

Coppice Farm Primary School

Laver Close, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 7LS

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 6.
- Teaching is not consistently good. In some lessons, pupils spend too long listening to lengthy explanations. When this occurs, they lose interest and their behaviour deteriorates.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Leaders have not given teachers precise guidance about how they are to meet their personal targets, improve their teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- Staff with specific responsibilities for checking on teaching quality have not received enough training for them to do this effectively.
- Governors do not gather enough first-hand evidence of the school's performance so they can take action to improve it.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children progress well in a stimulating learning environment.
- Most pupils are very positive about school, enjoy their lessons and play happily together at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure and pupils say they are kept safe in school.
- Teaching and learning in music and sport are good.
- School leadership is benefiting from the link with the partner school and the support of the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons in total, including two with the headteacher and two with the deputy headteacher. They also observed two school assemblies and made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- They observed pupils at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other staff and pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor. They also met the headteacher of the partner school, a representative of the local authority and some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors heard groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- The inspectors took account of 21 responses to the staff questionnaire and 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- They looked at the school’s policies, teachers’ plans, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety, together with samples of pupils’ work. They also looked at information on individual pupils’ progress and teachers’ performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jonathan Smart

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Coppice Farm Primary School is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British, with a minority coming from different ethnic groups. The proportion speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school accommodates a privately run breakfast club, after-school club and a holiday club, all of which are reported on separately.
- The school is working in partnership with Hillside Primary and Nursery School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that:
 - teachers' explanations are not too long and pupils have more time for independent learning
 - teachers' expectations are raised so that they consistently set work that provides pupils with the right level of challenge
 - teachers continually check pupils' learning during lessons so that misunderstandings can be quickly identified and corrected
 - more effective use is made of teaching assistants
 - when marking pupils' work, teachers provide clear guidance on the standards pupils have achieved and how the work can be improved.
- Improve progress and raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by making sure that:
 - all staff have the skills needed to teach letters and sounds (phonics) effectively
 - pupils have more opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects
 - the school's plan for improving pupils' understanding of number facts and calculation skills is implemented consistently across the school.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - providing teachers with clearer guidance and better training so that they can improve their teaching,
 - linking teachers' targets explicitly to desired improvements in pupils' progress
 - developing the skills of leaders at all levels so that they are able to check and improve the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility
 - making sure that all governors have the knowledge and skills needed to systematically challenge leaders and help them improve the school's performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The good progress children make in Reception is not built upon sufficiently in Years 1 to 6. Although recent action taken to tackle weaknesses has led to pupils making good progress in some lessons, slower progress is made in others. As a result, their progress is not fast enough and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has fallen from above average to average over the last three years.
- Reading and phonics skills are not sufficiently secure in Years 1 and 2. This is partly because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise saying the letters and sounds themselves, and not enough pupils reached the expected standard in the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening test.
- Pupils do not receive sufficient opportunities to write at length across a range of subjects. Consequently, whilst their spelling and punctuation skills are reasonably accurate, they are less secure when sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events in their writing.
- Pupils' skills in calculation and their knowledge of number facts, and their ability to apply these to solve mathematical problems, are not developing as quickly as they need to. Less able pupils, in particular, are not confident when given simple calculations or the level of problem-solving activities that are expected for their age.
- The additional funding the school receives for pupils through the pupil premium is used to enhance provision through, for example, additional support staff and targeted support for individual pupils. While records show that this support is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' progress in some classes, it is too soon to see an impact on the attainment of these pupils at the end of Year 6. In the 2012 national tests, these pupils were about 6 months behind their fellow pupils in writing, 24 months behind in reading and 18 months behind in mathematics.
- The progress of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is as inconsistent as that of their peers.
- Children enter the Reception class with a range of skills and abilities that are generally below most children of their age. Because teaching is consistently good, they make good progress across all areas of learning and reach standards that are in line with the national average by the time they enter Year 1. They are particularly successful in learning letters and sounds (phonics).

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are a number of strengths in teaching but the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics across Years 1 to 6 is not consistently good.
- In lessons where teaching requires improvement or is occasionally inadequate, pupils are often required to sit and listen to lengthy explanations by the teacher, and work is not matched closely enough to their abilities and their next steps in learning. In these lessons, teaching assistants are not used effectively as they, too, merely sit and listen to the teacher. As a result, some pupils lose concentration, do not behave well enough and their progress suffers.

- Teachers' marking, some of which is good, does not consistently provide pupils with enough guidance on how they can improve their work. Where pupils are given guidance, they are not always given enough time to correct the things the teacher indicates were wrong, so pupils do not learn from their own mistakes.
- In too many lessons, questions are too closely directed towards drawing out an expected answer and the lesson is moved on without checking that all pupils are keeping up.
- The teaching of phonics is inconsistent. Some staff do not have a good enough understanding of how letters and sounds should be taught and do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to sound out new letter sounds themselves.
- The most effective teaching occurs where learning is well planned and the teacher makes clear exactly what pupils are expected to learn. For example, in an English lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, good progress was made in writing a play script because the teacher made clear exactly what pupils were expected to do and the work was well planned to match pupils' differing ability levels. Pupils were highly motivated because the work engaged and interested them.
- In these good and better lessons, teachers use questioning very effectively to assess pupils' understanding. Consequently, mistakes in their learning are picked up quickly. Pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are linked and developed systematically. The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well planned, and teaching assistants are used to good effect and make a good contribution to pupils' good progress.
- Teachers generally make good use of resources to help learning, especially in the good and outstanding teaching seen in Reception. In these lessons, both the indoor and outdoor areas are used well to improve children's range of skills. Children's physical development is promoted through a range of well planned outdoor activities, and every opportunity is taken to develop their language and numeracy skills through questioning and counting.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour is good around the school and at breaks and lunchtimes but, in lessons, it is too variable and too dependent on how good teaching is. In lessons where pupils are required to listen to lengthy explanations, or learning is not made interesting enough, individuals become inattentive and too much of the teacher's time is taken up in checking behaviour. Generally, pupils are not provided with enough challenges for them to develop persistence and determination.
- Most pupils are polite and helpful to adults in school. They were very happy to talk to inspectors about their work. Lunch and break times are well supervised and pupils play together well. They willingly take on responsibility and through, for example, the school council or their work as 'lunchtime buddies', play a constructive role in the life of the school.
- Pupils report that they feel safe, secure and happy in school. Most say that behaviour is mostly good and that pupils of all backgrounds get on well together. The small number of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire generally indicated that behaviour is good, although a minority disagreed. While staff feel that behaviour is generally good, a number expressed the view that it is not as good as it should be because the school behaviour policy is

not implemented consistently enough.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and are knowledgeable about risk and danger for their age. They say that bullying is rare and pupils spoken to were confident that there was an adult they could approach if they had any concerns
- Behaviour in the Reception class is consistently good. The vast majority of children quickly learn and accept adults' expectations of behaviour. They play well together and learn to share toys and resources.
- Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and most come to school regularly.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership requires improvement because, until recently, the actions taken by school leaders and governors have not had a strong enough impact on pupils' progress and achievement.
- The headteacher has used the system of lesson observations to determine where teaching needs to improve but has not set out clearly enough, either in the school action plan or in his feedback to individual teachers, precisely how improvements are to be made. Consequently, actions taken to improve teaching are not always systematic or effective.
- Procedures for holding teachers to account for pupils' progress have recently been strengthened. However, there are insufficient links between the targets set for teachers to improve their work and the training opportunities to help them do so.
- Although staff with subject or other leadership responsibilities are keen to support the drive for improvement, many do not, as yet, have the necessary skills to judge the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in lessons accurately.
- The school has successfully tackled weaknesses in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which were identified in the previous inspection. It has also established a successful partnership with another local primary school, and this is helping bring greater clarity and to leaders' decision-making. This indicates that the school has the capacity to go on improving.
- Teaching programmes are enhanced through a variety of sports, musical and performing arts activities. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well through assemblies, where pupils sing together enthusiastically, worship and are encouraged to reflect on moral issues.
- Pupils' progress is carefully tracked by teachers and senior staff to identify and provide additional support for any groups that may be falling behind. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium receive targeted individual support, and steps are taken to ensure they are able to take part in all the school has to offer.
- Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the good links established with parents and carers have a positive impact on the development of children's academic and social skills. While most parents with children in other years expressed satisfaction with the school, a few others showed concern. The school is intent on exploring these concerns and strengthening links between the home and school.

- School leadership and management is benefiting from the links with the partner primary school and the continuing support of the local authority.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very supportive and fully committed to ensuring the school's future success. Governors are linked to different aspects of the school's work and a system for visiting the school and observing children's learning has recently been introduced. This helps governors to gain first hand information on the impact of their decisions, for example, in the use and impact of pupil premium funding. They have a clear understanding of the importance of ensuring that decisions about teachers' pay are closely linked to performance and responsibilities. They know where teaching needs improvement and what is being done to bring this about. However, not all governors fully understand the implications of comparative measures of pupils' progress and achievement. Consequently, some governors are not in a position to challenge the school sufficiently about its performance. Governors manage funding conscientiously and ensure that statutory duties are met, including those relating to safeguarding of pupils. All necessary checks are carried out to ensure pupils' safety.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122516
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	412253

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Langmack
Headteacher	Jason Brewster
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2009
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