

Cobourg Primary School

Cobourg Road, London SE5 0JD

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2018

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not secured consistently good teaching. As a result, pupils' progress in key stages 1 and 2 is too variable, particularly in reading, spelling and mathematics.
- Leaders and managers have not focused sharply enough on the areas requiring priority attention.
- Leaders and teachers do not take sufficient account of pupils' starting points when tracking their progress and when planning work.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough. They do not always provide sufficient levels of challenge for pupils in reading, mathematics and the wider curriculum. This limits pupils' progress, which has fallen in the last three years and on occasion contributes to a decline in pupils' behaviour.
- The most able pupils are not set tasks that consistently stretch them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' advice and use of assessment information is inconsistent. This means that pupils do not know precisely what to do to improve their work.
- Although improving, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is not as strong as it should be. This is also the case for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Some do not attend regularly enough.
- Too few children make good progress in the early years, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, they are not well prepared for Year 1.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and senior leaders are united in their aim to strengthen the progress of pupils of all abilities.
- Governors demonstrate strong determination and commitment to their roles. They have a good understanding of the school's work and they have recently navigated the school through difficult changes.
- Governors and leaders have created a caring and inclusive community. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Parents value the approachability of staff.
- Pupils appreciate the rich variety of extra-curricular clubs, trips and visits that the school offers. This is particularly the case for the music and sports provision across key stages.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - consistently planning activities which closely match the abilities and prior attainment of pupils, particularly the most able
 - developing the use of questioning to deepen pupils' understanding
 - using time effectively within lessons to identify and address pupils' misconceptions
 - ensuring that teachers provide pupils with clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work
 - ensuring that good-quality work and standards of presentation are sustained by pupils across subjects
 - ensuring that all children are provided with suitable and challenging learning activities in early years.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching of reading and mathematics by:
 - fostering mathematical fluency and confidence by developing pupils' abilities to rapidly recall and apply basic number facts
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and understanding in mathematical reasoning and problem-solving.
 - developing clear links between the teaching of phonics and developing fluency in reading
 - sharpening the use of questioning and feedback to deepen pupils' reading comprehension.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - refining the school's improvement planning, ensuring that the correct priorities are identified and tackled robustly
 - eradicating the inconsistencies in teaching and learning across key stages 1 and 2
 - supporting teachers' understanding and use of assessment information to maximise pupils' progress
 - implementing plans to accelerate the progress of children in the early years, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Sharpen the evaluation of actions to improve pupils' attendance and reduce persistent absence, particularly for SEN support pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because senior leaders' actions have not yet secured consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The school's self-evaluation does not focus sharply enough on pupils' progress. Priorities in the school development plan are now appropriate. However, the targets in the plan do not have clear outcomes so that senior leaders can judge how well they have been met.
- Leaders have improved systems to track pupils' progress. However, leaders do not always use this assessment information to identify where teaching is less effective. This results in inconsistencies in some year groups.
- Leaders have ensured that pupil premium funding has been used effectively. They have accurately evaluated whether funded initiatives have had a positive impact on the progress that disadvantaged pupils make.
- There have been significant changes to senior and middle leadership since September 2017, which have added much-needed capacity to the leadership team. However, as yet, it is too soon to see the impact of some of the actions and initiatives designed to bring about school improvement.
- Senior leaders receive effective support from the local authority school improvement advisers and they have linked the school with a local good school. This collaboration is resulting in improvements across the school. However, it is too soon to measure the full impact.
- Teachers appreciate the training they receive from senior leaders. They value the opportunities they have to share good practice. Leaders set them clear development targets that link closely to their training.
- Governors, leaders and teachers are all committed to maintaining the inclusive nature of the school, which welcomes pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has been reorganised. The additional funding is used to identify pupils' needs early and provide appropriate support. As yet, SEN pupils' progress remains limited.
- Leaders make effective use of the physical education and sports premium. Most pupils are able to participate in competitive sports events and they are positive about the range of sporting activities available at the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The values and ethos of the school, 'respect, excellence and unity', underpin assembly themes and school life. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to listen and support each other at breaktimes and lunchtimes. This is reflected in the caring attitudes shown by most pupils.
- Links between the school and parents and carers are well established. The majority of parents who responded to the online survey Parent View were positive about the school and the care and attention that their children receive. One parent summarised

the strength of the school: 'Cobourg is a welcoming environment with a visible new headteacher.'

Governance of the school

- Despite the many challenges the school has faced in recent years, the governors remain resolutely committed to improving the school further. They bring a wide range of expertise, which enables the governing body to provide support and challenge to school leaders.
- Since the previous inspection, together with the local authority, governors have worked hard to maintain good leadership during a time of considerable turbulence. They are effective in supporting and holding leaders to account.
- Governors ensure that systems are in place to manage the performance of the headteacher. Members are fully aware of their statutory responsibilities and are actively involved in the school. They are aspirational for the school.
- Governors ensure that funds for pupil premium and sports premium are used effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are in line with statutory guidance. Staff training is up to date and staff receive regular safeguarding updates. Leaders and staff are vigilant about child protection matters and understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They deal with any safeguarding concerns in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Leaders and staff ensure that all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, are well cared for and protected. Parents who completed the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, confirmed this. Pupils say that they feel safe at the school and they know who to approach if they have a concern or are upset.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress from their starting points. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low and work is not consistently well matched to pupils' abilities. Too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, especially the most able.
- The use of assessment is variable, between and within subjects. Teachers do not consistently use assessment information effectively in their lesson planning. This is particularly the case in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not check carefully enough to see whether pupils are falling behind or finding the work too easy. Pupils' misconceptions are not addressed rapidly and too often pupils have to wait for further direction.

- Pupils are not challenged to think deeply in mathematics. They are insufficiently fluent in calculation. They are not given enough opportunities to use and apply their skills, such as to solve problems.
- Pupils' books give a mixed picture of the progress they make, reflecting the uneven quality of teaching. In some books in both key stages, pupils repeat the same mistakes in spelling and grammar because they have not been routinely corrected.
- The recent decline in the proportion of Year 1 pupils who met the expected standard in the national phonics screening check reflects some weaknesses in the teaching of phonics. Teachers do not make the most of the wide range of learning activities and resources available for the teaching of phonics. However, there is evidence of good phonics teaching in year 2. Here, the pupils' starting points were taken into account, and pupils learned to blend, segment and apply their skills. However, this was not typical of the phonics teaching across the school.
- Some good teaching was seen in different subjects and year groups. For example, Year 6 pupils were asked probing questions, which caused them to explain their understanding of a challenging text, and they responded with confidence. Pupils' reading records indicate that they are encouraged to read widely and often in school and at home.
- There is broader evidence of improvement in teaching as a result of co-planning in subjects including mathematics. This contributes to greater consistency in teaching across classes in the year group.
- The relationships between teachers and pupils are usually very warm and supportive. Most pupils now show positive attitudes towards learning and want to do well. Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel well cared for and safe. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, confirmed this. Pupils know who to speak to if they have any concerns.
- Assemblies challenge pupils' thinking, and pupils make representations on topics that demonstrate care and support for each other. For example, the theme of respect and responsibility is used to reinforce values in all aspects of the school.
- Leaders have provided pupils with strong anti-bullying guidance; the impact of this is shown by pupils' awareness of the various types of bullying. They say that bullying happens sometimes but that adults deal with it swiftly.
- The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Representatives from each class are on the school council and they actively contribute to school improvement.
- Pupils have the opportunity to participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities at the school. These include a number of sporting activities such as football, dance and tennis.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Some pupils are inattentive when the work is not matched well enough to their ability. They sometimes lose concentration and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' attendance has declined and is now below average. A much higher proportion of pupils than nationally are persistently absent, and this is particularly true of those pupils receiving SEN support.
- Records show that pupils' behaviour has improved rapidly since the new headteacher took up her post, with a steep decline in the number of incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils are taught how to be polite and welcoming. They were eager to engage in conversation with the inspectors. Pupils feel that the school is safe and friendly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because their progress is inconsistent and has been in decline in recent years. In 2017, although Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was slightly above average, this represented much less progress from their starting points than should have been expected. Progress was particularly weak in reading and mathematics.
- In 2016 and 2017, disadvantaged pupils' progress was also below national averages for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Over the last three years there has been a slight decline in the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check, although the overall performance remains a little above the national average. This has implications for reading across key stages 1 and 2.
- Current pupils make inconsistent progress across the school. Variations in the quality of teaching mean that pupils make less progress in some classes and subjects. Too few pupils make the progress they should across key stages.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who are supported with an education, health and care plan make slower progress than their peers do. There is some evidence that they are beginning to make progress from their starting points, but it is too soon to measure the full impact. Similarly, disadvantaged pupils and the most able make slower progress than their peers do.
- Leaders are aware that progress is inconsistent across the school and have begun to take action. However, the initiatives they have put in place to bring about improvement have yet to demonstrate impact. In some year groups, the school's own data showed a declining trend over the autumn term of 2017.
- Pupils currently in Year 6 are now making good progress from their starting points in English and mathematics as a result of improvements in provision. Year 6 pupils interact and contribute in lessons and show determination to achieve their best. This is not the case in most other year groups, where progress is slower.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because children do not make the progress of which they are capable. This means that too few are well prepared for the next stage in their education when they enter Year 1.
- Leaders' assessment systems to track and analyse children's progress are not used effectively to plan for progression.
- Teachers' expectations in Reception are too low. Work in books and 'scrap books' suggests that there are weaknesses in the writing and mathematics provision as well as in phonics.
- The quality of teaching in the Nursery, however, is generally good. Staff have good subject knowledge and plan effectively. This encourages children to be curious, to explore the world around them and to apply their skills across all areas of learning. However, there are times when adults do not encourage children to participate and maximise their learning. This leads to off-task behaviour and loss of interest, and the pace of learning slows down.
- In the Nursery, children who have SEN and/or disabilities, disadvantaged children and the most able make progress because of the support and challenge they receive. In contrast, children who have SEN and/or disabilities, disadvantaged children and the most able in the Reception classes make very slow progress. This is because teaching does not take into account their varied starting points.
- The outdoor provision for the Nursery is exciting. This is because adults take time to set out challenging activities that enable children to explore, be curious and learn. The same cannot be said about the Reception section of the same outdoor garden, where resources are less engaging.
- There is effective provision for children's personal, social and emotional development. Leaders have established effective routines so that children know what is expected of them.
- Parents value the good lines of communication and are positive about their children's start at school. Indoors and outdoors, learning spaces are safe.

School details

Unique reference number	100782
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10047640

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	437
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Olayinka Ewuola
Headteacher	Karen McBride
Telephone number	020 7703 2583
Website	www.cobourg.southwark.sch.uk
Email address	office@cobourg.southwark.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2017.
- The majority of pupils come from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is high.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- A larger than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at usual times.
- The governing body manages a breakfast club and after-school club on the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 36 lessons, accompanied by the headteacher and deputy headteachers.
- The inspectors held meetings with governors, representatives of the local authority and school staff, including the headteacher and subject leaders.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and safety, attendance and punctuality, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- The inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work alongside the headteacher and the deputy headteachers.
- Discussions were held with pupils and support staff members. The inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 34 parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke with 20 parents informally at the school gates. There were 27 staff survey responses. No pupil survey responses were received.

Inspection team

Maureen Okoye, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Warner	Ofsted Inspector
James Hollinsley	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