



# Coalway Community Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 115551  
**Local Authority** Gloucestershire  
**Inspection number** 290254  
**Inspection date** 9 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Lorna Brackstone

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Coalway Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Coleford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7		GL16 7HL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01594 833457
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	155	<b>Fax number</b>	01594 836488
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Kathy Russell
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Fiona Hamilton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This average-sized infant school is situated in the Forest of Dean. The low numbers claiming free school meals does not fully represent the socio-economic status of the area which is below average. Most pupils are White British and a few are from other ethnic backgrounds. There are no pupils who use English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is slightly above the national average. There is a wide spread of individual attainment on entry. Taken overall, children's skills are below the level expected when they start in the Reception Year.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which many parents would 'highly recommend'. It ensures that pupils' achievement is exceptional and that standards are extremely high by the end of Year 2. It prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

The secret of the school's success is the highly effective leadership and management. The headteacher's leadership is inspirational. She demands the very best deal for pupils at all times and is supported by an extremely competent senior management team. The excellent teamwork throughout the school ensures that pupils receive outstanding care, guidance and support in all aspects of school life. Staff know the pupils extremely well. Positive relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils ensure that the school environment is highly supportive of learning.

The school has established the highest quality systems for tracking the progress of each pupil throughout their journey in school. Based on an excellent understanding of exactly where each pupil is in their learning, pupils are set very challenging targets for achievement. The pupils are very clear about what they must do to improve their work. One of the outstanding features of the overall good quality of teaching is the very effective deployment of teaching assistants. This leads to excellent support for specific individuals or groups who have been identified for additional help. The best teaching is where teachers take chances and this heightens the pupils' engagement in their learning.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning because classrooms are stimulating and their very high quality work is celebrated. One parent echoed the views of many by explaining that her child 'can't wait to go to school each morning' and 'this makes it very easy when your child loves school'.

The curriculum is excellent and ensures that the pupils are taught in a way that helps them make links between the work in different subjects. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they contribute extremely well to their own school community and that of the wider world. High quality links with the junior school and other outside groups also enhance their academic learning and personal development. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. They know, for example, that they need regular exercise and a balanced diet.

The quality and standards in the Reception Year are good. The school's self-evaluation is very thorough but the school is modest about its significant strengths. This is because it is continually striving to improve. Teachers already understand that they need to develop systems to share best practice to build on the strengths and make the school even more effective.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Share examples of the most exciting and interesting teaching amongst all teaching staff so that learning consistently captivates and motivates pupil interest.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Children get off to a flying start in the Reception classes where they achieve well in all areas of learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children have attained the expected levels for their age.

Good progress is maintained in Year 1 and accelerates in Year 2. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, standards are extremely high in reading, writing and mathematics. By this point, pupils' overall achievement in relation to their below average starting points is outstanding. Standards are also high in many other subjects such as science, information and communication technology and design and technology. Pupils do well in these other subjects because they are given good opportunities to use their high quality basic skills across the curriculum.

The school has correctly identified that boys did not move on as quickly as girls in the past. Since introducing some new topics and resources that are more suited to the interests of boys, a significant improvement in their standards has been already recorded.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are remarkably well prepared for the next stage of their education with academic and personal skills and attributes that will stand them in good stead in the future. They are very keen and eager to learn and enjoy school tremendously. Excellent spiritual development enables the pupils to think reflectively, for example about special people and the wonders of nature. Pupils' good knowledge of other cultures is well developed through international themes and arts events. Outstanding moral and social development ensures that the pupils know the difference between right and wrong and play together very well.

Pupils contribute with real confidence to their own community through the school council and to the wider world through fund-raising events and links with the local church. Because of childhood illnesses and family holidays during term time, the attendance rate is only average. The school does all that it can to discourage parents from taking their children out of school in this way.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The consistently good teaching is reinforced with some aspects of outstanding practice. This is particularly noticeable in Year 2 where very challenging targets are set for individual pupils and this results in excellent achievement. Teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of the young children in their care and use successful methods to engage and encourage them in their learning. Rigorous checking systems ensure that work is extremely well matched to all of the pupils' needs. The very efficient deployment of teaching assistants helps to ensure that the needs of individuals and groups are met. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can do and how they should behave. As a result, there is a good pace to lessons and this promotes effective learning. The most successful lessons are when teachers inspire the pupils to link their learning with everyday life.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is based on interesting topics which helps the pupils make excellent academic progress and contributes well to their personal development. There is a very strong focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy which are used well to promote learning in other subjects. For example, pupils record instructions for food and design technology during literacy sessions and this helps them to make links in their learning.

Effective measures have been introduced to ensure that boys do as well as girls. For example, boys have taken a greater interest in learning since topics such as 'pirates' and 'famous explorers' have been introduced. The excellent range of clubs for the older pupils adds much to their enjoyment of school. For example, pupils learn to speak a foreign language, play musical instruments or discover how to observe birds at 'Tiny Twitchers'. During special events, there are good opportunities provided for pupils to learn through participation in activities such as Indian dancing and African drumming, all of which broaden their horizons.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The school keeps a sharp eye on its pupils. They are each known extremely well by the staff, both in personal and academic terms. The procedures for keeping pupils safe and secure are very good and ensure that they feel comfortable and well looked after. One parent commented that her son 'likened school to home, only bigger! What more can I say?'.

Pupils have no hesitation in seeking the advice of adults. Individuals with learning difficulties are given a high level of care and support and this ensures that they thrive.

The tracking of pupils' progress is exceptionally detailed. This information is used very well to provide an accurate and consistent level of support and guidance. Group targets are used very well in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. As a result, pupils speak confidently about what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and senior managers provide excellent leadership. They very successfully focus on ensuring that pupils achieve their best, academically and personally. A very thorough system of self-evaluation ensures that managers have a clear view of the strengths of the school and areas for development. However, although the staff evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through detailed analysis of the pupils' progress and by work sampling, there is no regular monitoring of best practice. This means that the most lively and exciting teaching is not shared throughout the school.

Governors prudently manage the school's finances to ensure that staffing levels are maintained despite budget cuts. Using the good information provided by the headteacher, they help to move the school forward. The school has made exceptionally good progress since the last inspection and has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. It was very interesting seeing you at work in your classrooms. I really enjoyed watching you at work and play. I would like to say a special thanks to the group of pupils I met who told me all about life at Coalway Infant School.

Your school provides you with an excellent education. You feel safe and cared for because the school looks after you extremely well and gives you the highest quality support with your learning. You make outstanding progress and, by Year 2, reach standards that are exceptionally high. You behave exceptionally well and enjoy your learning because teaching is good and the curriculum is very interesting.

You are proud of all the after-school activities you are involved in and particularly enjoy the visits out of school which help you learn more about the wider world. I was very impressed with your extremely detailed knowledge about keeping fit and healthy.

The adults in charge of the school are leading and managing the school exceptionally well. Your headteacher is very determined to always give you the very best education.

I have asked the school just to do a little more to try to make sure that your teachers share the very best ways of teaching.

Once again thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Coalway Infants remains an outstanding school.