

Manor Farm Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110340
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	310264
Inspection date	20 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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 on roll	
School	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Adam Linnell
Headteacher	Mrs Lynn Kirk
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Rose Avenue Hazlemere High Wycombe HP15 7PH
Telephone number	01494 814622
Fax number	01494 817166

Age group	7-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach their targets; how good is progress in mathematics; and how well teachers with subject responsibilities carry out their monitoring and evaluation role.

Evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' progress, scrutiny of samples of their work and observation of pupils in lessons. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils. In addition, the responses of 75 parents' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Almost all the pupils in this average sized and oversubscribed school are White British. There are three pupils that are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils that have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The most common needs are moderate learning difficulties. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is very low. The school has a new headteacher and deputy headteacher both of whom took up their post at the beginning of this school year. The school has gained the Investor in People, Artsmark Gold, Sports Activemark and Charter Mark awards.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The pupils are very proud of being part of this good school. They thrive in their personal development and achieve well academically so they are well prepared for their move to secondary education. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'I will be very sad to leave but I can't wait to go!'

The headteacher has made an excellent start and is supported well by the deputy headteacher. Together, their leadership and management are good. They have quickly become admired by staff, governors, parents and pupils, because working in close partnership, they have continued the improvements and begun to build on the many strengths found at the time of the previous inspection. There is close collaboration amongst the staff and governors, morale is high, and there is a strong commitment to improve the school's provision and standards. There had been weaknesses in the target-setting processes in the past, and so the key development of adding more rigour and systematic use of data, means that teachers are now able to be much more clear about their expectations for the pupils' progress. This is rubbing off on the pupils who are clear about what is expected of them both in lessons and in units of work. These new systems are operating successfully in many, though not yet in all classes. In addition, as yet, although there are some excellent examples of marking, not all teachers consistently use targets and lesson success criteria as a reference point when marking pupils' work.

A further result of the strengthened use of data is that the school now has a much more accurate view of standards and where improvement is needed. Action taken to tackle priorities for development is successful and focused. For example, analysis showed that there was a need to accelerate progress in mathematics because some pupils, particularly the most able, were not making enough progress. It was realised that although pupils' knowledge was good, when they were asked to apply this in practical situations some had difficulties. A programme of staff training has been carried out, adjustments made to teachers' planning and, critically, there is now a designated weekly practical and problem-solving session. In consequence, progress has been boosted and the Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve high standards. Even so, the most able pupils still do better in English and science than in mathematics.

Pupils enter the school with attainment that is above average and, by the time they leave, standards are well above average and on occasion, such as in English in 2007, exceptionally high. This marks good progress and achievement. Current Year 5 and 6 pupils are on course to attain high standards. In particular, almost half are on course to attain the higher level in all three subjects. One of the main reasons why pupils achieve well is that teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, are lively and teachers are skilled in managing the pupils. This results in excellent relationships, and lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. As a member of the school council commented, 'Our teachers are enthusiastic. They have lots of personality and make our learning fun.'

Parents are unanimous in saying that their children are safe in school and are well cared for. Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is excellent. All child protection and safeguarding regulations are met in full. There is a good emphasis placed on personal, social and health education to give pupils a strong base for the choices they will need to make in later life. Pupils say that their views are respected through both the influential school council, eco-committee, and the healthy schools committee. They have a keen understanding of how to stay safe, which is demonstrated through such initiatives as cycling proficiency training and their excellent understanding of internet safety. They

thoroughly enjoy physical exercise, which was evident during the inspection when the whole school, including the staff, went through a thoroughly enjoyable aerobics session followed by a sponsored skip for charity. Pupils were buzzing with excitement when explaining how much money they have raised. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they have very positive attitudes to school and a strong desire to do their best. These key strengths make a positive contribution to the pupils' good achievement. Almost all parents hold the school in high regard and many commented on the very wide range of opportunities that are available for pupils, particularly in sports and games and the residential visits. A few commented that behaviour is not always good. However, behaviour is consistently of the highest standard in lessons, during assembly, and around the school and play areas. Pupils say that neither the staff nor they themselves would tolerate any bullying. The pupils are clear that if they were disturbed by any poor behaviour they would know which adults to turn to in order to find help.

Leadership and management at all levels are good. The school's accurate self- evaluation strategies are supported well by teachers with responsibilities. The new arrangements for teachers to work in subject teams rather than taking individual responsibility is successful as staff appreciate the opportunity to be involved in decision-making. The teams work well together and fulfil their monitoring and evaluation roles well. The success of improvement projects demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure standards in mathematics continue to rise, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Embed the arrangements for teachers' use of data to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Make marking more consistent and as good as the best.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

01 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Manor Farm Community Junior School, High Wycombe, HP15 7PH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited you recently. You were all extremely polite and keen to talk to me about your work and your school.

There are many good things about your school. These are some of them.

- You reach well above average standards and make good progress in your learning.
- You behave exceptionally well and work hard to help others.
- You thoroughly enjoy school and the good range of things there are for you to do. I particularly enjoyed watching your 'Wake 'n Shake' session and was very impressed with how well you did in your teams when you were skipping to raise money for the British Heart Foundation.
- All the adults make sure that you are well looked after and cared for.
- Your headteacher, and all the other people who help run your school, are very good at making sure that you receive a good education.

I agree with your parents that you go to a good school. However, all the adults want it to be even better. I have asked Mrs Kirk, the staff and governors to do these things.

- Make sure that standards in mathematics keep improving, particularly for those of you that find learning easy.
- Ensure that your teachers use the information that they have about your progress to make lessons demanding so that you learn even more.
- Make sure all marking of your work is as good as the best examples that I saw during the inspection.

You can help by continuing to work hard to meet your targets, particularly in mathematics.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector