

Morgans Primary School & Nursery

Morgans Road, Hertford, SG13 8DR

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress varies within and across year groups, and is not as strong in writing as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching does not consistently succeed in improving pupils' learning. Some teachers are not quick enough to spot when pupils are struggling or finding the work too easy.
- Marking is not consistently good enough to show pupils how to improve their work.
- Although subject and other leaders have helped raise pupils' standards to some extent, their role is not yet developed sufficiently to ensure all subjects have seen the same level of improvement.
- In some lessons pupils are given too few opportunities to participate actively, and remain passive listeners for too long.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has successfully harnessed the enthusiasm of the staff and all share her determination to make theirs a good school.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children well for the next stage of their education.
- Standards in mathematics and reading are often good.
- Pupils feel happy and secure. They are interested in learning, enjoy school and respond well to their teachers. They show concern for one another and respect for adults at all times.
- The governing body is led by a knowledgeable Chair who is fully committed to supporting and challenging the headteacher and helping her do what is needed to improve the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 18 parts of lessons taught by 18 different teachers. Two of these lessons were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the lead inspector conducted a tour of the school with the headteacher to observe learning at the start of the inspection.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked with groups of pupils about their work and their experiences of school. They observed and spoke with pupils at break and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke informally with parents and carers.
- Inspectors took account of the 53 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View), a recent parental questionnaire carried out by the school, two letters and an e-mail from parents and 38 questionnaires completed by the staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's assessment information, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's plans for improvement, monitoring documents, records of incidents, the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, performance management documents and details of how pupil premium funding is spent.

Inspection team

Mary Erwin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Margaret Louisy

Additional Inspector

Olson Davis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Morgans Primary School and Nursery is much larger than the average primary school.
- Children are taught in two separate classes in Reception, and one in the Nursery.
- After the school was last inspected in May 2011 it was led by an interim headteacher, and then the current headteacher from January 2012.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding from the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, with few speaking English as an additional language.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at 'school action' level is broadly average, but the proportion supported at 'school action plus' or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club on the premises, along with a toddler group. These are independently run, and did not form part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, make all teaching at least good and more outstanding by ensuring that:
 - the good existing practice is shared across the school
 - teachers do not talk too much in lessons, and encourage pupils to participate actively in discussions about their learning
 - all teachers use assessment information well when preparing tasks and activities so that these are matched closely to the pupils' needs and ability levels
 - all marking and other guidance to pupils in class is focused on what will make the difference and helps pupils understand how to improve their work
 - teachers use probing questions in order to engage pupils directly in their learning and deepen their knowledge and skills.
- Increase pupils' progress in writing to at least the levels in reading and mathematics by improving teachers':
 - understanding of the best ways to teach writing so that pupils find writing tasks more interesting
 - skills in analysing writing so they are clear about what pupils need to concentrate on in order to improve.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of subject leaders and other staff with leadership responsibilities so that they make a stronger contribution to checking and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
 - improving the role and skills of the governors in challenging the school's leaders and helping them to raise standards.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement. Most pupils achieve well in mathematics and reading by the time they leave but some, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, do not make consistent progress as they move through the school, and progress in writing is a notable weakness.
- Children start school with knowledge and skills that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age. Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes enables the children to settle in quickly, develop social skills and become confident learners. By the time they enter Year 1, they are meeting expectations in most of the required areas of learning.
- Pupils generally make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve good results in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can read accurately and have a secure understanding of letters and the sounds that are linked to them. Pupils use these skills to develop their reading ability when in Key Stage 2.
- Older pupils continue to do well in mathematics and reading so that by the time they leave, their results are above average. This year more pupils achieved the higher levels in mathematics as a result of additional support in smaller groups for those who needed it, the use of local secondary school teachers to challenge more-able pupils, and the introduction of weekly mental mathematics work for all. Attainment in reading has similarly been raised by the introduction of better teaching methods and the development of a school library; however, results in writing were below average.
- The gap between the achievement of all pupils and those who are eligible for extra support through pupil premium funding is narrowing as a result of carefully targeted support that is aimed at improving pupils' confidence as well as their academic skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make overall progress that is in line with their classmates. However, their progress varies too sharply within and between year groups because the quality of teaching is not consistently good enough in all classes and lessons.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While some teaching is good or better and inspectors saw no unsatisfactory teaching, there is currently not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils in all classes make accelerated progress. The inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that some pupils do not always progress as fast as they should.
- Marking, in particular, is not always good enough to show pupils how to improve their work. In some lessons, pupils are given clear guidance and as a result their work quickly gets better. In others, teachers' comments are too broad to help pupils understand what is needed.
- Where teaching is good or better, teachers question pupils to extend and check their understanding. These teachers are skilled at spotting when pupils are struggling, ensure tasks are never too easy and use what they know about pupils' progress to adapt tasks and match them carefully to pupils' abilities. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their learning and to help each other understand what they have to do.

- However, these qualities are not evident consistently enough in all lessons across the school. Teachers do not encourage pupils enough to take an active part in their learning, or to discuss and explore ideas for themselves. Pupils sometimes have to sit and listen to lengthy explanations before they are allowed to start their work. This is particularly a problem for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teaching assistants are generally used appropriately. They provide good academic and emotional support for pupils and try, though not always successfully, to encourage pupils to be independent learners who do not rely on adult help.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils treat each other and adults with respect at all times. They move around the school sensibly and arrive punctually to lessons. They are polite and considerate to teachers and to each other, and provide visitors with a very warm welcome.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards learning when given activities that meet their different needs, are stimulating and engage their interest. In lessons where the pace of learning is slow, they remain well behaved but can lose concentration, and this leads to fidgeting or simply not doing enough work.
- Behaviour outside the school during break and lunchtime is good. Although play is active, it is not boisterous. Pupils from different ethnic groups play well together.
- Pupils feel safe and secure when at school and incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils understand what bullying is and feel confident that adults deal with any problems quickly and effectively. Questionnaires from parents and carers show they are also confident their children are kept safe when at school.
- Pupils know how to stay safe on the internet and understand the problems arising from talking to strangers or from cyber-bullying in social networking sites.
- Attendance is above average and this reflects the positive attitudes pupils have to learning. The school quickly and successfully follows up cases of pupils who are persistently absent.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher and deputy are passionate about the importance of raising standards. Their high expectations of what staff and pupils can achieve are shared by all the staff.
 - The headteacher holds staff accountable for their pupils' progress, using a system of regular half-termly meetings to analyse data and set teachers high targets for improvement. This has been moderately successful and has brought about clear gains in standards and strengthened teaching at the top end of the school. However, the school itself acknowledges that pockets of underachievement, directly related to teaching, remain.
 - Subject leaders have worked hard to improve achievement with mixed success. There have undoubtedly been some marked improvements in some subjects. However, they have not all adopted the same methods when setting targets and have consequently not eradicated the
-

variation in pupils' progress in different classes. Improvements have been made in mathematics and reading but not in writing. The headteacher has recently reorganised the leadership team so that they can make a better contribution to improving teaching, but it is too soon for the impact of this change to be apparent.

- The senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's general strengths and weaknesses, but they have not yet eliminated variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
 - Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to provide additional tuition in English and mathematics and one-to-one nurture sessions. This has helped to ensure that eligible pupils' achievement is increasingly in line with that of their classmates.
 - The local authority advisory team has provided some support through staff training and other guidance. However, these measures have not had a demonstrable impact on the weaker teaching.
 - The involvement of parents and carers in all aspects of school life is growing. Every child who has started in the Nursery and Reception has been visited at home. This has helped the new entrants settle into school smoothly.
 - Parental questionnaires are overwhelmingly positive about the headteacher and show strong support for her. One parent said, 'She's outside every day to welcome us,' reflecting the view of many that the headteacher has improved communication between home and school since her arrival. The vast majority of parents are happy to recommend the school to others.
 - The way subjects are taught makes a good contribution to the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils have a reasonable understanding of cultures and religions other than their own, have access to and use a variety of musical instruments, and participate in a range of extra activities such as visits to environmental sites and residential adventure camps.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement. Although the newly appointed Chair of the Governing Body is ensuring that governors have an increasingly secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, this has not yet secured consistently good teaching and progress throughout the school. However, governors now attend training sessions that are helping them to better understand and fulfil their role, and to know how the school is performing compared to similar schools nationally. They ensure that statutory requirements, such as those for keeping pupils safe and for recruiting and vetting staff, are fully met. Governors oversee how funding from the pupil premium is spent and ensure it supports those pupils for whom it is intended. They do not, however, sufficiently ensure that all documents on the school's website are up to date and reflect current school policy. Targets set for the headteacher's performance are closely linked to improved achievement and are increasingly challenging. The Chair has a good understanding of teachers' performance and has advised and supported the headteacher in decisions about how pay should be linked to performance for individual teachers.
-

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	117363
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	405699

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 of pupils on the school roll	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Croston
Headteacher	Alison Pepper
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2011
Telephone number	01992 582162
Fax number	01992 509499
Email address	admin@morgans.herts.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

