanding achievement. The very good partnership with the

pre-school and induction procedures enable children to settle quickly and to become familiar with well-organised daily routines. Links with parents and the community are very strong and promote effective partnerships, which support children's learning well. The curriculum is very well planned and enables children to engage in a wide range of exciting learning experiences indoors and out. Resources are used well to support individual children's needs and to encourage children to explore and make decisions independently. Staff are well qualified and provide outstanding role models. They have a very good knowledge of the needs of the age range and the environment creates a sense of joy and excitement in learning. The consistent promotion of positive values ensures children know right from wrong, have high self-esteem, learn from mistakes and make decisions through structured discussion. The assessment of learning and children's personal, social and emotional development is of high quality. Regular reviews ensure that rates of progress are monitored meticulously and interventions ensure there is no risk of underachievement.

The EYFS is led and managed very effectively and staff work together as a committed team, The leadership ensures children are safeguarded effectively and that their well-being is paramount and learning is tailored to their needs. Assessment information is shared with parents and with staff in Year 1, so adults know each child's abilities and needs. The capacity to improve is very good. The leader has identified the further development of outdoor learning in the newly built area to enhance children's learning even further.

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

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to make decisions and apply their learning, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Involve pupils in refining their personal targets, so that they know how to improve their work and extend their learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils maintain their above-average standards during Key Stage 1, so that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Although this represents satisfactory achievement overall, there are now signs that progress is accelerating. Several pupils' writing, for example, is above age-related expectations in Year 1 and Year 2. This is because there have been recent improvements in teachers' marking and a whole school focus on developing more opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes. Pupils achieve well throughout Key Stage 2 and progress is rapid in Years 5 and 6 in all subjects, where there is a high level of challenge in lessons. Pupils with specific learning difficulties achieve well throughout the school. The most able pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2, but pupils of similar ability who are now in Year 3 did not achieve their full potential in the 2008 national tests.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Parents are fulsome in their praise of their children's enjoyment of school. One parent commented, 'My children have experienced happiness and grown in confidence as a result of attending this school.' Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and the additional activities available to them. They are enthusiastic about their eco projects and thoroughly versed in what constitutes healthy foods and lifestyles. Their excellent relationships with the adults in school ensure they feel confident to share any anxieties in the knowledge that adults will do their best to help

them. The School Council and Eco School Committee are beginning to make a real contribution to the school community and other pupils say that, if they ask the council, things will be voted on and often improved. Year 6 pupils are trained as playground leaders. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their strong sense of right and wrong, care for and empathy with others less fortunate than themselves is a testament to the school's long-standing commitment to their personal development. Pupils' good skills in mathematics, English and information and communication technology (ICT) prepare them well for their futures.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan work which is well matched to pupils' needs, enabling them to make good progress. In an outstanding mathematics lesson the teacher's good knowledge of prior achievement enabled pupils to be challenged very effectively. Pupils explained their ideas, listened to others and made rapid progress. Teaching assistants support specific groups very effectively and enable pupils to understand how to improve their work and achieve their objectives. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and trust in staff make them confident and eager to express their ideas. Staff question pupils effectively, to encourage them to self-correct and enable them to review their learning. Pupils have a good understanding of their progress and teachers' marking provides a balance of praise and guidance. However comments do not always focus clearly enough on what needs to be learned next to sustain rapid learning. At times, particularly in Key Stage 1, there is an overemphasis on teacher-directed tasks and pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their learning and solve problems independently.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets government requirements and it continues to evolve in the light of recent guidance. It also is beginning to be adapted to meet specific needs based on assessments of pupils' learning, for example, by increasing opportunities for developing writing to accelerate progress in Key Stage 1. Subject leaders have plans to refine the curriculum to meet pupils' needs more precisely, especially for the basic skills of English and mathematics. Pupils' skills are often promoted within other subjects, making learning relevant. For example, an ICT lesson to produce a graph to demonstrate cool-down times using different materials as thermal insulators not only promoted ICT and mathematical skills but will also be used in future science lessons. Pupils' recent Japanese week was a stimulus for writing, design and technology, religious education and art. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have French or Spanish lessons, and some now know some Japanese. French lessons are being trialled in Key Stage 1. Many of the additional activities are run by people from the community and the school takes every opportunity to extend pupils' learning in the community or beyond.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school fully complies with government requirements for safeguarding children, and adults provide exemplary pastoral care, guidance and support for the pupils. The good personal, social and health education curriculum, class discussions and consistent systems for promoting good

behaviour are very effective in promoting pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. A focus on improving attendance has resulted in very impressive recent attendance figures. Pupils who have specific learning difficulties or physical challenges are catered for well, with clear identification of their needs and good support. Academic guidance is good overall and pupils are helped to make good progress. Teachers set targets for improvement, using national systems to track pupils' progress. The school aims to refine the tracking systems so that teachers can swiftly identify and respond to any dip in the progress of individual pupils. The targets teachers set for pupils are often rather general and are not specifically matched to individual needs. The consistent use of highlighted text (the traffic light system) helps pupils know their strengths and what could be improved in their completed work, but rarely identifies the steps pupils need to take to amend and extend their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher joined a well-established team of staff in an inclusive school with a strong ethos of care, enjoyment and strong community links. She clearly celebrates the school's strengths and has a good understanding of what could be improved, based on analysis of results and monitoring. There is already clear evidence of the impact of plans for improvement in teachers' marking, for example. Classes were reorganised this term to enable most age groups to be with their peers. The headteacher has quickly developed effective relationships with the teachers, all of whom have specific responsibilities for aspects of the school's management and their own plans for development. Governors also work closely with the school team and have their own individual responsibilities for monitoring aspects of the school's self-evaluation and development plans. There are challenging targets for improvement. Leaders, governors and managers work hard to provide the best for the pupils on a tight budget. The talents of the community are used to the full. There is a weekly cooking session, for example, for pupils of all ages, run by a teacher and supported by the cook, parents and grandparents. Teachers actively promote community cohesion through residential trips and a curriculum that provides well for multicultural experiences. The sports hall is widely used by local organisations and pupils have planted woodland. As one parent remarked, 'The school is at the heart of the village.'

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

08 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Moreton School, Didcot, OX11 9AG

Thank you very much for all your friendliness and help during our visit to your school. We really enjoyed meeting you all and hearing your views.

We were very impressed with the respect you showed to your teachers and each other and the way you carried out your duties. You are very happy in school and you and your parents told us how well you are cared for. We agree. The grown-ups in school help you to become mature and responsible people who work hard and behave extremely well. Well done! I know your teachers are proud of you.

You are part of a good school where you are taught well. This helps you to make good progress. Those of you in the Reception class have a flying start because the grown-ups make sure you have all you need to help you to learn. We know that you are very good at deciding for yourselves how you will carry out your tasks. Throughout the school you all make good progress. As you get older, you make rapid progress because you are taught extremely well and your teachers encourage you to think for yourselves. We would like all of you to make similar progress and have asked the teachers in Key Stage 1 to make sure that you have plenty of opportunities to decide for yourselves how you will solve problems, just as you did in the Reception class. We know how eager you are to make your work even better and we have asked your teachers to help you set targets for yourselves, so that you know exactly what you need to do to improve. You will then be able to amaze your teachers with your progress. Please make sure that you take your teachers' advice.

By the time you leave school, many of you are working at higher-than-average levels because you are well taught and achieve well. The grown-ups who are in charge of your school make sure that you continue to do well. Your new headteacher has lots of plans to help your school to go from strength to strength. Lots of people, including many of your parents and grandparents, help to make your learning interesting. We know how much you enjoy all the visits and visitors and learning about people in other countries. Your origami birds are lovely and I know some of you can write Japanese!

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Dawson

Lead Inspector