

# Manland Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	117103
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379349
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Philip Mann HMI

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

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Katy Wilmshurst
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Sauncey Avenue Harpenden AL5 4QW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 713452
<b>Fax number</b>	01582 715938
<b>Email address</b>	admin@manland.herts.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	25–26 January 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379349



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Philip Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector

Christopher Gray

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors took account of any responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed seven teachers teaching a total of 16 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition the inspection team made short visits to other lessons to look at pupils' work and to review the teaching of phonics and literacy skills. They also listened to pupils of lower ability in Years 1 and 2 read. Meetings were held with pupils from Years 5 and 6, senior staff, middle managers and members of the governing body. Several discussions took place between inspectors and parents before school. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents including the school improvement plan, those related to self-evaluation, the monitoring of teaching, safeguarding and minutes of the governing body. Also, they analysed 150 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and others completed by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

The school is average in size for its type. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion from minority ethnic groups is very small. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils who leave or join the school at other than the usual times is similar to that found nationally. A very small minority of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. While the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below the national average, the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. In 2011, the school met the government floor standard.

The building is shared by a breakfast and after-school club which is not managed by the governing body and was not included in this inspection.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The vast majority of parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the sense of community that exists within the school and the high levels of care that staff provide for pupils. Inspectors agree with them. Despite above average attainment at the end of Year 6 in English, not enough pupils make consistently good progress from their above-average starting points. This is especially so in mathematics where standards of attainment have fluctuated in recent years between average to above average.
- Teaching is satisfactory but inconsistent in quality. There are examples of outstanding practice in Years 2 and 6 but there is too much satisfactory teaching in other year groups to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress in all lessons. The support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effective and these pupils make good progress. The teaching of reading is good. The quality of marking is satisfactory but it is not used effectively in all classes to accelerate pupils' learning.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well and are keen to be at school. Parents speak highly about the good behaviour of pupils both in and around school. Older pupils say that staff are quick to deal with any unacceptable behaviour and if any bullying does occur, it is dealt with promptly. Attendance is above average, pupils get on well with each other and their attitudes to learning are positive.
- Day-to-day management is good. Leadership has created a positive and harmonious climate for learning. Monitoring procedures are satisfactory but insufficiently robust to ensure that teaching is consistently good or better. Furthermore, not enough rigour is applied to the analysis of data to inform self-evaluation and address weaknesses in order to improve pupils' outcomes further. The governing body supports the school well but is not asking challenging enough questions of leaders about areas of weakness and underperformance.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and improve achievement overall, and especially in mathematics, by ensuring that:
  - teaching is consistently good or better in all classes and key stages
  - pupils of all abilities are given challenging tasks in all lessons that fully meet their needs
  - teachers use information and communication technology effectively to engage pupils in their learning
  - marking is used effectively to inform pupils about what they need to do next to improve.
  
- Improve the quality of self-evaluation and school improvement by ensuring that:
  - teaching and learning are monitored with greater rigour
  - systematic use is made of data to identify areas of further improvement and to measure success
  - middle leaders play a greater role in monitoring the quality of provision and pupils' learning in their areas of responsibility
  - governors are more challenging in their monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Attainment in English has remained at above average levels at the end of Key Stage 2 for several years. It has been more variable in mathematics, for example, moving from above average in 2010 to average in 2011. The vast majority of parents are happy with the progress their children are making. Inspectors agree that the pupils' achievement is good in reading and writing. However, they judge that many pupils are not making enough good progress from above average starting points and especially in mathematics.

Most pupils are keen to learn; even when teachers talk for too long, pupils listen attentively and willingly undertake the tasks set for them. The best learning takes place in lessons where teachers use a wide range of strategies to support pupils' application of basic literacy and numeracy skills. For example, where teaching was good in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher engaged more able pupils in peer assessment to determine the accuracy of each other's punctuation and the inclusion of an 'embedded clause' in their writing. As a result, these pupils' progress in writing was rapid. In less successful lessons, pupils of average or below average ability are expected to complete the same work that is planned for the more able pupils, with the help of adults. This is not always successful and leads to slower progress for these pupils, especially in mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs respond well to good levels of support and achieve well in literacy and numeracy. There are no significant differences in the achievement of those pupils eligible for free school meals or for those who speak English as an additional language.

Standards in reading and writing are good across the school. All pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs can read with confidence because their knowledge of letters and sounds is good. As a result, pupils of all abilities can read unfamiliar words with confidence by breaking down the sounds each letter or group of letters make. This is contributing well to their achievement in literacy and the above average standards in reading by Year 2. The skills of writing in a neat joined style are taught effectively from Reception. Consequently pupils' handwriting is neat and the presentation of work is good in books. This leads to a sense of pride among the pupils about their work.

Children start in Reception with skills above those expected for their age. While many activities are planned to provide them with opportunities to develop their skills of independence many of these activities lack real purpose. This has been recognised by the school with modifications made to the use of outdoor area. Furthermore, opportunities for the development of mathematical skills are limited. Consequently pupils of lower ability often start in Year 1 making mistakes in writing numbers correctly. Skills in addition and subtraction are not effectively consolidated for all pupils in Year 1, leading to slower progress in numeracy. However, outstanding teaching in Year 2 rectifies many misconceptions and ensures that all pupils make good progress.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some examples of good and outstanding practice. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that teaching is good. Inspectors do not endorse this view because there is too much teaching that is satisfactory and this leads to inconsistencies in pupils' achievement across the school from their above-average starting points in Year 1.

All teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and use questions in many lessons to advance pupils' learning. However, some teachers talk for too long and this limits the opportunity for pupils to be fully engaged in productive independent learning. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn in a lesson. Planning provides sufficiently challenging work for the more able pupils but there is often an absence of specific tasks for less able pupils. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to support their teaching. However, despite the use of computers to support individuals' learning in literacy and numeracy at the start of each day, some teachers make insufficient use of information and communication technology to fully engage pupils in exciting learning experiences in other lessons. When given such opportunities, pupils excel in both personal and academic skills. For instance, in an outstanding mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher provided excellent opportunities for pupils to explain their investigations of symmetry in two dimensional shapes while developing their presentation skills. Such activities make a very positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils' work is marked regularly in all classes and guidance is provided on how they can improve. However, the quality of this marking varies from class to class. Pupils' books indicate that there are insufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to correct

mistakes or to practise skills to consolidate learning. Consequently, mistakes can be repeated and the progress of some pupils slows as a result. Furthermore, discussions with older pupils of average and below average ability indicate that they do not fully know the targets that have been set for them and are not clear about what they need to do next to improve.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The vast majority of parents and pupils believe that behaviour, both in class and around the school, is good. Inspectors endorse this view and note that pupils are very polite and courteous towards visitors. Relationships are very positive between pupils and adults and the pupils themselves. Playgrounds are harmonious and happy places to be. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and that if any unacceptable behaviour occurs it is dealt with very quickly. Pupils demonstrate high levels of care for those pupils in need of extra help and support, such as talking to someone on the 'playground buddy' bench because they feel lonely or upset. Incidents of bullying are very rare and pupils say that when it does occur it is dealt with swiftly by senior staff. Attendance is above the national average. The small number of pupils who display challenging behaviour respond well to the care and guidance provided by support staff. The need to exclude any pupil from school is very rare.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning. They listen attentively to the teachers in lessons and quickly undertake the tasks set for them. They persevere with their work and are keen to do well. Pupils respond particularly well to good or better teaching. This is especially so when they are given tasks to complete together with fellow classmates. However, such motivating activities were not seen by inspectors in all lessons during the inspection.

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher ensures that responsibilities are appropriately delegated to enable good day to day management. Her high expectations of behaviour are reflected in the good behaviour of pupils. The headteacher and staff actively promote a positive and inclusive climate for learning. Pupils feel at ease to talk to someone if they have any concerns because they know they will be listened to. Communication between parents and the school is very good and many parents state that they know that any concerns they may have will be dealt with quickly by the headteacher.

Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Key issues from the last inspection related to improving the pupils' cultural development have been addressed successfully. For instance, assemblies highlight the celebrations of other faiths such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Such activities prepare pupils well for living in a modern and diverse society.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and enriched by an extensive range of activities outside of lessons. The school is in the process of designing more imaginative links between subjects with a stronger focus on skill development. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The remodelling of the

outdoor area is a positive step forward in improving the provision. Planning is satisfactory overall but too many activities lack a clear purpose to ensure that these children make good progress.

The governing body is supportive of the school's work. Governors have been rigorous in establishing robust safeguarding procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. They visit regularly and have first-hand knowledge of what happens in school. However, monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work lacks a sharp focus. This limits the ability of governors to challenge school leaders about areas of weaker performance, such as pupils' achievement in mathematics.

Leaders monitor teaching through performance management and 'learning walks' to provide a broadly accurate overview of strengths and weaknesses. The monitoring of lessons, however, is not focused enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. The school's ability to promote equality and tackle discrimination is satisfactory. The tracking of individual pupils' progress is regular and enhanced by improved systems for analysis of the data. However, senior leaders and middle managers do not use this data systematically to identify areas of weakness, support effective performance management, identify areas of further improvement and measure success. Subject leaders provide appropriate support and guidance to colleagues but are yet to play a significant role in monitoring the quality of provision and pupils' learning within their areas of responsibility. Despite these shortcomings, staff teamwork is a strength and the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Manland Primary School, Harpenden, AL5 4QW**

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school. Manland provides you with a satisfactory education and we were pleased to see your good behaviour and personal development shine through during our visit. You get on very well with each other and are keen to work hard. We were particularly impressed with your neat handwriting and the pride that you take in your work. A number of you told us that incidents of any misbehaviour and bullying are dealt with very quickly by the staff.

The school provides you with good opportunities to become confident readers and good at writing before you move on to secondary school. Those of you who need extra help make good progress while at Manland. However, some of you are less confident in mathematics and this is something that we have asked the teachers to tackle. We have also asked them to make sure that the tasks that they set you in both English and mathematics are more closely matched to your different abilities. You can help by telling your teachers when you find the work too easy or too hard.

The teachers work hard to provide interesting lessons for you. Some talk a bit too much and this means that you do not have enough time in lessons to show what you can do. The best teachers provide lots of opportunities for you to work with others in your class and also to use new technology to include you in exciting activities. We have suggested that all teachers should always include these activities in their lessons. The teachers mark your work regularly, but we have asked them to make time for you to read and respond to the comments they write, to improve your progress.

The headteacher, staff and the governing body are keen to ensure that the school continues to improve. We have asked them to be more rigorous in their approach to checking how well they are doing to ensure that all of you achieve well during your time at the school.

Thank you again for welcoming us to your school and our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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