

Morley Meadow Primary School

Address: 51 Encombe Street, Plymouth, PL9 7GN

Unique reference number (URN): 144933

Inspection report: 2 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils, including those who face barriers to their learning. Pupils' achievements across the curriculum are typically above national figures. The school ensures that pupils quickly develop strong knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. Published outcomes reflect pupils' high performance in statutory assessments at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, typically make strong progress from their starting points and achieve well.

Current writing in pupils' books shows significant improvement in their command of grammar, punctuation and spelling. As a result, pupils have the foundational knowledge needed to follow the wider curriculum. Their work is consistently of a high standard across all subject areas. Pupils apply their strong reading, writing and mathematical skills very well in subjects such as history and geography. This enables them to read and write about complex topics successfully. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable in lessons and as they move around the school. They understand the school's routines and rules very well. Through the curriculum, pupils learn to interact in kind, friendly and empathetic ways, which contributes to an orderly and calm learning environment. Positive relationships between staff and pupils help to foster a culture of inclusion and respect for the needs of others. In classrooms, pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. The curriculum engages and enthuses them so they enjoy learning. Bullying is very rare. Pupils know they can speak to trusted adults if they have any concerns and are confident that staff will respond quickly if an issue were to arise.

Leaders are relentless in ensuring that pupils attend school consistently. They monitor pupils' attendance with precision and work closely with families to provide tailored support. Their actions are successful in improving pupils' attendance. A sizeable number of pupils join the school mid-year and, although their attendance is often initially low, leaders' targeted actions and the impact of the school's engaging curriculum ensure that their attendance improves rapidly.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to build securely and incrementally on their prior learning. Stories and high-quality texts underpin learning across all curriculum areas. This creates a highly consistent approach to the development of pupils' reading, writing and oracy. Teachers use their expert knowledge to plan exciting and stimulating lessons. For example, pupils study in depth the stories that underpin a range of religions. This approach begins in the early years where children learn about the world around them in rich detail.

Pupils follow a well-structured mathematics programme that supports them to typically achieve highly. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly before introducing more complex concepts. This means that any gaps in pupils' learning are identified promptly. For example, leaders recognised gaps in some pupils' knowledge of grammar and punctuation and implemented precise adaptations to the curriculum. This has led to a significant improvement in pupils' writing.

Pupils learn to read very well. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 develop strong phonic knowledge and confidently connect letters with the sounds they represent. Staff have a high degree of expertise in the teaching of early reading. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about reading and become confident, successful readers by the end of key stage 1.

Early years

Strong standard 

Children in the early years flourish in the well-planned and thoughtfully organised setting. Nursery and Reception children are enthused by a range of stimulating activities, carefully designed to extend their knowledge of the world around them. For example, the nature area fills children with awe and wonder. Through carefully structured interactions with staff, children eagerly explore the life cycles of insects and plants. The curriculum extends their vocabulary which enables children to talk confidently about concepts, such as 'invertebrates' and 'nocturnal animals'.

Stories underpin children's learning. High-quality fiction immerses them in rich, imaginative worlds and supports them to develop their own creative interpretations of the world around them. Reading is prioritised throughout the setting. Reception children learn to read through high-quality daily phonics lessons. Staff support children's pencil grip and letter formation very well, enabling many to write simple sentences using capital letters and full stops. As a result, children are very well prepared for their transition to Year 1.

Children learn a well-sequenced curriculum that supports their physical, emotional, social and academic development. They learn to ride tricycles with confidence and create sculptures with cardboard to represent stories they have read about pirates and robots. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well. Staff identify their needs with precision and provide bespoke interventions.

Leaders and staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that children's learning is celebrated.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders have created a highly inclusive school where the needs and interests of each pupil are identified and addressed. As a result, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early and bespoke interventions are implemented with speed and precision. Leaders and staff monitor this support closely and adapt it when necessary. This ensures that pupils can follow the curriculum successfully and engage fully in learning. Pupils' social and emotional needs are supported extremely well.

Staff receive ongoing training that enables them to identify and reduce the barriers pupils may face. In the early years, staff are highly alert to children's social, emotional, physical and learning needs. They provide tailored support that helps children to thrive. For example, pupils can access a quiet space at the beginning of the school day and at lunchtime to help them manage their emotional and social development. Parents of pupils with SEND are very positive about the impact of the school's early identification and support. The school also works closely with external agencies so pupils receive the most appropriate support in a timely way.

Leaders use the funding allocated for disadvantaged pupils in a highly targeted and effective way to support pupils' academic, social and emotional development. The strategy is firmly rooted in evidence-based research, ensuring that funding is used to maximise its impact.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders' vision for a school where all pupils flourish socially, emotionally, physically and academically is shared by all staff. Leaders lead by example and their unswerving commitment to school improvement is mirrored by staff. Through robust monitoring of the impact of school improvement strategies, they have secured and assured the school's continued success. Pupils who need additional support are at the heart of leaders' work. Their commitment, diligence and sharply focused approach are having a profound impact on the education and welfare of pupils.

The structure of governance has undergone change. However, the role of governance and the sharpness of its focus in challenging and supporting leaders has not diminished as a result. Governors and trustees are knowledgeable and work closely with leaders through regular visits. They maintain strong oversight of the school's priorities for improvement. Their analysis of the funding received to support disadvantaged pupils is consistently sharp and probing.

Staff's responses to the Ofsted questionnaire are unanimously positive about the support leaders provide for their wellbeing and workload. They value the programme of continuous professional learning which helps them to refine and develop their teaching. Staff are very proud to work at the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Through the school's personal development programme, pupils develop strong knowledge and skills that help them to understand the world, both within school and beyond. They grow into highly reflective, responsible and inclusive members of the school community. They embrace social, cultural and ethnic diversity. They form warm friendships with each other and make sure that everyone is included. Pupils also learn about their cultural heritage. For example, they learn about the naval significance of the city of Plymouth.

Through the school's personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves emotionally and physically healthy. The school provides nutritious meals, and pupils learn about the importance of healthy food for their physical development. In the early years, children enjoy healthy snacks. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of sports resources at break and lunchtime that support their physical development and help them to

build friendships. In addition, pupils deepen their understanding of the natural world through studying the ecosystems in the school's woodland area. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe when online.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They experience democracy through voting for the school council. They have many leadership opportunities, such as helping with assemblies and supporting younger pupils in the playground.

The school provides a rich offer of clubs and activities, including dance, football and art. Leaders carefully monitor pupils' participation to ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, can benefit from these opportunities. As a result, pupils are extremely well prepared to be active and thoughtful citizens of modern Britain.

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What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils thrive socially, emotionally and academically at Morley Meadow. They attend well and are eager to learn about a range of subjects. There is a calm, harmonious learning environment across the school which enables pupils to learn very well. For example, pupils love writing stories based on their own imaginative interpretations of stories they have read.

Relationships between adults and pupils are warm, nurturing and supportive. As a result, pupils mirror these behaviours with one another. They demonstrate kindness, empathy and friendship. Pupils are highly inclusive of each other. This begins in Nursery where children are highly engaged in the vibrant and stimulating early years environment. Children quickly learn the importance of politeness and gentleness in their social interactions.

Pupils behave impeccably in lessons and around the school. They have a range of leadership roles which enable them to help each other. Pupils understand how to recognise the signs of bullying. However, incidents of bullying are very rare.

Reading has a very high profile in the school so pupils develop a love of reading. In early years, children are immersed in rich story worlds. This helps them to develop fluent language skills. Pupils achieve very well in reading, mathematics and phonics. Pupils' writing in their books across the curriculum demonstrates a creative and attentive command of language, grammar and structure. This prepares pupils very well for their next steps.

Pupils who are disadvantaged, as well as those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, flourish because of the well-planned and precisely targeted support they receive. This enables them to learn with confidence and success.

Pupils have many opportunities to enrich their learning through visits to places of cultural, scientific and sporting significance, as well as through visitors to the school. They also routinely explore the natural world through the 'Wild Tribe' curriculum, making purposeful use of the school's wood.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to strengthen leadership across all areas of the school so that the achievement and experiences of vulnerable pupils are deepened and sustained over time.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Westcountry Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Nat Parnell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Carl Atkinson.

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. They also met with the chair of the board of trustees. Inspectors spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Claire Duncan

Lead inspector:

Susan Aykin, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sally Hannaford, Ofsted Inspector

Marie Thomas, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

226

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

236

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

25.50%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.33%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

19.91%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	61%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	70%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	73%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	64%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	81%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	84%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	68%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	84%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	90%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	80%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	51%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	46%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	53%	44%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	62%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	58%	63%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	60%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	57%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	60%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	50%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	59%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	73%	59%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	51%	68%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	67%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	53%	66%	-13 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	65%	80%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	58%	81%	-22 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	80%	-20 pp
2022/23 (final)	73%	78%	-5 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	57%	78%	-21 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2023/24 (final)	60%	78%	-18 pp
2022/23 (final)	60%	77%	-17 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	65%	80%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	81%	-31 pp
2023/24 (final)	70%	79%	-9 pp
2022/23 (final)	73%	79%	-6 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.4%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	9.9%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	11.7%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	15.5%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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