

Courtwood Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique reference number | 101774 |
| Local authority | Croydon |
| Inspection number | 395723 |
| Inspection dates | 27–28 June 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Chris Grove |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 203 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alastair Roseweir |
| Headteacher | Meg Gibbons |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 July 2008 |
| School address | Courtwood Lane Addington Croydon CR0 9HX |
| Telephone number | 0208 657 8454 |
| Fax number | 0208 651 4084 |
| Email address | admin@courtwood.croydon.sch.uk |

| | |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Chris Grove

Additional inspector

Justina Ilochi

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in eleven lessons taught by seven teachers and heard some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the school's staff and the Chair and another member of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development planning and documents relating to monitoring, safeguarding and the curriculum. The inspectors analysed inspection questionnaires returned by 146 parents and carers, as well as those completed by 111 pupils from Years 3 to 6 and 23 members of staff.

Information about the school

Courtwood Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British and others come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, principally speech, language and communication needs or specific learning difficulties, is above average. Among the school's accreditations are the Activemark, Artsmark (Gold) and the Basic Skills Quality Mark (awarded for the fourth successive time). The school has also gained Healthy Schools status. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The role of headteacher is shared by the substantive head, who works part time each week, and by the deputy headteacher who acts as co-headteacher for the remainder of the week.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Most parents and carers hold the school in high esteem. However, it is not presently a good school because pupils did not make consistently good progress in all year groups in 2011. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress during their Reception Year, but less in developing their calculation skills than in other areas. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' progress is good in reading, writing and mathematics and attainment is above average. Pupils' attainment has fluctuated recently in Year 6 and in 2011 it was low, for exceptional reasons. School data indicate that current attainment in Year 6 has improved, although it is higher in reading and mathematics than in writing.
- The leadership of teaching is satisfactory. Although good teaching was observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching over time is satisfactory and has not led to consistently good progress by pupils. Writing is not always as well taught as it could be. The use of target setting does not consistently help pupils to the extent that it should.
- Pupils are well behaved and display good attitudes to learning. They pay good attention in lessons, cooperate well and are diligent. Pupils feel safe and the school effectively addresses the few incidents of bullying or racism that occur. Attendance is consistently above average and improving.
- Leaders work effectively as a team for the good of the school. Self-evaluation involves effective arrangements to track the progress of individual pupils and monitor teaching. The improvement in performance in 2012 has been effectively supported by professional development arrangements. The curriculum meets pupils' interests. However, in Key Stage 2, pupils have insufficient opportunities to write extensively in a variety of subjects.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in writing, and accelerate their progress, particularly at Key Stage 2, in order to match their better attainment in reading and mathematics, by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write more extensively in a range of subjects
 - ensuring that pupils have a more precise understanding of the expectations of writing tasks through the use of clearer success criteria and prior exemplification of good work.
- Improve children's achievement in numeracy in the Early Years Foundation Stage through the provision of a broader range of activities aimed at developing their calculation skills.
- Improve the use of target setting in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 in order to indicate more precisely to individual pupils the aspects of their work that they need to improve in order to reach higher levels of attainment.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

When children enter the school their knowledge and skills vary, but are typically as expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress so that by the end of the Reception Year, they reach broadly average attainment levels in almost all aspects of their learning, including reading and writing. However, their attainment in calculation is markedly lower than in all other areas because there is not always enough emphasis on this aspect of numeracy in lessons.

In recent years, pupils have made improving progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 to reach above average levels of attainment as the result of good teaching. This was evident in a well-devised lesson in which pupils in Year 1 made good progress in mathematics because the questions posed helped them to think more deeply about important characteristics of different shapes. Similarly, in exciting role play to prepare for writing about a sea adventure, pupils in Year 2 developed imaginative ideas, leading to good progress in their learning. Pupils in both years develop successful reading skills because they are well supported by their secure understanding of phonics (linking letters and sounds). They also learn to self-correct when a sentence does not make sense if they misread it. In discussion, pupils show good understanding of the meaning of stories.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' low attainment in Year 6 in 2011 was partly the result of the exceptionally high proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in quite a small year group. Furthermore, weaknesses in teaching, which have now been successfully eliminated, also played a part in pupils' low attainment. Better teaching during this academic year has led to

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an improvement in pupils' progress in Year 6 and a consequent rise in attainment, including in reading.

A good example of such teaching was observed in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Pupils made good progress because the teacher ensured that they first gained practical experience of gathering data and then encouraged them to discuss its interpretation. Pupils worked hard because they enjoyed learning and understood what they had to do to complete their tasks successfully. Similarly, in a well-taught lesson in Year 4, pupils gained good experience of planning and carrying out a scientific enquiry, by devising appropriate methods to investigate the issues and simultaneously considering how to ensure fair and consistent tests. Across the school, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is comparable to all other pupils because they are given appropriate individual support. Pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is higher than in writing throughout Key Stage 2.

Most parents and carers feel that their children make good progress. Inspection evidence shows that, although there are signs of improvement this year, pupils' progress over time are satisfactory rather than good.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers consider that teaching is good. Inspection evidence shows that, although much current teaching is good, the impact of teaching over time has been satisfactory rather than better because it has not resulted in consistently good progress in Years 3 to 6.

The school's very positive ethos is reflected in the especially good relationships between adults and pupils. This leads to pupils' good readiness to learn, so that teachers rarely need to manage behaviour. Teachers' high expectations about pupils' work show in the neat presentation of exercise books and good work rates.

The brisk pace of learning is a consistently good aspect of lessons so that pupils remain attentive and on task. In the best lessons, teachers also make good use of time which ensures that pupils are productive. Teaching assistants make good contributions, especially to the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

Reading is taught well as is clear from tracking data of attainment, from hearing some younger pupils read and from discussions with them. However, the teaching of writing is not as consistent as it should be. Where teaching is most effective, pupils are well prepared for their tasks through good prior exemplification of what will be expected of them. In such lessons, teachers also discuss the criteria necessary for success, so that pupils are clear about what counts as good work. In other lessons, these positive features are far less evident.

The school does not have a consistent policy for the use of target setting in writing

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and mathematics at Key Stage 2. As a result, almost one third of questionnaire responses from pupils indicate uncertainty about how well they are doing. Pupils do not understand as precisely as they should what they need to do to reach higher levels of attainment, especially in writing and mathematics.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good, and conforms to the 'Courtwood Creed'. In the classroom, pupils are very attentive and cooperate well when asked to do so. In discussions, they listen well to explanations and instructions, and are responsive to teachers' questions. They carry out activities and tasks quickly and productively. Pupils are polite towards adults and especially courteous to visitors, for example spontaneously holding doors open for them. Their mature and responsible conduct attests to the high expectations of staff about behaviour. In the playground, pupils play well with others, making good use of the hoops, ropes and other equipment available to support their enjoyment, and are well supervised by adults. As a result of the school's calm and highly supportive ethos, the great majority of pupils who completed a questionnaire judge that behaviour is good, and say that they feel safe. In lessons and assemblies, the school teaches pupils about safety issues, for example about how to make responsible use of the internet. The pupils who are junior road safety officers play positive roles in the school, and help others to assess risks from traffic.

Parents and carers agree that their children feel entirely safe and almost all believe pupils behave well. However, a small number thinks that lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour. In observations in lessons and around the school, and in reviewing the school's behaviour and incident logs, inspectors did not find much evidence of unsocial behaviour by pupils. All respondents to the staff questionnaire think that the school deals effectively with cases of bullying. Although most parents and carers make the same judgement, a few disagree. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying including cyber-bullying and that involving social networking sites. Records show that bullying of any type or racist incidents are rare, and pupils agree that they are addressed promptly by members of staff if ever they occur. The school seldom has recourse to exclusion. Attendance has been above average for the last three years, and continues to improve.

Leadership and management

The arrangement to share roles within the senior leadership team works well. The substantive headteacher and the co-headteacher provide clear leadership in maintaining the school's positive ethos, with good support from the senior teacher, and the English and mathematics leaders. Leaders share an ambitious vision for the school. Accurate self-evaluation is based on careful gathering of performance data, and regular monitoring of teaching and learning, leading to effective strategic planning. Regular reviews of individual performance at pupil progress meetings support the promotion of equality of opportunity. Staff speak of the positive impact of performance management on their professional development. Discrimination of

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any sort is not tolerated. A large majority of parents and carers would recommend the school to others. One described the school as 'well run, organised and efficient', whilst another characterised it as 'a fantastic community school where all pupils are known and looked after by all staff'. Members of the governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses, provide appropriate challenge for improvement, and have made effective appointments which ensure continuity in senior leadership.

Evidence for leaders' capacity to secure improvement is seen in the above average attainment at the end of Year 2, and in pupils' good standards of behaviour, readiness to learn and above average and improving attendance. Despite the low attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2011, tracking evidence indicates convincingly that this is not a trend, and that in 2012 the school has reversed the decline. Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements.

The broad, balanced curriculum does much to meet pupils' interests. The extra-curricular programme of activities provides pupils with opportunities to join the school choir and take part in clubs focusing on sports, the expressive arts, modern foreign languages and cooking and gardening, which foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are strengths in environmental education involving use of the spacious grounds and in the good quality of two- and three-dimensional artwork on display. However, pupils in Key Stage 2 do not have sufficient opportunities to practise more extensive writing in other subjects.

The school benefits from membership of a number of local clusters which includes support for initial teacher training and a sports partnership. The school has also had a significant role in forming the recently developed Selsdon Education Partnership whereby several local schools collaborate over initiatives such as provision for gifted and talented pupils.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



29 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Courtwood Primary School, Croydon CR0 9HX

We would like to thank you all for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms, talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes and hearing some of you read. We particularly thank those of you who filled in the pupils' questionnaire and those who came for a discussion with an inspector. The inspection judgement is that you go to a satisfactory school.

These are some of the main things that we found out about your school.

- You all get on well with your teachers and other adults and you feel safe in school.
- Your behaviour at school is good and you listen attentively in lessons and work well with others.
- Your attendance is above average.
- Children make satisfactory progress in the Reception class and good progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 6 did not do very well last year but the good news is that the pupils presently in Year 6 are on track to make better progress.
- The headteacher, co-headteacher and the other leaders know what to do to continue to improve your school.

We have asked the headteachers and the governing body to do some things to improve the school.

- Improve your progress in writing, especially in Key Stage 2, by giving you more opportunities to develop your writing skills in lessons in different subjects.
- Make sure that you first see examples of good work before you do writing tasks, and always understand what you need to do to be successful.
- Make sure you all know exactly what you need to do to improve your work, especially in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Help children in the Reception class to improve their calculation skills.

You can help by working hard so that the school can continue to improve.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove
Lead inspector

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