

Cotford St Luke Primary School

Bethell Mead, Cotford St Luke, Taunton, Somerset TA4 1HZ

Inspection dates

17–18 April 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- In a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, pupils make good progress from their various starting points.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers and other adults have high expectations of pupils and plan work that is accurately tailored to meet pupils' needs. They have secure subject knowledge and use questioning effectively, to develop pupils' understanding. However, there is some lack of clarity around the school's approach to developing pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Leaders, including governors, have an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and areas which require further improvement. They use this knowledge to inform their development planning, but systems to monitor the impact of their actions lack the necessary rigour.
- Leaders' plans for the spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils do not meet statutory requirements. This is limiting leaders', including governors', strategic oversight of this spending. Although disadvantaged pupils are making progress, a large majority are still working below the expectations for their age.
- Children get off to a strong start in the Nursery and Reception Years. Adults interact skilfully with children to develop their language, as well as skills and understanding, across the early years curriculum.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They speak articulately about how leaders and teachers keep them safe. Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities and the opportunities these provide for them to develop their skills and interests.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally. Where absence rates are higher, for example in the case of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, leaders are proactive in promoting good attendance.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school. They recognise improvements made by leaders, in particular with home-school communication. Parents appreciate the workshops that the school is providing and feel that these are helping them to support their children's learning.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are vigilant and aware of the vulnerabilities pupils face. However, there is a lack of thoroughness in some of the school's safeguarding records.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to strengthen the progress of disadvantaged pupils so higher proportions have levels of attainment in line with the expectations for their age.
- Further develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers have a consistent understanding of the school’s approach to the teaching of reasoning
 - teachers routinely planning opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across a range of different contexts and subjects.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - development planning, including that used for performance management, focuses on the intended impact of actions upon pupils’ outcomes, and how this impact is to be measured
 - strategic plans for raising the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils are fully evaluated and meet statutory requirements for what schools must publish online
 - safeguarding records are thorough and completed in line with statutory guidance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for the school. They have ensured that the school's ethos of 'aspire, believe, achieve' is understood by staff, pupils and parents alike. These values permeate the school at all levels and support leaders' vision that, in addition to academic progress, pupils will develop the life skills required to become active members of their community.
- The headteacher, along with other senior and middle leaders, has an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and areas which require further improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders use this knowledge to inform school development planning, as well as subject-specific action plans. These plans, however, lack precision and do not focus on the impact that planned actions are to have on pupils' outcomes. The consequence of this is that leaders' evaluations of a plan's success consider whether the planned actions have taken place, rather than the impact these actions have had on pupils' learning.
- The headteacher has implemented a programme of monitoring which is ensuring that leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching in the school. Leaders use a range of activities, including learning walks, work scrutinies and discussions with pupils, to gauge the consistency of practice and implementation of school policies. English and mathematics leaders have published a set of 'non-negotiables' for the teaching of these subjects and the impact of these is evident in classrooms and pupils' books.
- Leaders have high expectations and maintain well-established procedures to monitor and manage the performance of staff. Leaders set objectives which are linked to priorities in school development planning. However, these objectives are not sufficiently focused on the demonstrable impact actions are to have on raising pupils' outcomes. Evidence shows that the school's systems are having a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, but leaders recognise that extra precision will enable them to hold staff to account with greater levels of rigour.
- Middle leaders are developing in their roles and playing an increasingly strategic part in the leadership of their subjects. The leaders of English and mathematics have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. They have used this knowledge to inform staff training, which they have led effectively, to raise teachers' skills and confidence. Subject action plans indicate that leaders have focused on appropriate areas to develop the quality of teaching in their subjects, for example improving pupils' editing skills in writing. Inspection evidence, as well as leaders' own monitoring, shows that these have proved successful in developing teachers' practice. However, leaders are not clear about the impact actions have had on pupils' progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is making effective use of additional funding. He has a detailed understanding of pupils' needs and tailors provision to ensure that pupils make the progress they are capable of. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making strong progress and, in the majority of cases, making up gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding.

- The school's plans for the spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils do not meet statutory guidance. Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium grant are making progress, but leaders' strategic oversight of the impact specific interventions are having is not sufficiently robust. Plans for the previous academic year have not been fully evaluated for their impact. Additionally, plans for the current year are not yet finalised, despite two thirds of the year having already passed. Leaders recognise that this is limiting their ability to refine the school's provision and thus ensure that disadvantaged pupils are making the strongest possible progress.
- Leaders are making effective use of sport premium funding to raise pupils' participation in physical activity. Pupils talk very positively about the opportunities they receive to develop their sporting skills both within school and competitively against other schools. Leaders are also using additional funding to provide pupils with high-quality physical education (PE) lessons. This is developing pupils' specific skills and understanding of tactics, for example in tennis.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum which is exciting and engaging, and is developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of subjects. Leaders promote a holistic approach to child development and this is evident not only in pupils' learning but also in the way they conduct themselves in lessons and around the school. Pupils develop their skills in English, mathematics, science, humanities, the arts, PE and languages. Pupils appreciate the opportunities they are provided with to celebrate their achievements, for example sharing homework projects with their peers.
- Leaders actively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a secure understanding of other faiths, as well as fundamental British values. Pupils were able to talk with inspectors about the features of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, as well as democracy, respect and tolerance of people's differences.
- The vast majority of parents are positive about the school and would recommend it to other parents. They recognise that their children are now being challenged more and appreciate the school's efforts to improve levels of communication. Parents say that their children are safe in school and feel that leaders respond appropriately should they have any concerns. Parents talk positively about the workshops that leaders are providing to keep parents up to date with changes in teaching and learning. One parent summed up the view of many when they wrote: 'The school finds the positive aspect of all its children and places importance not only on academic and learning skills, but also the development of the individual in relation to social skills, behaviour and good manners.'

Governance of the school

- Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas that are in need of further improvement. They play an active part in formulating the school's development planning and monitoring its effectiveness. Through their strategic lead roles, they visit the school regularly to ensure that they are up to date and knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility.
- Governors hold leaders to account for their actions. The chair of governors' persistence and attention to detail has proved a key factor in the school's improvement journey.

Minutes of governing body meetings demonstrate that governors ask challenging questions, particularly around the school development plan and pupils' progress.

- Governors have challenged the leader responsible for disadvantaged pupils to demonstrate the impact of additional funds. As a result of this, they are confident that disadvantaged pupils are making sufficient progress. However, governors recognise that they need to have a greater level of strategic oversight in this area.
- In addition to their visits into school, governors use a range of evidence to validate the information that leaders provide, for example visit notes from the local authority and school evaluation partner.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. All members of staff understand that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. They have a secure understanding of the signs of abuse they need to be looking for and are clear about the school's procedures for reporting any concerns.
- Training is up to date and in line with statutory requirements. Similarly, checks to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers are in place and appropriately documented. Leaders, including the governor with responsibility for safeguarding, regularly check the implementation of school policy and procedures. Despite this, though, there are some weaknesses in the school's record-keeping. For example, at the time of the inspection, leaders had not recorded that all members of staff had read and understood the school's current safeguarding policy.
- The headteacher, who is also the designated leader for safeguarding, has a secure understanding of the local vulnerabilities pupils face. For example, he has a detailed understanding of 'cuckooing' and 'county lines', which are issues prevalent in the local area.
- The school works effectively with both parents and external agencies to promote the safety of its most vulnerable pupils. Leaders regularly attend case conferences and strategy meetings. Recently, the NSPCC has led sessions with both pupils and parents to raise awareness of issues such as online safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the time of the previous inspection and is now consistently good across the school.
- Teachers have a secure understanding of what pupils can already do. They understand the school's assessment processes and use their knowledge of pupils to plan learning activities that build upon pupils' skills. As a result, the vast majority of pupils across the school make strong progress from a range of different starting points.
- Teachers and teaching assistants display strong subject knowledge. They use precise terminology when explaining concepts and expect pupils to do the same. This subject knowledge is evident in subjects across the curriculum, for example in English,

mathematics, science, humanities and music. This is leading to pupils making strong gains in all subjects.

- Teachers and teaching assistants use skilful questioning to explore pupils' knowledge and deepen understanding. They routinely expect pupils to explain what they are doing and to justify their responses based on the evidence available to them. For example, in mathematics, pupils have to describe why they have chosen a particular strategy to solve a problem and, in reading comprehension, pupils use the text to support the validity of their answers. This approach is consistent across all year groups, including in early years, and is encouraging pupils to think deeply and reflect upon their learning.
- The teaching of phonics and early reading skills is a strength of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge and use this to model sounds with accuracy and precision. Phonics sessions are well planned and designed to meet the different stages of pupils' development. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 read with confidence and fluency. They apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to tackle unfamiliar words and demonstrate levels of comprehension appropriate to their age.
- In key stage 2, teachers develop pupils' comprehension and higher-order reading skills. Consequently, as they progress through the school, pupils gain a widening vocabulary, as well as the skills they require to infer and deduce meaning. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good levels of support for pupils who find reading more difficult, and high levels of challenge for those pupils reading at or above the expectations for their age. This is leading to pupils' strong progress and a greater proportion of pupils working at the higher standards.
- In writing, teachers' secure subject knowledge and high expectations are resulting in pupils writing with greater fluency and technical ability. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of different genres. This equips pupils with the vocabulary and structure they require to write independently. For example, pupils in Year 6 spoke very knowledgeably about the features of persuasive writing and could list a number of different modal verbs they could use. In Year 2, pupils described the features of diaries as well as the difference between the first and third person.
- Teachers' focus on developing pupils' spelling and editing skills is evident in pupils' writing books. Pupils across the school are spelling with greater accuracy and, where pupils have specific difficulties with their spelling, leaders have put effective strategies in place to support them. Pupils talk positively about the importance of editing their work and recognise how this is improving the quality of their writing.
- Opportunity for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills across different subjects is more variable. Where this is strongest, pupils routinely write explanation texts in science and non-chronological reports in geography. However, an inconsistency in teachers' expectations is limiting pupils' abilities to develop their writing skills fully.
- In mathematics, the school's drive to develop pupils' understanding of basic skills is paying dividends. The work in pupils' books demonstrates that pupils can carry out calculations with accuracy. This is supported by the majority of pupils having a secure understanding of number bonds and multiplication tables. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to apply their mathematical skills and deepen their understanding. However, there is a lack of consistency in teachers' understanding of the difference between problem-solving and reasoning activities. Pupils tackle reasoning activities with confidence across a range of concepts, for example number,

shape and fractions. This is leading to greater proportions of pupils working at both the expected standard and at greater depth.

- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is equally strong. Teachers demonstrate secure specialist knowledge in a range of subjects. This leads to pupils developing their knowledge, skills and understanding across the breadth of the curriculum. For example, in a music lesson, pupils were composing a short music piece. In response to strong teaching, they were able to demonstrate a secure understanding of both time signatures and musical notation.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are polite, well-mannered and articulate. They talk to adults with confidence and exude a sense of pride in their school. During the inspection, pupils were keen to talk about their learning and were able to describe how teachers challenge them to be the best they can be. One pupil told an inspector that they like lessons best when they are given work that makes them think.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying rarely happens but, when it does, they know they can talk to a trusted adult. Pupils are confident that should they have a problem in school, any adult would be able to sort it for them straight away.
- Pupils appreciate the leadership responsibilities they are given, for example as school councillors and peer mediators. They take these roles seriously and talk proudly of the respect they are shown by other pupils in the school.
- Pupils relish the opportunity to represent the school in the wider community. Pupils in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 have the chance to play competitive sport. Older pupils told inspectors how they are proud of the school's reputation. Other pupils described how honoured they felt when the choir went to Taunton and sang in front of the mayor.
- Pupils understand the importance of staying safe when working online and know that, if they have a concern, they can talk to an adult at school or at home. Additionally, pupils have a secure understanding of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and eating a balanced diet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and are respectful to each other and to adults. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils play well together and older pupils involve the younger pupils in their play. Pupils who act as 'active club leads' are proving effective in raising pupils' participation in lunchtime activities. They enjoy this responsibility and issue stickers for pupils who display certain sporting attributes, for example passion and resilience.

- Pupils' behaviour in classes is, in the vast majority of cases, very good. They listen attentively to adults, as well as to each other. They take responsibility for their own actions and realise that hard work and application will bring their own rewards.
- Historical data indicates that, over time, the proportion of pupils receiving fixed-term exclusions has been above the national average. Discussions with leaders, and analysis of the school's behaviour records, show that the number of exclusions is reducing. Leaders are implementing a range of behaviour strategies to support pupils who exhibit difficult behaviour. Exclusions are used as a last resort to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and staff. Where an exclusion has been necessary, the headteacher and governors have followed the correct procedures and records are kept in line with local authority guidance.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. As a result, overall rates of absence are broadly in line with national averages. Where the attendance of particular groups has historically been lower, for example disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, this is improving. Leaders are proactive in addressing poor attendance and can evidence the impact of their work in challenging and supporting parents as is appropriate.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils currently in the school are making strong progress from their various starting points. This is the case for pupils in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Published assessment information in 2017 showed that at the end of Year 6, pupils' progress in reading was in line with that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. However, progress in writing and mathematics was less strong and below national averages. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 was also below national averages in writing and mathematics. This was the case for pupils at both the expected and higher standards. Although there were only a small number of disadvantaged pupils in this cohort, their progress in reading, writing and mathematics was below that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- At the end of Year 2, 2017 assessment information showed that progress towards the expected standards was at least in line with that of pupils nationally with the same attainment at the end of Reception. This was particularly the case in reading, where the proportion of pupils at greater depth exceeded the national average. In writing and mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth was below national averages when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment.
- In 2017, a very large proportion of pupils were assessed as meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. This was well above the national average. The proportion of children assessed as having a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was in line with the national average.
- The school's internal assessment information, supported by the work in pupils' books, shows that pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are making strong progress. Consequently, greater proportions of pupils are on track to meet both the expected and higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current pupils are making equally strong progress in subjects other than English and

mathematics. An engaging curriculum, combined with teachers' strong subject knowledge and high expectations, is leading to pupils making rapid gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding across a wide range of subjects. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

- In Year 1, strong phonics teaching is leading to high proportions of pupils already working at the expected standard for the end of the year. Published results for the phonics screening check are, again, likely to exceed the national average.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Teaching assistants skilfully support pupils. They modify tasks and reshape learning so that it meets pupils' needs. As a result, pupils meet their personal targets and many are catching up with their peers.
- Disadvantaged pupils in the school are making progress which is generally in line with their peers. However, the school's assessment information shows that the vast majority of disadvantaged pupils are working below the expectations for their ages. Leaders and governors recognise that the progress of these pupils should be strengthened further in order for them to catch up with their peers.

Early years provision

Good

- Children typically start school with skills, knowledge and understanding slightly below that expected for their age. They make good progress through both the Nursery and Reception Years. Accordingly, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is in line with that seen nationally. In early learning goals across the curriculum, the proportions of children at the expected standard are in line with national averages, as are the proportions exceeding expectations.
- Adults foster relationships which are warm and supportive. They use their in-depth knowledge of the children to plan interesting and exciting activities which engage children and encourage them to be inquisitive. As a result, children are confident and keen to explore new learning.
- Across the early years, leaders have created stimulating environments, both inside and outside, where there is always something for children to discover. During the inspection, children in Nursery were enjoying the role-play area, which was set up as a doctor's surgery. They were highly articulate in giving their diagnosis and prescribing the inspector with the appropriate medication.
- Leaders are highly skilled at refining provision so it meets children's needs and maximises the acquisition of knowledge and the application of skills. Staff are constantly evaluating and reflecting upon their practice and how it affects pupils' levels of engagement and, consequently, their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants display strong subject knowledge across the areas of learning. This is particularly evident in the teaching of phonics, which is extremely effective. Children are confident in their knowledge of individual sounds and blends. They are able to apply these skills in reading and writing activities.
- Adults lead enquiry skilfully and ask probing questions to deepen children's understanding and develop language. For example, during the inspection children had

made their own slime. Adults were asking children to explain what they had been doing, as well as encouraging them to use a range of words such as 'sticky', 'slimy' and 'squelchy' to describe the slime.

- Children's behaviour is good. They listen attentively to adults and to their peers. Children play collaboratively, sharing resources and waiting their turn patiently. When engaging in activities, children display high levels of resilience and concentration. They stick to a task and see it through to its completion.
- The school views parents as active partners. Staff regularly 'tweet' pictures and information about children's learning. This is effective in celebrating children's successes and keeping parents informed. Parents appreciate this involvement and talk very positively about the start their children make in their schooling. One parent stated: 'My child comes home from school enthusiastic about her day and telling me all about the things they have been learning. She has come on so much since starting and I can't believe how quickly she has learned to read... I couldn't have asked for a better start to school life.'
- Safeguarding practices in the early years are effective. There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	133560
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10048248

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Walder
Headteacher	James Geen
Telephone number	01823 430831
Website	www.cotfordstlukeprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@cotfordstlukeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 June 2016

Information about this school

- Cotford St Luke Primary School is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in a variety of single- and mixed-age classes.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well below the national average.
- The school is a member of the Tone Valley Partnership. This is a collaborative partnership consisting of a number of local primary schools and the local secondary school.

- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the spending of pupil premium funding on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning. A number of these visits were carried out jointly with school leaders.
- Discussions were held with school leaders, staff, members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and two representatives from the local authority. The inspectors also took into account responses to questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's evaluation of its own performance, its improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. They also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to seek their views and listened to a selection of them read. An inspector also attended a whole-school assembly led by the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of 63 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including a number of free-text responses. They also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonathan Dyer, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jo Briscoombe	Ofsted Inspector
Maddy Kent	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018