

# Manor Church of England Voluntary Aided School, York

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 121713             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | York               |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 314090             |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 6 November 2007    |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Marianne Young HMI |

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>                     | Secondary   |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Voluntary aided   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 11–16   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 670   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Ruth Somerville                                       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mr Brian Crosby   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 10 May 2005   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Low Poppleton Lane<br>York<br>North Yorkshire<br>YO26 6BB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01904 798722  |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01904 782902  |

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## Introduction

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school and evaluated its overall effectiveness. The inspector investigated the following areas: the progress made by the students, the quality of teaching and learning, students' personal development and well-being, academic support, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered by observing lessons, scrutinising school documentation and questionnaires completed by parents, and by talking with students, teachers, the headteacher and members of the governing body. 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.

## Description of the school

Manor Church of England School is a smaller than average school situated on the northwest edge of the City of York. It is very popular and regularly oversubscribed. Almost all students are of White British background; most come from advantaged backgrounds. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found nationally. The school has held performing arts specialist status since 2004. It has also gained the Healthy Schools Award. The school is about to embark on a complete re-build which will result in a significant increase in its population.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Manor School provides an excellent education and is an outstanding school. This will come as no surprise to parents. The vast majority of those who replied to the questionnaire indicated their whole-hearted support for the school and all that is achieved for their children. The comment, 'A school with a strong Christian ethos, a place where my child is very happy, keen to attend, can flourish and where it is "cool" to learn and succeed,' sums up the huge number of positive remarks made by parents. Historically, the majority of students start school with standards above those expected nationally and this is still the case with the current Year 7. From students' first days in the school, both teaching and support staff establish high expectations of what students can achieve, irrespective of background, ability or aspiration.

The standards attained by students at the end of Year 11 continue to be well above those found nationally and reflect their excellent progress. In 2007, the proportion of students attaining five A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, rose again to 79%. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make exceptional progress. Boys' attainment has increased more rapidly than that expected for boys nationally. In the national tests for students in Year 9, boys and girls now reach very similar standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This improvement is due in no small part to the detailed and informative tracking of their progress and the early support and intervention provided for all students when necessary. Standards are above average in the performing arts subjects. Students thoroughly enjoy these subjects and the opportunities afforded to either take part in an extensive range of productions in school or at venues throughout the city and beyond. Students also enjoy the wide range of visits to places of interest. These contribute significantly to their learning and understanding in many different subjects.

The students' personal development lies at the heart of much of the school's planning. Conversations with students during the inspection revealed them to be confident, caring and mature young people ready to contribute to life in multi-cultural Britain. Students support each other when necessary and also take on leadership roles with aplomb, for example as specially trained 'listeners' or as prefects. Students appreciate the size of the school, referring to it as 'a family community, friendly, where teachers make lessons fun'. Another typical comment was, 'we get on well together and have lots of friends'. The recently introduced rewards and sanctions system is clearly understood by all and used effectively throughout the school. This leads to healthy rivalry to see how well each house is doing.

The students' very positive attitudes and behaviour mean that they arrive in lessons wanting to learn. In the main they are not disappointed. Most teachers plan thoroughly for all levels of ability in their classes but occasionally this is not the case and then students' progress is not as good. Marking of work is regular and tells the students how well they are doing and how they can improve. The school is aware that some learning is not as good as the best, which is often exemplary. Plans are already in place, especially through the active and effective teaching and learning group, to provide coaching, paired observation and support where necessary. The curriculum is good and suits the needs of most learners. The school is responsive to the needs of learners and has introduced a new course in Year 10 which is more appropriate for some lower attaining students. Aware of other shortcomings and the need to plan for future developments, particularly in the area of vocational education, senior managers are already holding active discussions with members of the governing body. The students drew the inspectors' attention to aspects of the curriculum which they most valued, many of which lie

beyond the formal school day: revision sessions, visits and extra-curricular clubs and activities. As a student said, 'there is always something to do'.

The school is not complacent, but forward-looking and seeking constantly to challenge and improve its current position. Through outstanding leadership and strong management the school has continued to raise standards and improve the life chances of its students. Subjects that were previously strong have improved still further. Academic support has improved so that all students have clear, precise targets that challenge and stretch them; as a consequence they make better than expected progress in many subjects. Target-setting is grounded in detailed, accurate analysis and tracking of students' progress. Ambitious but realistic goals are set. Effective action is taken when performance in particular areas is not meeting the high standards and expectations set by senior managers.

The headteacher demonstrates exceptional leadership. He is ably supported by a very capable and knowledgeable senior team and governing body. Governors know the school very well. They are regularly involved in school life and speak with authority about the school's performance. Subject leaders are increasingly playing their part to ensure that accountability for the students' achievements is shared by all teachers. The school knows well its strengths and areas for development. As to be expected, senior leaders together with the governing body have identified certain practices in need of renewal and development. Raising standards and ensuring all students achieve to the best of their ability has been at the heart of the school's work since the previous inspection. This continues to be central to the school's development, together with promoting the personal development and well-being of each student. For these reasons the school provides excellent value for money and demonstrates outstanding capacity for improvement.

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

- Ensure that the proportion of students attaining A\* and A grades at GCSE level, continues to rise across all subjects.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1   |
| 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?   | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 1   |

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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 | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 1 |
| 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?   | 1 |

<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>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 1   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 1   |
| 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  |

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

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to some of you and hearing what you like best about Manor School and also what makes it such a special place. A few of your comments are included in the report. Many of your parents took time to complete the questionnaire sent to them. Please thank them; I enjoyed reading their comments. A special note of thanks goes to your Head Boy and Head Girl who gave me a first-class tour and introduction to the school.

Yours is a very successful school which provides an outstanding education for you. It is clear that when you come to the school in Year 7 you have very positive attitudes, wanting to learn. As you move up through the school you are well taught, enjoying lessons where learning is often fun and exciting. You respect each other's opinions in class, and when moving around your cramped site you invariably treat each other with care and respect. You also value how your teachers give their time generously to support you as individuals and in your studies. It is clear that you enjoy the extensive range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Many of you walk to school and the number of bicycles parked in the sheds is indicative of how many of you cycle! These contribute to helping you keep fit and healthy.

The headteacher, senior staff and governors know in depth the school's strengths and what they need to do to sustain current successes. They are currently working to check that all lessons are of the same high standard as the best and also to plan ahead for changes to the curriculum next year. I have asked Mr Crosby and the governors to make sure that as many of you as possible gain A\* and A grades in all subjects. I'm sure you will all do your best to help.

Many of you said you liked the size of the school and 'feeling part of a family'. Thank you for including me, if only for one day!

With good wishes to all at Manor School.