

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs P Coppins
Headteacher
Manor Farm Community Infant School
Rose Avenue
Hazlemere
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP15 7PH

Dear Mrs Coppins

Short inspection of Manor Farm Community Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 22 March 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in June 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your strong leadership and commitment to providing high quality care and education have ensured that the school has remained good. You have taken effective action to ensure teaching continues to be good across the school, taking difficult decisions when required when your expectations are not met.

The school's motto, 'Together we grow', reflects the whole-school approach to improving, whether pupils, staff or governors. Everyone at the school is signed up to your approach of supporting the whole child, not just their learning. Parents comment on how well you and staff know their children and the ways in which you personally ensure that pupils are happy and settled in school.

Lessons are well planned and useful links are made across the curriculum. Pupils develop very good attitudes to learning. The whole-school approach, which encourages pupils to have a go and not worry about making mistakes, is helping pupils to develop confidence and independence.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well in almost all aspects of learning. In the early years, children make good progress and the percentage of children who reach a good level of development is above the national average. In Year 1, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected level in phonics (letters and their sounds) is below the national average, but is improving year on year. By the end of

Year 2, pupils consistently achieve very well in reading and well in writing and mathematics.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils learn about values and how to recognise and demonstrate them. Recently, pupils learned about respect; they correctly identified that picking up people's belongings if they had fallen off their pegs, and being ready for and attentive in lessons were signs of respect. Pupils were also encouraged to reflect on what they were thankful for; pupils were able to explain that they were thankful for their family members, their homes or things they are good at.

Since the last inspection, you have taken effective action to improve the areas identified in the previous report. All teachers now follow the school's feedback policy, so pupils know exactly what they have achieved and how to improve their work. Teachers use assessment information to identify how well pupils are doing and provide challenging activities for most-able pupils. Most of these pupils make very good progress but some do not make quite as much progress as they could.

You have successfully built strong links with parents. They comment on the many ways in which they are kept informed and involved in school life, such as being invited to observe lessons. The parents I spoke to struggled to identify any ways in which the school could be even better. Parents recognise and appreciate the good quality teaching and support their children receive.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say that learning is fun and they recognise that their teachers help them to do well. They rightly describe the school as being a safe and caring place.

You have successfully introduced a new assessment system to meet the requirement of the new national curriculum. You recognise that some further development is needed for leaders and governors to be able to see at a glance the achievement of different groups of pupils. While governors are generally well informed about pupils' achievement and can identify areas for improvement, they do not have a deep enough understanding to challenge you and other leaders fully.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding processes are rigorous and effective at keeping pupils safe. Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date and staff receive regular training which ensures that they know, and are confident about their responsibilities in keeping the children safe. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Almost all parents who expressed their views, either verbally or through the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, are rightly confident in the school's work to care for pupils and ensure that they are safe. Supervision at breaktimes is appropriate and well organised. Pupils learn about road and fire safety and know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Inspection findings

- At Manor Farm Infant School, great care is taken to ensure that all pupils' needs are met so that they are happy, enjoy learning and achieve well. Staff are proud to work at the school and are rightly confident in your leadership.
- Governors are committed to making the school the best it can be and have a good knowledge of all aspects of school life. They gather evidence to check what you tell them so they know your evaluations are accurate. Governors consider information about pupils' progress and identify areas where progress could be better, but this is not always as sharp as it could be.
- Your checks on teaching, and those carried out by the deputy headteacher, ensure that it is good. You know how effective teachers are and provide useful feedback to help them become even better.
- All teachers are using the new assessment system to check how well pupils are learning. You have rightly identified that refining the new system will make it easier to check how well groups of pupils, such as the disadvantaged, are progressing so that any pupils who fall behind can be identified and supported even more quickly.
- The teaching of reading is very good. Pupils develop a love of reading from an early age. They achieve very well and by the time they leave the school virtually all pupils reach the expected level and about half reach the higher levels. Recent improvements in the teaching of phonics are bringing about better outcomes.
- Writing lessons are well structured and purposeful. Teachers consider carefully how to engage pupils' interest and motivate them to write. In a writing lesson, pupils selected their own ending from a choice of four, or were able to devise their own. Pupils were very keen to share their ideas and were excited to write. Writing skills are well developed over the three years pupils are at the school so they make good progress. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels is above the national average.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Skills are developed over a series of lessons and pupils have opportunities to practise what they have learned by investigating and solving problems. Pupils achieve well and do better than those nationally.
- The pupil premium (government funding to support disadvantaged pupils) is used well to support individuals. You and your teachers consider carefully what each pupil needs to help them to make as much progress as possible, such as providing resources or helping them to manage their emotions. As a result, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is closing.
- Children in the early years enjoy learning and make good progress. Activities are well planned and interesting to help them learn well a range of skills, such as the Easter and egg-related activities we saw. Children were counting eggs, painting them and designing and making Easter bonnets. Communication with parents is very good; teachers summarise what children have done each week so parents can discuss learning with their children and support them to build on new skills.

- Teaching assistants provide effective support in all areas of the school. They work closely with teachers to discuss planning and identify which pupils require support. They use their initiative to make adjustments to activities when necessary.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide more challenging activities to enable the most-able pupils to achieve as much as they can
- governors review pupils' progress with greater rigour so they have an incisive understanding of where progress could be even better
- assessment systems are refined so that leaders and teachers can check the progress of groups more easily, including that of disadvantaged pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Buckinghamshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Louise Adams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, governors, including the chair and the vice-chair, and all staff. I spoke to pupils in lessons and in the playground and observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and around the school. With you and the deputy headteacher, I visited classes and scrutinised work in pupils' books. Parents' views were gathered through conversations in the playground and 61 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Staff views were provided through the 17 responses to the online survey for staff. I analysed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.