

Inspection of Morice Town Primary Academy

Charlotte Street, Devonport, Plymouth, Devon PL2 1RJ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Morice Town enjoy attending school. They are proud to be part of the school community. They feel safe because adults care for them. Pupils understand the school's learning dispositions of being resourceful, open, aspirational, resilient and reflective. They know how to learn well.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils behave sensibly. Adults treat pupils with respect. Bullying rarely happens. If it does, it is quickly dealt with. Leaders make sure that it does not happen again.

Children make a good start in the early years. They become independent and confident learners. Children have lots of opportunities to talk, and they learn to communicate well. The curriculum builds on what pupils have learned before. Teachers check what pupils can remember, and this helps them to support pupils who fall behind. All pupils learn well.

Leaders build strong relationships with pupils and their families. They create a welcoming school where pupils and parents feel well supported.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for pupils at Morice Town. They have developed a well-sequenced curriculum. Pupils' learning starts with what they know, and this builds well over time. For example, in early years, pupils learn about the area immediately around the school. Their knowledge broadens effectively as they learn about Plymouth before finding out about the wider world. Pupils deepen their understanding and make sense of new knowledge.

Reading is a priority throughout the school. From the moment children start at Morice Town, they are immersed in stories. In early years, the children respond to, and act out, stories that they have heard. Older pupils read a range of exciting texts. These are often connected to the wider curriculum. Staff are well trained in teaching pupils to read. The books pupils read match the sounds that they know. This helps them to become confident and speedy readers. The small number of pupils who fall behind have appropriate support to catch up quickly.

Leaders have developed a well-thought-out mathematics curriculum. Children in the early years count often. This helps them to build their number facts. By the time they go into Year 1, pupils are confident to use number facts to answer simple questions. Older pupils draw upon number knowledge to solve tricky problems. Pupils who find learning mathematics difficult are well supported by staff. For example, some pupils receive extra teaching about clocks that prepares them well when learning about time.

In some subjects, the curriculum is not as well developed as others. Where this occurs, pupils do not remember what they have learned before. This has led to gaps

in pupils' knowledge and lower outcomes. Leaders are developing these curriculum areas and how they are taught.

Behaviour in lessons is good. Leaders have high expectations and pupils understand them. Where some pupils find it difficult to behave well, staff support them effectively by following the school's new relational policy. Leaders work tirelessly to make sure that all pupils attend school. Despite this, there are still too many pupils with poor attendance. These pupils miss learning and find it harder to keep up.

Pupils know what to do to learn well. The clear routines and consistent structure of their learning help them. The personal, social and health education curriculum is effective. It ensures that pupils know what healthy relationships are. They know what is acceptable and what to do if they are worried about a relationship. Pupils appreciate the school's clubs and visits. Leaders work hard to make sure that all pupils can take part.

Leaders feel well supported by the trust and by governors. Staff benefit from the wide range of professional development that the trust provides for them. Staff feel that leaders do all that they can to make their workload manageable. Morale is high, and staff are dedicated to pupils and their families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. Pupils say that there is always an adult in school who will help them if they are worried. Parents say staff and leaders are always available. This means that parents can get the support that they need quickly.

Staff understand their role in keeping pupils safe. Systems in the school are used well. Leaders act quickly if there are concerns about a pupil. They work with parents and agencies to make sure that any risks are dealt with. Leaders go above and beyond to support families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils are not able to remember knowledge that they have been taught. This is because the curriculum has not been well structured. Leaders need to ensure that recent improvements to the curriculum in these subjects have the impact they intend.
- Despite leaders' actions, the attendance of some pupils is not yet high enough. As a result, these pupils miss learning. Leaders need to ensure that their strategies to improve attendance have greater impact.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	143892
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10284087
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Marcus Agius
Headteacher	Joe Roberts
Website	www.morice-town-primary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Morice Town Primary Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- On 1 January 2017, Morice Town Primary School converted to an academy and joined Reach South Multi-Academy Trust, becoming Morice Town Primary Academy.
- In September 2018, the school entered a collaborative arrangement with Drake Primary Academy, another school which is part of the Reach South Multi-Academy Trust. This arrangement started by sharing an executive headteacher and a head of school. In January 2019, the local governing board then amalgamated to oversee both schools.
- This is the second inspection since the school became an academy.
- Pupils start at the school in their Reception Year, which is the academic year in which they turn five. Some children join earlier, in the Nursery, at the age of three.
- Governors run a breakfast club for pupils between the ages of four and 11.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.

- A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders. They met with members of the governing body and representatives from Reach South Multi-Academy Trust.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, attendance, personal development and behaviour. The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils. They looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks on staff.

Inspection team

Jayne Keller, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Carl Thornton	Ofsted Inspector

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