

Manor Farm Community Junior School

Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, HP15 7PH

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 do not make consistently good progress. As a result, they do not always reach the levels of which they are capable. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average.
- Too many pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, are not doing as well as they should in writing.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not always plan lessons that are effective in meeting pupils' different needs.
- Feedback to pupils from marking does not always help them to improve their work.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Leaders are relatively new in post and have had limited impact on improving teaching and pupils' progress.
- Governors do not check the progress of groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, closely enough.

The school has the following strengths:

- The recently appointed headteacher is ambitious for the school. He provides caring and supportive leadership.
- The newly appointed middle and senior leaders have made a good start in developing their skills and expertise.
- There are good relationships between the adults and pupils throughout the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are caring towards each other and well mannered.
- Activities for pupils outside the classroom are rich and varied and pupils enjoy them.
- Attendance has improved and is now above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, six of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed an assembly, heard pupils reading and discussed their reading progress with them. Meetings were held with groups of pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, other staff with significant responsibilities and representatives of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of Buckinghamshire Learning Trust.
- Inspectors took account of 66 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents and carers, and responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's own self-evaluation documents, records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, and records of checks made by senior leaders on the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books, displays of pupils' work and the school's assessments of the progress made by pupils.
- Inspectors also examined the school's arrangements for spending the additional sports and pupil premium funding.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Colin Lower	Additional Inspector
Christopher Deane-Hall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for which the school receives pupil premium funding, is well below average.
- There have been many staff changes since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in January 2014. Both the deputy and assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2013. The leadership structure has been revised and more teachers now have additional responsibilities for subject leadership.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - work is set at the right level for all groups of pupils so that pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - teachers' skills in teaching writing are developed further, so that pupils' presentation of their work, including handwriting, improves swiftly
 - pupils have regular opportunities to write independently.
- Improve all pupils' progress, including those in danger of underachievement, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - give pupils a clearer understanding of what they need to do in order to raise their attainment
 - place a greater emphasis on showing pupils how to improve their work through marking
 - provide regular opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' advice about how to improve their work.
- Improve the way leaders check how well the school is performing by:
 - making sure middle leaders acquire and use the necessary skills to improve the quality of teaching and its impact on progress
 - making better use of assessment information to analyse how well pupils are performing
 - closing the gaps in attainment in English and mathematics for pupils supported through the pupil premium
 - ensuring governors make regular checks and gather information first hand to monitor more closely the school's performance.

An external review of governance, including a review of the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils join the school in Year 3 well prepared for the challenges of junior school. However, as they move through the school, their progress is not consistently good. Consequently, pupils only achieve broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Progress in writing is too erratic across the school. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise and develop their independent writing skills. On occasion, learning time is lost because teachers repeat things pupils already know. Pupils are eager and keen to write and become frustrated when held back from committing their ideas to paper.
- A good proportion of higher-ability pupils in Year 6 achieve standards above the expectations for their age, particularly in reading. Pupils enjoy reading and discussing books with adults. They read fluently and make good use of their voices to add expression.
- Some pupils of average and lower ability make slower progress in English and mathematics. At times the work given to them is too easy or too hard. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils talk positively about mathematics. More-able pupils particularly enjoy solving mathematical challenges. These pupils have regular opportunities to extend their thinking and, as a result, many achieve well.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in the present Year 6 achieve as well as other pupils in reading. However, in writing and mathematics the gap between them and their classmates is increasing. They are some three terms behind in writing and one term behind in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make variable progress. Where their skills are less secure, for example in writing, tasks are not always well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Since the previous inspection and with the appointment of the new headteacher, leaders are establishing more efficient systems for tracking the progress that pupils are making. Teachers are becoming more accountable for pupils' progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough of it is consistently good. Where teaching requires improvement, the work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils of differing abilities. Consequently, some pupils do not make enough progress in their learning.
- Teachers do not use assessment information sharply enough to inform their planning. When pupils have misunderstood a concept, activities to make up for their gaps in understanding are not always planned. Equally, when pupils have grasped new ideas, activities do not always extend their thinking further. Consequently progress slows.
- The work in pupils' books is marked regularly. However, marking does not always help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. For example, in teachers' marking of writing tasks, there is not enough emphasis on correcting spelling errors or developing handwriting. For many pupils the presentation of their work has not improved over the course of the year. There is very little evidence of pupils responding to marking.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge. They ask relevant questions to find out what pupils know. In a Year 6 personal, health and social education lesson, questioning was used to good effect to challenge pupils' thinking about stereotypes.
- Where teaching is good, pupils have opportunities to work on tasks that are well matched to their ability levels. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils made good progress with their understanding of ratio and proportion as tasks varied in difficulty. This ensured that all pupils were challenged. Pupils explained their reasoning, allowing them to consolidate their

understanding.

- In all classes there are good relationships between teachers and their pupils. Where teaching is most effective, teachers sustain pupils' positive attitudes by providing stimulating activities that capture their interest.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good. Staff and parents and carers rightly believe that the school manages behaviour well. Responses in Parent View indicate the majority of parents and carers agree that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and adults. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to staff and respond promptly to instructions. Pupils work well together, sharing resources and working collaboratively. They are positive about the care and support they receive from their teachers.
- Attitudes to learning are consistently good. Pupils remain keen and willing to participate, even in lessons in which teaching is less effective. However, when tasks are too hard or too easy, pupils' concentration wanes, leading to minor inattentiveness rather than disruption.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep safe. Leaders recently completed a review of e-safety procedures. Guidance for families is readily available in the 'home/school link book.' Pupils know how to keep themselves safe on the internet.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above average. However, there are still small numbers who have poor punctuality.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about the activities on offer. They particularly enjoy the many trips and visitors to school. For example, pupils told inspectors about a visit to Sulgrave Manor, a 16th century mansion where they experienced Tudor life. One Year 4 pupil commented, 'It was fun because you were learning as you worked but didn't realise it!'
- Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They are aware of whom they can talk to if they have a concern. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because many leaders are relatively new and have yet to develop their skills fully. As a result they have not yet secured improved standards for pupils, especially in writing.
- Subject leaders' roles and responsibilities are clear. They are developing their skills and expertise in leading their areas. However, they have not had a full impact on improving the quality of teaching or rates of pupils' progress.
- There are effective methods for regularly evaluating the performance of teachers. Leaders ensure staff performance is linked to promotion and increases in pay. However, judgements about the effectiveness of teaching are over-generous because they do not take sufficient account of how well pupils are progressing.
- Senior leaders have established a detailed system to present information gathered from assessments of pupils' progress. However, leaders have yet to use this information to evaluate the impact of actions they are taking.
- The new headteacher is committed to improving the school. His leadership is caring and supportive. He has helped to organise useful visits to outstanding schools and additional training for all staff. This is contributing to supporting and developing sound leadership skills in a relatively new team. Staff morale is high and teachers are responding positively to the training opportunities, including visits to other schools.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Values such as caring

and kindness are well established. They are keen to help others and look after the environment.

- Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors or responded to the online survey are positive about the school.
- The range of subjects taught is broad and balanced. Visits and after-school clubs enrich the curriculum. Staff are well prepared for changes to the curriculum in September 2014.
- Senior leaders promote equality of opportunity well. Leaders have used additional premium funding to provide a range of resources, additional staff and staff training to help eligible pupils. They are aware that more is needed to ensure that all pupils, including those supported by additional funding, make the progress of which they are capable.
- Primary school sports funding is used successfully. An increased range of sports and related activities is available to pupils including golf, cheerleading and tennis. Participation rates, including for extra-curricular activities, have increased dramatically and are now over 95%. As a result, pupils develop skills and broaden their range of sporting activities. These activities contribute positively to pupils' well-being and health.
- The school works well in partnership with other local schools. The local authority monitors the school's performance and has provided light-touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a growing understanding of the school's performance data. However they have not fully challenged senior leaders to bring about fast enough improvements in pupils' progress. This includes the progress of those supported by additional funding. Governors have undertaken some brief visits to different classrooms to improve their understanding of the quality of teaching and the curriculum. However, this form of monitoring is in the early stages. They agree that more regular monitoring activities will enable them to test the information they receive first hand. Work has already begun and several useful visits have taken place, particularly focused on mathematics.
 - The governing body is very supportive of the school. However, many governors are new to the role. They have recently carried out an audit to ensure that they have the right balance of skills in order to challenge and support leaders. Governors have attended training on safer recruitment. They are aware of their statutory duties and ensure they are met. Governors have a developing awareness of the school's pay and promotion processes and check the performance of staff, including that of the headteacher.

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	110340
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	444234

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Hunt
Headteacher	Andrew Sierant
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 October 2010
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