

Manor Court Community Primary School

Duck Lane, Chard, Somerset, TA20 2ES

Inspection dates 17–18 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils are not making progress that is consistently good in all year groups in all subjects. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 improved in 2014, but not enough of the most able pupils are achieving what they are capable of in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is still low-level disruption in some classes, so behaviour requires improvement.
- Pupils are not making the progress they are capable of in Key Stage 1 and do not have an accurate knowledge of letters and sounds to help them make better progress in reading and spelling.
- The checking of children's progress in the early years provision (Reception) does not result in precise planning for the next steps in children's learning.
- Teaching requires improvement because recent developments to improve teaching have not been in place long enough to secure consistently good progress for all groups of pupils in the school.
- The checking of pupils' progress from the end of the Reception year into Key Stage 1 is not accurate enough for teachers to plan activities that are precisely matched to pupils' needs.
- Leaders and managers have not analysed the information that they have for pupils' progress precisely enough to make sure that it can improve at a faster rate.
- The governing body has been reconstituted since September 2014, but has not yet had sufficient time to fully check and challenge all aspects of the school's work, particularly for pupils' progress over time between key stages across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The school provides good opportunities for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- The school's aims for 'Ambition, Sincerity, Positivity, Integrity, Respect and Empathy' (ASPIRE) are reflected well in the quality of relationships and ambition to succeed at all levels within the school.
- The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers at this school has closed rapidly.
- The school has improved over the last two years. Pupils and parents report that behaviour and teaching have improved during this time.
- The headteacher has recently made sure that there is a team of teachers who are keen to improve their skills. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated.
- The subjects and topics studied, identified by the multi-academy trust, give good opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge in the range of subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 16 lessons, seven of these jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Short visits were made to other lessons and work in pupils' books was checked to determine their progress.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders, a representative from the multi-academy trust and two groups of pupils. A telephone conversation was held with the chief executive of the Collaborative Academies Trust. There were informal conversations with parents.
- Inspectors analysed 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, along with a recent questionnaire by the school undertaken in January 2015. They considered the 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- The inspection team looked at school documents, including information relating to checks on pupils' progress, plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, the minutes of the governing body, records of visits from external consultants and safeguarding documents.
- This inspection team collected information about the role of the Collaborative Academies Trust as part of a coordinated inspection of schools. The results of this will be reported to the Secretary of State and published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fiona Richardson	Additional Inspector
Alison Hendy	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Manor Court Community Primary School became a sponsored academy of the Collaborative Academies Trust on 1 April 2013. The deputy headteacher was acting headteacher until the current headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- There have been several changes of teaching staff in the last year.
- It is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and of those who speak English as an additional language, are above average. The largest group is from Other White backgrounds.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is an Early Years Centre on the school site, managed by the governing body, which currently has a separate registration and was inspected in December 2013.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The early years provision is part-time in the Early Years Centre and full-time in the Reception classes in the school.
- The deputy headteacher is currently seconded from this school for one term for three days a week and one other teacher is seconded on a full-time basis to support one of the other schools in the multi-academy trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better for a sustained period of time across the whole school by making sure that:
 - all groups of pupils in all lessons have work that is sufficiently challenging
 - there are consistently high expectations of what all groups of pupils, particularly the most able, can achieve
 - the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) leads to more rapid progress in Reception and Year 1.
 - teaching assistants always receive clear guidance from teachers about how to support pupils' learning
- Improve behaviour so that low-level disruption is eliminated and the speed of learning in lessons can increase.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by making sure that:
 - leaders use the checks on pupils' progress to accurately identify how well the school is doing against all schools nationally across a wide range of measures, and that this is communicated clearly to governors
 - improvement plans are sharply focused on raising pupils' attainment and progress and governors can check this
 - progress is accelerated rapidly for any groups that are beginning to underachieve, particularly in the early years provision and as pupils move into Year 1.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leaders check the quality of teaching using a range of measures, but these are not always precise enough to check that all groups of pupils are making the progress of which they are capable in lessons, particularly the most able in some classes. This imprecision has given leaders and managers an inaccurate view of the quality of teaching in some parts of the school over time.
- There have been several staff changes, which mean that progress has been slowed in some year groups.
- The headteacher has received effective advice and support from the multi-academy trust to carry out his role in the school, particularly to eradicate inadequate teaching and improve the curriculum. This has resulted in an overall rise in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2014 84% of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics when they left Year 6.
- Teachers' performance is well managed and pay is related to performance in the classroom. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. The 'achievement teams' have enabled teachers to begin to improve their skills, and there are a few notable examples of highly skilled teachers. Leaders have not yet made sure that this is consistent across the school, which is why teaching is not yet good.
- Some of the information collected from the school and the formats for documents that are recommended by the multi-academy trust do not support precise self-evaluation; they do not show exactly how well pupils are progressing in relation to all schools nationally. The resulting improvement plans are not sharply focused enough to enable leaders and governors to know exactly how all aspects of attainment and progress are improving.
- The school does not have an accurate picture of pupils' progress between Reception and Year 1 and what pupils are capable of.
- Middle leaders have contributed to improvements in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2. The changes to the teaching of phonics that are necessary have only been made recently and are not yet accelerating progress fast enough in Key Stage 1.
- Recent changes in the senior leadership team have meant that the checking of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in mathematics are beginning to demonstrate significant improvements at Key Stage 2. Not all the improvements, which are necessary to fully comply with the high expectations of the new National Curriculum in Year 1, are in place.
- The provision for pupils who need additional support for social, emotional and mental health needs and for those new to learning English is well managed and effective. There is not yet clear evidence of how effective other teaching and support has been in accelerating pupils' learning when pupils need to catch up rapidly.
- The curriculum, which is supported with training and resources from the multi-academy trust, is providing memorable experiences and skills in a wide range of subjects. Pupils make good progress in their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development because, for example, they are taught to be aware of how they feel and how this affects other people. They have good opportunities to perform and tell stories.
- The curriculum fully promotes the core British values of tolerance, respect, democracy and understanding of difference and diversity. This, combined with the school's core values, helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. The school promotes equality of opportunity and works to prevent discrimination.
- Sports funding is used well to promote competitive sports and wider participation in a range of sports. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day for pupils.
- Leaders are making sure that the gap is closing rapidly between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others at the school, by making teachers accountable for this and checking pupils' progress carefully. The school makes effective use of funding to provide bespoke teaching for some individual pupils, particularly for those with social, emotional and mental health needs. There is also specific support for pupils to catch up with their reading, which is effective.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Staff are trained well and the child protection lead meets several times a term with the governor responsible. This ensures that safeguarding arrangements are effective in supporting children's' needs.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of Governors is a national leader of governance and has audited and reviewed the work of this governing body. The multi-academy trust has provided training for governors, and the governing body was reconstituted in September 2014. Some members are new and the recent training has not yet enabled governors to fully hold the school to account for the progress of all groups of pupils currently in the school. Governors know how the school compares nationally with some of the measures at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, but the governing body, and the multi-academy trust, do not use the full

range of performance data available to bring about more rapid improvement in the school.

- Governance is effective. The governing body keeps accurate records in its minutes of the challenge that it provides to the headteacher. It knows how the pupil premium funding is spent and that gaps in achievement have been closed. Governors receive reports about the quality of teaching and check the work of the school with a range of visits. This has, however, not yet given them a fully accurate picture of the effect of teaching over time on pupils' progress. They have ensured that teachers are rewarded appropriately for their performance in the classroom and that the performance of the headteacher is well managed. Governors were not fully aware of the most recent statutory safeguarding requirements, but rectified this by the end of the inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In some classes, pupils are not yet fully motivated and involved in the activities provided; this means there is low-level disruption which interrupts the flow of teaching and the speed of other pupils' learning.
- Staff and parents still have some well-founded concerns about pupils' behaviour at the school. In a recent survey by the school, a fifth of parents said that their children's lessons are interrupted by poor behaviour.
- Staff and pupils report that behaviour has improved since the school became an academy. There has been rigorous application of the behaviour policy, which everyone now understands. There were high levels of exclusions in the autumn term of 2014.
- There are notable examples of significant improvements in behaviour for some pupils who experience considerable difficulties in managing their behaviour because of their social, emotional and mental health needs. The school provides good care and support for these pupils.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils play safely and know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They understand how to do that at home as well. They understand about cyber bullying and other forms of bullying and say that it is rare at school and, if it occurs, adults 'sort it out'.
- Attendance has improved rapidly this academic year and is now average. The number of pupils with persistent absence has been significantly reduced. The school has worked effectively with local authority attendance officers and families to do this.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not yet been consistently good for long enough, since the school became an academy, to enable pupils to make rapid progress in all year groups and make up the gaps in their learning caused by previous underachievement.
- Staff do not target early reading skills, for example in phonic (letters and sounds) activities, precisely enough to enable all groups of pupils to make rapid gains in their reading.
- A few of the most able pupils say that work is not sufficiently challenging. Some teaching in mathematics does not enable pupils to apply a wide range of skills to problems or enable higher ability pupils to deepen their understanding further.
- There are low expectations of what pupils can achieve in some classes.
- In some classes, teaching assistants are deployed well to help pupils catch up with their learning. This is not consistent across the school because, in some cases, they are not given enough guidance from the teacher.
- Sometimes teachers do not act quickly enough in lessons to reshape tasks so that pupils can make more rapid progress.
- Pupils receive good support for improving their reading skills in Key Stage 2.
- There have been improvements in the teaching of writing skills demonstrated by the improving progress that pupils are making. Most teachers clearly identify the next steps pupils need to make to improve. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 say that marking is particularly helpful to them. In most classes pupils respond to advice given in marking.
- There are some examples of excellent teaching, particularly in Year 5 for writing and Year 6 for mathematics, that enable pupils to make rapid gains in their learning. This is because teachers question

well to deepen pupils' understanding and provide challenging tasks for all groups of pupils.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils currently in Year 1 are not making the progress that they are capable of in acquiring knowledge of phonics (letters and sounds). In 2014, a below average proportion had the skills expected. They have caught up a little in Year 2, but not sufficiently to reach the full range of current national expectations in reading.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make better progress in reading and begin to read a good range of books. However, the most able are not achieving at the standard of which they are capable.
- There have been recent improvements in writing at Key Stage 2, and in 2014 all pupils made the progress that is expected; the most able achieved at the higher level. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are also beginning to make good progress in writing, but this has stalled for the current Year 2 and they have not yet made rapid enough progress to catch up.
- In the national tests in 2014 the most able pupils did not achieve at the higher levels in reading and mathematics. The current cohort in Year 6, however, is on track to achieve at these levels. At Key Stage 1 a below average proportion achieved the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014, and the progress of the current Year 2 shows that this is still the case.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not consistently good. There are small groups in each cohort with diverse needs, including social emotional and mental health needs, and most are making progress in line with their peers, which, in some classes, is not rapid enough in literacy and numeracy skills.
- In 2014 the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others at the school was six months in reading, two terms in writing and over a year in mathematics. There is evidence that these gaps are closing rapidly for current pupils in the school, particularly in mathematics. Current school data show that the gap is now closed in the current Year 6 and closing in Year 2. Disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2014 achieved better than their peers nationally in writing by nine months. They achieved the same as peers nationally in reading and were six months behind in mathematics.
- Pupils who arrive at the school and are learning English as a second language settle quickly and make good progress; those who have been at the school for some time are achieving at the standards expected for their age.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children who start at the school have skills that are broadly typical for their age. The early years provision requires improvement because children do not make enough progress in improving their reading and communication skills.
- Checking of children's progress is not used regularly or accurately enough to speed it up. Teaching requires improvement because activities are not designed well enough to make sure that each group of children can make rapid progress in developing the specific skills they need, for example in reading.
- In some parts of the school day, children are given inappropriate things to do and, as a result, are not motivated and low-level disruption occurs. Therefore, behaviour requires improvement.
- When children have the opportunity to choose activities for themselves some make better progress, but children do not always have enough support from adults to deepen their understanding and communication skills. Teaching is not effective in making sure that all parts of the school day promote children's progress.
- Leadership and management require improvement. The leader does not yet make sure that information about children's progress is used effectively to improve the provision and to support children's transition into Year 1 by making sure that assessment is precise. School data shows that 70% were ready to start Year 1 in 2014 which is in line with the national average.
- There are examples of individual children who have low levels of communication skills and those who are learning English for the first time making good progress. It is notable that children who have attended the early years centre at the school usually have better skills than their peers who have come from other settings.
- Parents now have the opportunity to find out what their children have been learning and contribute to their children's records through an online system. They value this, but it has not been in place long enough for it to improve children's progress at a faster rate.

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	139385
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	449813

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Peck
Headteacher	Adrian Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	0146062350
Fax number	0146062613
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