

Manor Farm Community Junior School

Rose Avenue, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP15 7PH

Inspection dates

5–6 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have brought about significant improvements to the school since the previous inspection.
- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. They work hard and make good progress to reach standards that are above average.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as other pupils.
- Teaching is consistently good with an increasing proportion that is outstanding. Teachers use assessment information to plan work that is pitched at the right level for pupils.
- The well-planned curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of additional activities that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The school environment is bright and attractive with stimulating displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school. They enjoy school and they have very positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe in school.
- School leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their plans for improvement are closely linked to a thorough analysis of performance.
- Following a review of governance, governors reorganised the way in which they work. They know the school well and provide a good level of challenge to school leaders.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics. There has been some improvement but a few pupils still lack basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing, particularly in Years 3 and 4, by ensuring that:
 - all pupils develop basic skills in handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation
 - work provided for pupils builds on and extends what they can already do
 - teachers provide clear guidance to pupils about how their writing may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders and governors are ambitious and acted quickly to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Consequently, teaching is consistently good or better and pupils achieve well across the school in a range of subjects including English and mathematics.
- Leaders have created a climate of high expectations in which staff and pupils are expected to do their best. Staff have risen to the challenge. They work closely together as a team to secure the good academic and personal outcomes for all pupils. Staff morale is high.
- Leaders use performance information effectively to identify what the school does well and where further improvements need to be made. The actions on their development plan are clear with measurable steps to show how well the school is doing. This helps leaders and governors to keep a close check on how well new initiatives are helping pupils to progress.
- Teachers are very positive about changes introduced by school leaders. They appreciate the guidance and support provided by leaders that helps them to become better teachers. Leaders at all levels visit classrooms formally as well as informally. They look at work in pupils' books so they know how well teaching enables pupils to progress.
- The local authority has provided effective support to help leaders to bring about improvements. They have arranged training for subject leaders and for class teachers, and this has led to improvements in leadership as well as in teaching.
- One of the strengths of leadership is the way in which leaders have created a culture in which all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are expected to achieve well. They pride themselves on being an inclusive school in which all pupils are treated fairly and equally. Leaders have used pupil premium funding thoughtfully so that all disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well as other pupils both personally and academically.
- The curriculum is well planned so that pupils gain rich experiences both within and outside the formal curriculum. While English and mathematics are given high priority, pupils also learn a wide range of other subjects including French and Spanish. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively through art, music and religious education.
- The formal curriculum is supported by many additional activities that add to pupils' enjoyment of school. There are clubs before and after the school day as well as at lunchtimes. These are available for all pupils and help them to develop hobbies such as sewing, gymnastics and fencing. There is also a programme of educational visits to the local area as well as places further afield.
- School leaders have used the additional sports funding to provide specialist coaching for pupils to develop their skills and gamesmanship. Part of the funding has also been used to train teachers to teach swimming and gymnastics. Year 6 pupils have been trained as playground leaders so they organise physical activities for other pupils at lunchtimes.

- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain through the values promoted by the school. Pupils are taught to respect the views, values and beliefs of those from other backgrounds. They are taught to treat each other with kindness and respect, and that all pupils are equal and have equal rights. Discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated.
- The large majority of parents who responded to the survey agree or strongly agree that the school is well led and managed. One parent wrote, 'This is an excellent school with great teachers, enthusiastic teaching assistants and well led and managed by the headteacher and his team.'

Governance

- Governors provide an effective balance of challenge and support to school leaders. The review of governance recommended in the previous inspection gave them a clearer term of reference and helped to shape their vision and direction for the school. Following the review, they reconstituted the governing body and reorganised the committee structure. This has helped them to focus on shaping their strategic role while helping them to manage their workload more efficiently. As one governor said, 'We are light years away from where we were in 2014.'
- Governors are relentlessly focused on raising standards. They use performance information effectively to challenge school leaders. They visit school frequently so they see for themselves how well the school is doing. Governors are highly visible in the school community and meet regularly with subject leaders.
- Governors are ambitious and very knowledgeable about the school. They have devised an electronic system to share information and to communicate with each other and with the school. This is informative and keeps all governors fully up to date with school developments.
- Governors meet all statutory duties, including that to ensure that pupils are safe at school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding pupils is given very high priority by school leaders and governors. The school site is bright, attractive and secure. It is well maintained and governors carry out a termly walk to check that there are no health and safety issues. Staff are vigilant in checking the identity of visitors to school. School leaders and governors carry out careful checks to ensure that any new members of staff are suitable to work with children. All staff have been trained to look out for signs that a child might be at risk of suffering harm and they know what to do should a concern be raised. Risk assessments are carried out prior to any off-site activities including local walks and visits to places requiring transport. Pupils are taught about how to stay safe from dangers outside school including those relating to modern technology. Pupils say they feel safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is consistently good and improving. Teachers constantly assess pupils' learning and so they understand pupils' needs. They have established good working relationships with pupils and consequently pupils have positive attitudes to learning and want to do their best.
- Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. A particular strength of teaching is the way in which teachers adapt their lessons to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps all groups of pupils to make equally good progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well to ask pupils questions that make them think and work hard. They often probe pupils to deepen their understanding. This helps pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers have imaginative approaches to help pupils to learn. For example, in a Year 4 history lesson, pupils learned about how the Roman army marched in different formations, including the tortoise, by going to the playground and marching as Roman soldiers. They enjoyed this activity that helped them gain a broader understanding of life in Roman times.
- Most teachers provide pupils with opportunities to share their ideas and discuss what they have learned, and this helps them to make good progress. There are times, however, when this goes on for too long and the pace of learning slows.
- The English leader has introduced a new programme for teaching reading as well as improving the stock of books available to pupils. This has led to an improvement in pupils' progress in reading.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use very effectively to deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts. There is good provision for the most able pupils who have additional provision from a higher-level teaching assistant.
- Writing is not taught as well as other subjects, particularly in Year 3 and Year 4. This is because teachers do not consistently inform pupils about how the quality of their writing may be improved. There are times when work does not build on previous learning and this slows pupils' progress.
- Teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics is good. Teachers plan work that allows pupils to apply their numeracy and literacy skills when learning other subjects. For example, in a Year 6 geography lesson, pupils read information about climate change in preparation for writing about the likely changes to climate in other parts of the world.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Parents speak warmly of the good quality of care provided by staff. One parent echoed the views of many by her comment, 'This school provides a caring, happy, safe and friendly environment for my children to learn.'

- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning. They show determination, resilience and perseverance when tackling challenging tasks. They take pride in their work and are proud of their school. They trust adults and they show respect towards them in class and around the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including that related to social media. While they say bullying is exceptionally rare, they are confident that adults take their concerns seriously and deal quickly with any issues that arise.
- Pupils appreciate the additional activities and the roles and responsibilities they have that help to prepare them for their future. For example, some Year 6 pupils help to serve school lunches while others act as librarians.
- Pupils know how to stay safe from external dangers such as roads and railways. They know that tobacco and some non-medicinal drugs can be harmful. Throughout the curriculum, pupils are constantly reminded about the need to be vigilant when using modern technology.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have clear understanding of right and wrong and they respond appropriately to the school's systems for managing behaviour. They get on very well together regardless of background both in class and in the playground.
- Pupils are happy and they enjoy school. This is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. During lunchtimes, there are plenty of activities available for pupils and this helps to develop their social skills and to cement friendships.
- Pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions and guidance. There are few incidents of lessons being disrupted by poor behaviour. Just occasionally when work is not challenging enough, a very few pupils demonstrate 'off-task' behaviour by chatting among themselves and not applying themselves to their work.
- The school is an integral part of the local community and staff know pupils and their families well. They work in close cooperation with external agencies to harness the right support for a small number of pupils who struggle to manage some aspects of school. Consequently, there are very few reported incidents of poor behaviour and there have been no exclusions in recent years.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education both personally and academically. One parent wrote, 'They are so caring and the opportunities on offer from roles and responsibilities within school, school productions, after school clubs to trips and residential visits ensure children develop to be rounded individuals ready and well prepared to move to secondary school.'
- Pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has improved year on year although writing still lags behind reading and mathematics. There are very few differences between groups of pupils, showing how well the school promotes equal opportunities for all pupils.

- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. This is because staff go to great lengths to identify their potential barriers to learning and to provide extra help to prevent them from falling behind. The most able disadvantaged pupils make equally good progress as other pupils. This is because teachers have high expectations for them and challenge them to work hard.
- Teachers provide a high level of challenge for the most able pupils in all lessons so these pupils make good progress across a range of subjects. They receive additional mathematics lessons that allow them to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve real-life problems. This helps them to deepen and master complicated mathematical concepts and so make outstanding progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as other pupils. This is because trained teaching assistants provide these pupils with good extra support in classrooms. Sometimes these pupils are given specific programmes of work to help them to overcome their difficulties.
- Pupils' achievement in reading has improved and is good. Pupils enjoy a wide range of reading books, including those detailing some interesting methods of executing prisoners in some parts of the world in the late 19th century. Pupils read fluently and confidently and with a clear sense of pleasure.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress in writing. They write confidently and at length across a range of subjects, demonstrating competent skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Boys write as well as girls showing a flair for expressing their ideas thoughtfully. For example, one boy wrote, 'Jim has nothing. Nothing except his name, Jim Jarvis. His pale transparent skin glows like a phantom in the dark night sky.' This was in response to a task asking pupils to write a character description.
- Progress in writing is slower for pupils in Years 3 and 4. This is because they do not yet have a secure grasp of basic spelling, grammar and punctuation, and their handwriting is not always well formed. Pupils are not always clear about how they can improve their work because some teachers do not pick up and address pupils' mistakes.
- In mathematics, pupils make good and better progress so that their attainment is consistently above average. Work in pupils' books shows a high level of challenge across the school. Pupils manipulate numbers confidently and accurately, applying their understanding to solving problems and investigating patterns in number.
- Pupils achieve well in subjects other than English and mathematics. They especially enjoy science where in Year 5 they make predictions and carry out tests to find out what materials are best for insulating and what materials conduct heat. Work in their books shows that they record their observations accurately and apply both their literacy and numeracy skills when completing their work.
- Parents who responded to the survey agree or strongly agree that their children are taught well and make good progress. One parent wrote, 'My child enjoys learning at this school and as parents, we have loved watching him thrive. His progress in maths and English has amazed us and listening to him speak Spanish on holiday was a real credit to the school.'

School details

Unique reference number	110340
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10012274

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Hunt
Headteacher	Andrew Sierant
Telephone number	01494 814622
Website	www.manorfarmschool.org
Email address	headteacher@manorfarm.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is about the same size as the average junior school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average.
- There is a below-average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set out the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher joined inspectors to observe pupils working in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books alongside the leaders for English and for mathematics. The lead inspector listened to pupils in Year 6 read.
- The inspectors held meetings with school leaders, teachers and groups of pupils. They also met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector held a meeting with an adviser from the local authority.
- Among the documents analysed were records relating to pupils' learning and progress, school improvement plans and minutes from governors' meetings. Inspectors also examined records regarding pupils' behaviour and documentation to show how the school ensures that pupils and staff are safe at school.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 66 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also met informally with parents at the start of the day. Staff views were considered by talking to staff as well as evaluating the 77 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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