

Manifold CofE (VC) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124305
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	385871
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2012
Lead inspector	Joanne Harvey HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Gould
Headteacher	Jean Fletcher
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2011
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	13–14 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joanne Harvey

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed three teachers teaching six lessons, all of these were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made short visits to sessions in which pupils learned phonics (the sounds that letters make) and other reading skills. The inspector, with the headteacher, scrutinised samples of pupils' work books. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and a representative of the local authority. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, the school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans and school policies. The inspector analysed 43 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample of pupils. There were no responses to the on-line Parent View survey.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average sized primary school which serves a remote rural community and to which many pupils travel daily by school bus from surrounding villages. Almost all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much smaller than in most schools. The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. At the time of the last inspection, the school became subject to a notice to improve. The headteacher in post at that time has subsequently retired and was replaced by the current headteacher who took up her post in September 2011. Though designated as a full primary school, pupils leave at the end of Year 4 and go on to middle schools elsewhere. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes: Early Years Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 and 4. The school has achieved Healthy School status.

The school shares its site with Manifold Pre-School and the Leek and Rural Children's Centre. Neither of these is managed by the governing body and both are subject to separate inspections.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has successfully addressed the weaknesses raised at its last inspection. Leaders have focused more sharply on the areas most in need of improvement. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved. The school is not yet good because teaching does not have enough good features to secure good progress for all pupils and not all leaders are playing their part in making sure improvements happen at a good rate. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Inadequate progress seen at the last inspection in Key Stage 1 has been eradicated. Progress is at least satisfactory for all groups of pupils. Standards, though broadly average, are beginning to rise. Additional support has closed the gaps resulting from a legacy of underachievement. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. There is not enough good practice to secure consistently good progress for all. Not all teachers and adults are sufficiently accurate in their subject knowledge. Additional adults are not used well enough to maximise their contribution to learning. Teachers plan tasks for different abilities but sometimes these do not materialise in lessons. Teachers do not check often enough that all pupils in the class are doing as well as they can.
- Pupils develop many good personal skills. They develop positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour contributes well to a harmonious and safe environment. It does not make a strong contribution to good learning in lessons because pupils have not been taught the skills needed to learn independently. Attendance is average.

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- The headteacher has strengthened monitoring and evaluation and identified the correct areas for improvement. She manages performance and leads teaching effectively so that teachers are held to account. Leadership has not been devolved to ensure everyone in school plays their full part in driving improvements forward. Action plans do not include enough measurable targets.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to consistently above average in English and mathematics and quicken pupils' progress so that it is at least good by:
 - securing teachers' improved subject knowledge in mathematics and phonics and ensuring phonics is taught systematically and consistently across the school
 - maximising the contribution that additional adults make to good learning
 - ensuring pupils of different abilities always work on tasks that challenge them to do their best
 - ensuring teachers check regularly for misconceptions and swiftly address them so all pupils do as well as they can
 - ensuring pupils develop the skills they need to be able to drive their own learning independently.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - devolving leadership so that everyone plays their full part in driving forward school improvement
 - ensuring plans for improvement always identify precisely what they will look like for pupils' achievement, along with clear points at which to check on their progress towards success.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire believe that the school meets their children's needs, develops their basic skills and ensures their achievement is good. This is true in some, but not all, cases.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding. They are often similar to those expected nationally, except in literacy and mathematical understanding which are sometimes slightly below expectations. Strengthened teaching and an improved curriculum has ensured that children progress well and they are on track at least to achieve the levels expected when they enter Year 1.

Teacher assessments have not given a reliable picture of pupils' achievement at the

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end of Key Stage 1 over recent years. However, inspection evidence confirms that it has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils had underachieved and failed to maintain previous levels but additional support has closed the gaps in their learning. Improved teaching is ensuring pupils are maintaining the start they made in the Early Years Foundation Stage and that they make satisfactory progress to attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, progress is also satisfactory and attainment broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, but because of the increasing number of better features of teaching, attainment is improving. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. All groups make similar progress.

A recent start has been made to phonics teaching but it is not done systematically enough. Teaching groups comprise a wide ability range and planned tasks are not tailored closely enough to pupils' needs to ensure they make rapid progress. Not all adults have the knowledge to deliver phonics lessons well. Higher-order reading skills are taught well in small teacher-directed groups. However, pupils who are not working directly with the teacher in these lessons are not engaged in meaningful enough tasks to ensure their consistently good progress. Pupils love to read and take delight in discussing their favourite books.

Progress in mathematics is quickening where teachers offer pupils more practical opportunities to use their skills to solve problems. This practice is not consistent and embedded across school. Some teachers lack the confidence in their subject knowledge to secure good progress in higher-order mathematical skills for the most able pupils. Pupils have more opportunities to write at length in a greater range of contexts. Consequently, evidence confirms that the progress pupils make in writing is quickening, particularly in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, presentation is not good enough to show off pupils' skills to best effect and help them to improve further.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory and results in most pupils making satisfactory progress. The inspector agrees with the response of parents and carers in that teaching includes some good features. It is often good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where adults have a good understanding of national guidance and how young children learn.

Teachers work effectively to promote positive relationships and behaviour so that lessons are calm and pupils sustain concentration. Lesson objectives ensure pupils know what to do to be successful. Teachers' ability to assess accurately has improved, and they more often use this information to plan lessons matched to pupils' ability. This is not always the case as, occasionally, pupils of different abilities unnecessarily carry out similar tasks before more-able pupils go on to more challenging ones.

In one of the best parts of a lesson seen, several pupils – working directly with the class teacher – made good progress in their understanding of the features of poetry.

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This was because the teacher enthused them with her subject knowledge, gave them good strategies to support their learning and set them an open-ended challenge to promote their thinking skills. She intervened with well-targeted questions, checking their understanding and continuing to move their learning on. However, elsewhere in this lesson, which was typical of others seen, the progress of some slowed because adults were not actively engaged in their learning throughout the lesson, checking to see if they needed to address any misconceptions. Teaching assistants delivering bespoke programmes help to ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Occasionally, they are too focused on supervising the completion of tasks rather than promoting learning. Teachers are less reliant on work sheets than at the time of the last inspection and are giving pupils more opportunities to use practical equipment and to solve problems. Nevertheless, they are not always accurate in their subject knowledge and vocabulary and in how to ensure pupils record their findings appropriately.

Teachers make sure pupils know their targets for improvement. Some good examples of marking were seen, with comments to help pupils improve and time given to address mistakes. Occasionally, pupils are encouraged to assess their own understanding, with the teacher responding to pupils' assessments. These practices are not embedded and feedback remains affirming, even when on occasion, answers may be wrong.

Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. Pupils work harmoniously and supportively together. More rigour has been brought to the planning of assembly themes in this regard. The new curriculum is providing more opportunities for pupils to experience life beyond the immediate rural community. This is prompting pupils to reflect on and discuss the lives of others. They say the new curriculum is bringing learning to life, such as when Howard Carter left a letter for them in their own Tutankhamen's tomb.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents believe that their children are safe in school and that behaviour is good. Pupils agree. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school contributes to the harmonious and positive atmosphere. Pupils volunteer to carry out jobs in school and to be members of the school council. They are courteous and helpful. School records show that unacceptable behaviour, such as racism and other name calling, is extremely rare. Pupils report that issues are dealt with swiftly and appropriately so they feel safe and happy to come to school. They say their views are listened to and there is someone to go to if they have any worries or concerns. Even though pupils have positive attitudes to learning, behaviour is judged satisfactory because they have not developed the best learning behaviour so are sometimes passive and dependent rather than actively engaged in their own learning. The school works hard to ensure those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable are cared for and included.

Curriculum programmes ensure that pupils are confident about ways to help keep

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themselves safe, such as from the dangers of roads and fire. Pupils say they are happy to come to school and many demonstrate this through their punctuality and good levels of attendance. Attendance is average overall because a number take holidays in term time.

Leadership and management

The school has long focused on creating a caring community where everyone is included and feels safe. The good work of the new headteacher, strongly supported by the Chair of Governors, has ensured that this focus has widened to bring a similar rigour to raising achievement and to improving teaching and learning. It has ensured not only that everyone achieves equally but that there is a shared ambition that the achievement of all groups will be at least good. Systems for monitoring and evaluation are now rigorous, and decisive steps have been taken to ensure inadequate teaching has been eradicated. This demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to continue to improve. While the team is now united behind a clear vision for future improvements, the systems in place are relatively new and dependent on the work of the headteacher. Others are not yet playing their full part in driving improvements. Systems for tracking pupils' performance have improved but are only beginning to give leaders an accurate picture of attainment and progress. Plans do not include enough clearly identified targets for improved pupil outcomes and times to check on success. Staff are supported and held accountable through performance management and regular pupil performance discussions.

The governing body is supportive and committed to the school. Its members receive better quality information which is helping them to hold staff to account for the school's performance. Their own monitoring of its work is embryonic. They ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection are met.

The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the curriculum and school life. The curriculum is enriched through educational visits and opportunities to experience the creative arts. Consequently, pupils are beginning to reflect on and discuss issues that concern them. Opportunities are missed to capitalise on the potential of the exceptional outdoor environment in the local area to further enhance learning.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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).

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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



15 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Manifold CofE (VC) Primary School, Buxton, SK17 0JP

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I am writing to tell you what I found out about your school.

I found that Manifold CofE (VC) Primary School is a satisfactory school. Your teachers work hard to plan interesting activities for you to do in most subjects. As a result, you make at least satisfactory progress and attain standards similar to most pupils of your age in reading, writing and mathematics. The youngest children settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress.

You told us that your school is a happy place. You also said that teachers look after you well so that there is always someone there for you if you have worries or concerns. I was impressed with how well you get on with each other. I noticed how well you concentrate on your work, even when some lessons are not as interesting or challenging as others, but I have asked the teachers to help you develop the skills to make the most of every learning opportunity you are offered.

The staff and governing body want the best for you and are keen for your school to be even better. That is why I have asked them to check more carefully to make sure that all teaching is as good as it can be and that it challenges you all to do your best. The headteacher is doing a good job in checking on the work of the school and planning to make it better. I have asked that everyone at the school now plays their part to make it better as quickly as possible. You can help by continuing to work hard and by coming to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey
Her Majesty's Inspector

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