

Cotford St Luke Primary School

Bethall Mead, Codford St Luke , Taunton, TA4 1HZ

Inspection dates

14–15 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires Improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires Improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires Improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet good overall. While there is evidence of improvement since the previous inspection, teaching is not yet resulting in pupils' consistently good progress.
- Pupils' attainment is uneven across the school, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- In mathematics, calculation skills are improving, but in other aspects, activities do not build on pupils' prior learning.
- The most able pupils do not receive work that is sufficiently challenging. As a result, they do not make the progress expected of them from their high starting points.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently focused on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils.
- The assessment of pupils' work not always precise or accurate. Sometimes, work is too easy or too hard, especially where there is a wide ability range.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare require improvement because senior leaders and governors do not always check that policies are consistently followed and applied and that training is updated.
- Leaders' actions to monitor and improve pupils' attendance are not robust. Too many pupils are regularly absent, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders are working on the right priorities but this has not yet led to substantial and sustained improvement. The impact of leaders' actions is not evaluated robustly by governors.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, are actively addressing the considerable underachievement that was evident at the previous inspection. Parents recognise the positive changes and improvement that is being made.
- This is an inclusive school, with pupils who are respectful of adults and each other.
- Pupils' knowledge of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) has improved. Current work to raise standards in reading has been effective.
- Leadership of the early years is good. Children are well supported and make good progress.
- Teaching in Years 2 and 6 ensures that pupils make stronger progress towards the end of each key stage. This is helping those pupils who previously underachieved to catch up.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management so that they are consistently good by:
 - ensuring that systems for monitoring teaching over time are precise and more directly focused on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils
 - holding teachers to account so that they all set consistently high expectations for their pupils, particularly the most able
 - evaluating the impact of the school's additional funding on the development and attendance of eligible pupils
 - ensuring that more robust and rigorous procedures are in place to monitor policies, training and pupils' health and welfare.

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good by:
 - ensuring that all pupils get work that is sufficiently challenging, particularly in writing and mathematics
 - securing pupils' mathematical progression as they move through the school by ensuring that pupils build sequentially on their knowledge and understanding across all areas of mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment accurately to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' prior learning and development, particularly where there is a wide range of abilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Senior leaders have acted with clear purpose to raise pupils' achievement, but have not yet secured sustained improvement across the school. Consequently, some pupils are underachieving.
- The school's action planning does not have challenging and detailed measurements of impact. In some cases, targets set are not challenging enough to ensure that all groups of pupils are making good progress.
- Senior leaders do not check information on the school's performance rigorously enough and use this to identify and address new priorities as they arise.
- Leaders undertake a range of monitoring activities including checking teaching quality in lessons, talking to pupils, using school performance information and looking in books. This is resulting in a more consistent approach to teaching strategies across the school, for instance in marking and feedback and presentation in books. However, not enough attention is given to the impact of teaching on the rates of progress of different groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils.
- The work of subject leaders is helping to bring about improvement in some respects. For example, there is now better teaching of calculation strategies in mathematics and of comprehension skills in reading. However, there is still more to do in both subject areas to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress across the school.
- Senior leaders' monitoring of pupils' welfare and safety requires improvement. Procedures for risk assessments and reporting of accidents on the school site are not followed consistently on all occasions.
- The additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is tracked and leaders provide reports to governors about how the funding is used. However, there has been insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of the funding or what more might be done to close the gaps between these pupils and others.
- Leaders' actions to improve pupils' attendance have had too little impact, particularly of those who are regularly absent. Some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly enough.
- The headteacher has the full commitment of staff and works closely with leaders, managers and teachers. All staff value the leadership he provides. Performance management systems are now in place for all staff.
- There has been 'light touch' external support by a local leader of education, concentrated on leadership development. Additionally, some subject-specific support has resulted in improvements in teachers' subject knowledge.
- The curriculum is interesting and shaped to meet the needs of pupils. Whole school topics such as 'Fit for Life', 'Brazil' and 'A long time ago' provide exciting opportunities for pupils to learn both within their classes and across phases. Pupils experience a variety of visits, such as to the Taunton Museum, Cheddar Gorge and Stonehenge.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is entwined into the school's curriculum planning and pupils are encouraged to ask questions and learn from real experiences. The school works well to develop pupils' understanding of what it is like to live in modern Britain. Teachers actively promote respect and tolerance and pupils experience real opportunities to be part of democratic decision-making, such as when pupils undertook house captain elections.
- The additional physical education and sports premium funding is used effectively. Professional development has improved teachers' skills and pupils are able to participate in a wide range of physical activities and competitive sports within the school, across the district and with other Tone Valley schools. Pupils told inspectors that they are enjoying doing more sport this year, including extra-curricular activities such as cricket, play rehearsals, judo, drama, rounders, cricket, netball, hockey and science.
- Parents' views about the school are very positive. Parents recognise the changes and improvements that are being made across the school since the previous inspection. Parents welcome the improving communication they receive through social media and the parents' forum group.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are ambitious for the school but they have not held leaders to account effectively to ensure that policies or training are updated on time. For example, they have not yet approved the safeguarding policy on the school's website.
 - Governors have recognised that they need more specific information if they are to be fully effective in their roles. Visits to the school accompanied by senior and middle leaders are helping them to

understand the actions the school is taking to address areas identified in the school improvement plan.

- Since the previous inspection, the governing body has undertaken a review of its work. Governors now meet more regularly and focus on the school's priorities. They are developing a more accurate view of the school's performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, although some procedures need to be sharpened. The school is diligent in recording concerns and leaders work in close cooperation with external agencies to ensure that pupils get the right support in a timely manner. Staff have completed training appropriately, but some senior leaders have not kept up to date with their designated person's training. Statutory requirements are met.
- There is a clear approach within the school to implement the 'Prevent' duty in order to keep pupils safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. This is also supported by the school's personal, social, and health education curriculum.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Although there have been improvements in teaching as the result of staff changes and professional development, teaching remains inconsistent between classes so that pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Teachers' assessment of what pupils in some classes can and cannot do is not precise enough to ensure all groups of pupils receive work that is accurately matched to their needs. As a result pupils repeat work that is too easy for them and do not get more challenging work quickly enough. This is especially the case for the most able pupils.
- Additional interventions for pupils have variable impact. Teachers and teaching assistants are successful in developing pupils' reading skills, helping pupils to overcome difficulties successfully. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also effective, helping to develop pupils' confidence and access to the curriculum. However, some interventions by staff have less impact, usually because pupils are over-directed by adults, so that they do not work things out for themselves.
- The teaching of writing is weak in some classes. Grammar and punctuation skills are not applied consistently across longer pieces of work. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to edit and improve their work. This limits their opportunity to deepen and apply their understanding and hinders the quality of their outcomes, particularly for the most able pupils.
- There are also weaknesses in mathematics teaching. While there is a strong focus on number and calculation that is increasing pupils' fluency overall, these skills are not applied progressively in other aspects of mathematics, such as pupils' understanding of time or fractions. A lack of clear, planned progression of skills also means that pupils do not always build on their prior learning. The teaching of reasoning and problem solving are not consistently well taught.
- Where progress for all groups is strong, this is because teaching over time is consistently good, for example in Years 2 and 6. In these classes, the vast majority of pupils and groups make stronger progress, resulting in higher standards.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- Pupils' personal development and welfare require improvement. Leaders' monitoring to ensure that procedures are followed is not always robust and this limits the school's promotion of pupils' welfare and personal development.
- Pupils' attendance levels overall are above national average. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is considerably lower.
- Whole-school curriculum topics along with a wealth of sporting activities such as tournaments with other schools help pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- Older pupils talked knowledgeably to an inspector about the weekly lessons they receive as part of the school's personal, social and health education programme. They valued their work on topics including drug education, fitness, sex and relationships education and friendship.

- Pupils have a good understanding of e-safety. Pupils say that they feel safe at school.
- Pupils with additional medical needs are cared for exceptionally well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are courteous and polite inside and outside of class.
- The vast majority of pupils are attentive in lessons and demonstrate good learning attitudes. Occasionally, younger pupils find it difficult to work together in group activities and in taking turns. Teachers notice this quickly and support pupils effectively to develop their communication and language skills further. Consequently, pupils are developing strong relationships and their personal confidence as learners is improving strongly.
- Staff and pupils have a nurturing and collegiate approach which ensures an inclusive and supportive environment. Pupils say they feel valued as individuals and speak highly of one another.
- A new, more stringent behaviour policy is reducing the numbers of exclusions at the school. Pupils with challenging behaviour are managed well by staff.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is little bullying and that their teachers quickly sort out any concerns. The overwhelming majority of parents also support this view.
- There is plenty of space for pupils to play outside and a lunchtime club for inside games is also available. Pupils enjoy one another's company. They play and socialise well in small groups.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- Pupils' progress is variable. In 2015, pupils in Year 2 attained well as a result of good teaching. The proportions of pupils in Year 6 who made or exceeded the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics were higher than found nationally. However, these good results conceal some underperformance lower down the school, especially in mathematics, that suggests that attainment by the end of Year 6 should be even higher.
- In mathematics, pupils' fluency and calculation skills are improving but pupils do not apply these skills to other areas of the mathematics curriculum.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is inconsistent. Whereas in 2015 the achievement of these pupils in Year 6 matched that of their peers and outperformed other pupils nationally, the work of current pupils in some classes showed lower achievement than their peers in spelling, punctuation and grammar as well as in mathematics.
- The most able pupils also make uneven progress, reflecting the different levels of challenge presented to them from class to class. The most able pupils do well towards the end of each key stage as a result of higher and more consistent levels of challenge.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the national phonics check (which tests pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters make) has improved this year. For current Year 1 pupils, the new teaching arrangements over the last term have resulted in better outcomes. Nearly all pupils who failed to meet the required standard for phonics in 2015 have caught up by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make good progress from their starting points. However, their progress is sometimes limited when the work set is not at the right level or they are given insufficient time to complete their work.
- Pupils read widely and often. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 talked articulately to inspectors about the books they were reading. The teaching of reading comprehension skills is ensuring that pupils further up the school are developing their confidence in 'reading between the lines' and making inferences.

Early years provision

is good

- The Nursery and Reception classes are well led and managed. Staff in these classes work closely together, with a shared understanding of how children learn effectively. This results in good transition arrangements which help children to settle quickly.
- Children's progress across the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Around a half of the children who join the Nursery arrive with low levels of knowledge and skills, particularly in mathematics and

communication. Published outcomes at the end of Reception have been above the national average for the last three years. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected development in the early learning goals is also higher than nationally. Children are well prepared for the start of Year 1.

- Behaviour is good and children are well cared for. Across the early years, staff ensure that all children, including those with specific special educational needs and/or disabilities have access to a wide range of engaging and stimulating activities.
- Children eligible for additional funding are making more rapid progress than their peers in all areas of learning. From the time they start in Nursery, these children are provided with support that helps them to quickly develop their knowledge, particularly their writing and reading.
- The early years leader is responsive to the needs of the children so that they make strong progress across most areas of learning.
- Children have clearly developed social skills and are able to join in with each other's play. They cooperate well with each other. Children are developing strong characteristics of effective learning, resilience and concentration.
- Children are taught phonics skills every day and this helps them to make good progress in developing their early reading skills. Sometimes, opportunities are missed to encourage children to use the sounds they have learned when they are playing freely indoors and outdoors.
- Children's progress in mathematics has improved. Changes in teaching and provision have ensured that children are making more rapid progress. They show greater confidence with simple calculations. For example, children in the Nursery developed their understanding of number and measurement by making rulers with numbers up to six to measure a pile of bricks and recording their answers.
- Occasionally, other adults do not prompt and support pupils to make rapid progress in developing their language and communication. Children are occasionally not extended to develop their spoken responses into full sentences. For example, during children's imaginative play adults were quick to accept one-word responses.

School details

Unique reference number	133560
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10012366

This inspection 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	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lindsay Hall
Headteacher	James Geen
Telephone number	01823 430 831
Website	www.cotfordstlukeprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@cotfordstluke.somerset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 May 2014

Information about this school

- Cotford St Luke Primary school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are 11 classes; some have mixed ages.
- There is a nursery on site called Fledglings that is managed by the governing body.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. This is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school club that is managed by the governing body.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons or part lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher or key stage 1 leader. Inspectors also observed an assembly and visited the nursery.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, early years coordinator and key stage 1 coordinator.
- Telephone conversations took place with the deputy headteacher/SENCo, English and mathematics coordinators.
- Telephone conversations also took place with a representative from the local authority and the headteacher of Walton Primary School, who, as a local leader of education, is providing support to the school
- Inspectors took into consideration the responses to questionnaires completed by 28 members of staff.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised during the inspection, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school development plan, and data relating to pupils' attainment and progress and curriculum planning. Inspectors also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The 60 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account. Inspectors considered comments provided by text message. They also spoke to parents informally at the start and end of the day.

Inspection team

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