

# Manifold CE (VC) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124305
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314884
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	56
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lucy Kanon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Cruxton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	off Leek Road Warslow Buxton SK17 0JP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01298 84320
<b>Fax number</b>	01298 687162

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a very small primary school that currently has pupils up to the age of nine. Because of the small numbers of children involved, the school's make-up varies from year to year. Currently, no pupils are eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Governors appointed the present headteacher last Easter, at which time the school emerged from a period of instability.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It is improving rapidly because the headteacher is leading and managing it well. Pupils, parents and governors all recognise this. The headteacher's clear vision and her firm but measured approach to change have successfully focused all staff on accelerating pupils' learning. In her determination to provide the best possible opportunity for all pupils, she has been leading and managing most subjects and aspects of the school's work herself. However, she has prepared staff well to take over some of these responsibilities. This has led to strong, well-focused teamwork throughout the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but their progress is accelerating as teaching and learning improve. Although not yet wholly consistent, some good progress is evident in pupils' work since the start of this school year. Teachers use assessment information effectively in English and mathematics to plan and set targets for different groups of pupils. Pupils know their targets and are becoming increasingly able to assess their progress towards them. However, teachers' marking does not always help them in this. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above those expected for pupils' ages in Year 4 and above the national average in Year 2. Provision and progress are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum emphasises literacy and numeracy skills well and encourages teachers to bring different subjects together in topic work. However, the progress pupils need to make in each subject is not entirely clear and systems for assessing it are not yet in place. The school cares deeply for all of its pupils. The headteacher can tell the story of each child's progress and of any difficulties that may have affected the pupil concerned at different times. Pupils grow, learn and play in a supportive, harmonious and safe learning environment where they learn to respect and care for others. Behaviour is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and they enjoy school very much. They understand the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise, and make a good contribution to the school and to the wider community. One example of this is the recent Village Map project, of which they are clearly very proud. Pupils leave the school well prepared for the future. Governance is satisfactory. Governors know the school well but are not yet sufficiently involved in holding it to account. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and perceptive, and its priorities are the right ones. There is no senior leadership team at present; therefore, virtually all aspects of leadership and management have been down to the headteacher. However, she has prepared staff well to take on roles as senior and middle managers. Their understanding and readiness to do this, along with the recent good improvement in teaching and learning, give the school good capacity for further rapid improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Attainment on entry to Nursery is as expected for the children's ages. Good induction procedures ensure children settle quickly into school routines. A good range of exciting practical activities successfully engages them in all areas of learning, especially in Reception. Here, children readily suggest how they might take their own learning forward. For example, following a 'shape picnic', the pupils adapted a shape game to give themselves additional challenges over and above those set for them. Children work together well, taking turns and helping each other. Their speaking and listening skills are good. The recent emphasis on teaching letter sounds is improving their reading and writing. In most years, children reach the goals expected for the end of Reception, and a minority exceed them. It is clear from the school's own monitoring and that done by the

local authority that provision has greatly improved in this age group in the past year. Staff track children's progress carefully and plan their learning well, mindful of individual needs. However, some activities are still too directed by adults, leaving children little opportunity to select what they might like to do. Provision for learning outdoors has improved since the previous inspection. However, the area is still not used effectively enough as an outdoor classroom. The school has plans to remedy this.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Assess pupils' learning in all subjects, and improve teachers' marking to make sure pupils understand the small steps they need to take to reach their targets.
- Establish a senior leadership team to support the headteacher in her work, and improve the leadership and management skills of all staff and governors. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Although satisfactory over time, pupils' achievement is now accelerating fast because of the measures taken to improve teaching and learning. Speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils are articulate. They talk confidently to adults and hold a conversation well. They use different styles of writing for different purposes and audiences and have a good range of vocabulary. Spelling and punctuation are usually accurate. However, pupils do not always use these skills when writing in other subjects, and teachers do not pick up on this in their marking. The improved guided reading sessions are sharpening pupils' ability to reflect on the meaning behind a text. They are not always as good at doing this as they are at reading the words. Pupils have a good understanding of number and are becoming increasingly adept at solving more and more complex number problems. Pupils use computers effectively to enhance their reading, writing and number skills. They see computers as one of several ways to work out what to do before having to ask an adult for help. Standards are above the national average in Year 2 and better than expected for pupils' ages in Year 4.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils clearly enjoy school, as their above average attendance shows. They behave well, throw themselves into their work, and want to do well. Older pupils care for younger pupils, and all pupils feel safe in school, confident that staff will always help them should the need arise. Pupils of all ages are polite and well mannered, and show a good sense of responsibility for their learning and for the school as a whole. School councillors consult their classmates and have influenced decisions on, for example, which charities to support and what playground equipment to buy. They also take part in many community events, the most recent being the Village Map project, and are proud to do so. Pupils agreed the school rules with the headteacher. They and their parents appreciate very much the rules and the rewards that celebrate effort and achievement in all aspects of school life. The school's Christian ethos is evident in assembly and in the good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils have a growing awareness of different cultures in this country.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress in English and mathematics are relatively new but teachers have taken them on board well. They have successfully raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can do. This is helping pupils to make faster progress because planning is now good. Lesson objectives are clear, and lessons are carefully planned to meet pupils' individual needs, thus ensuring that pupils of all levels of ability are beginning to make good progress. Targets are set to move pupils' learning on. However, teachers' marking is very variable. It rarely refers to pupils' targets or identifies the smaller steps pupils need to take to reach their targets. The school knows all of this and is currently reviewing its marking policy to achieve greater consistency. Vibrant displays support learning throughout the school and successfully encourage pupils to find things out for themselves. Pupils were observed using the many reminders of the different ways in which they might do this. This and the teachers' good classroom management and organisation add to pupils' enjoyment of learning. All of this is helping pupils to catch up on learning they have missed out on in the past.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Topic work and opportunities for pupils to pursue their own learning in different ways, including through using computers, are successfully engaging pupils' interest. The school's focus on 'building learning power' contributes to this. However, curricular planning does not yet ensure progression in the different subjects included in a topic. Literacy and numeracy are given due attention but opportunities are still missed to further pupils' ability to write at length, for example in history. A good range of visits, visitors and well-attended extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' learning and promotes their health, safety and well-being effectively. The school enjoys good links with other schools. It uses these well to help it improve its own provision.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Good pastoral support enables pupils to flourish in a safe and secure learning environment, free from harassment of any kind. The school's good partnership with parents and other agencies support it well in this and in helping pupils who find learning difficult, whatever the reason, to make at least satisfactory progress. All of this contributes effectively to the pupils' good personal development and well-being and to their enjoyment of school. Good procedures are in place to assess and record pupils' progress and all pupils have targets for English and mathematics. They know their targets and are becoming increasingly involved in assessing their progress towards them. However, they do not always understand the steps they need to take to reach their targets, and teachers' marking rarely helps in this.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher's appointment last year ended a period of relative instability in leadership and management. She has successfully brought the school to a point where it is ready to take off. The headteacher leads from the front, showing teachers how to improve and checking that they do so. Her checks on teaching and learning, some carried out jointly with the local authority, are robust. They have improved the progress of all pupils significantly, from the least to the most able, and overall, pupils' progress is becoming increasingly good. Leadership and management focus well on providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school improvement plan provides a clear way forward for the school. It has a manageable number of achievable priorities aimed at improving pupils' progress further. However, the intended outcomes are not as closely related to pupils' progress as they might be. Challenging targets are set for teachers and pupils and progress towards them is tracked carefully. Other staff are becoming increasingly aware of their leadership responsibilities. At present, however, much is down to the headteacher, although there are plans to establish a senior leadership team to support her in the near future.



## 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?	3
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- 14 March 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Manifold Church of England (VC) Primary School, Warslow, SK17 0JP Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school yesterday. It was a delight to talk to you and to find out how much you enjoy school. Your good behaviour and manners are a credit to you and to the school. You clearly take pride in what you are doing and you want to learn. Your school is satisfactory at present but it is improving rapidly. This is because it knows what it needs to do, and in which order, to help you make faster progress. It has set about doing all of this in an organised way. One result is that teachers check and record your progress carefully now, and plan your learning accordingly. Another is that you are becoming more confident in your ability to find things out for yourselves and to improve your own learning. Additionally, the way teachers link different subjects together helps you to see how you can use what you learn in one subject to help you to learn faster in another. You and your parents clearly appreciate what the school does for you. You all praise the headteacher for how she is helping everyone to improve all aspects of school life, and you are right to do so. The school cares deeply for you. It prepares you well for the next stage of your lives, giving you a good understanding of how to keep yourself and others safe, and of the benefits of following a healthy lifestyle. You take responsibility well within the school, for example through the school council, and you contribute a great deal to the life of the school and the wider community. We have asked the school to concentrate on two things to help your learning move on even faster. They are:
  - To assess your learning in all subjects, and to improve teachers' marking so that you can understand the small steps you need to take to reach your targets.
  - To establish a senior leadership team to support the headteacher in her work, and to improve the leadership and management skills of all staff. You can help with the first point by continuing to work hard and by checking your work against what you are expected to learn in each subject, even when they are linked together. We hope you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now, for the rest of your lives. Yours sincerely Doris Bell Lead inspector

**Annex B**

14 March 2008



Dear Pupils

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Yours sincerely

Doris Bell  
Lead inspector