

Coberley CE VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115617
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326232
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2009
Reporting inspector	David Curtis
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cliff Pooley
Headteacher	Andrea Mills
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited ten lessons, and held meetings with governors, pupils and staff. He observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, the school development plan, safeguarding policies and the 19 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- standards in science
- how well pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
- the quality of the curriculum and its impact on standards in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Information about the school

This is a very small primary school, with mixed-age classes. Very few pupils live in the village. Most come from the surrounding area, including Cheltenham. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, mostly with behavioural, social and emotional needs, is above the national average. The headteacher has been in post since September 2007.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

At the heart of the school's success are the vision, drive and determination of the headteacher, with the full support of staff and governors, to provide pupils with the best possible education. The emphasis on high academic standards is paramount but is balanced by an equal desire to ensure that pupils are prepared to be citizens of tomorrow. Outstanding teaching is a significant factor in children's excellent progress from the day they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This excellent progress continues from Year 1 through to Year 6 so that by the time they leave the school, standards are high in English, mathematics and science. In science, pupils in Years 4 and 5 have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the skeleton, its function and the names of bones. In Year 6, pupils make excellent use of numeracy skills in recording the results of scientific investigations. A significant feature of pupils' work is their excellent use of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 used data-handling skills exceptionally well when carrying out a survey of healthy lunches. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, art and design, history and geography are well above expectations. Pupils' use of ICT skills, including desktop publishing and multimedia presentations, are particularly impressive.

The school provides excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties, with the result that many make outstanding progress and reach nationally expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers work in close partnership with highly skilled teaching assistants to provide high quality individual support programmes as well as ensuring that pupils play a full part in all lessons. The school makes excellent use of ICT in tracking pupils' progress and in taking swift and immediate action to support those who may be in danger of falling behind. Pupils know their next steps in learning as the result of effective marking and good quality oral feedback from teachers. Pupils know their targets and the steps required to reach the next level in their own performance. In discussion, Year 6 pupils replied unanimously that the thing they will miss most when leaving Coberley is, 'Our teachers'.

The school is full of bright, cheerful and very polite young people. They readily engage in conversation and take great delight in talking about their school. In lessons, they often burst to answer questions and show great enthusiasm and willingness to contribute. For example, in Years 4 and 5 everyone wanted desperately to perform their play scripts, with stage directions, to the rest of their class. Pupils work exceptionally well whether independently, in pairs or in small

groups. Their enjoyment is infectious. Behaviour is excellent and their outstanding attendance and punctuality reflect their desire to be in school.

School self-evaluation is accurate, although a little conservative. The school improvement plan is driven by rigorous analysis of its own performance. Targets set for improvement are challenging and focus on raising pupils' performance. The shared commitment and desire to succeed reflect the school's outstanding capacity for future improvement. Governors are supportive and challenging and use their expertise effectively in working in very close partnership with the headteacher and staff. Whilst they are aware of the need to develop the school's links nationally, they have not carried out an audit of their provision. As a result, pupils' knowledge of and engagement in life in a multicultural society is limited and restricts the multicultural aspect of their otherwise excellent spiritual, moral and social development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom through developing links with other schools and institutions that have greater ethnic diversity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Outcomes are outstanding. Standards are high, as is shown in National Curriculum tests and assessments over recent years and by evidence from pupils' current work. A key strength is pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, particularly in their high levels of concentration and perseverance. Pupils want to succeed and respond exceptionally well to teachers' effective and challenging questions. In most lessons, boys and girls, including those with learning difficulties, are bursting to contribute. The quality of pupils' responses shows excellent speaking and listening skills and reflective thinking. For example, in a religious education lesson about baptism in Years 5 and 6, pupils' understanding of the notion of being 'inwardly clean' was exceptionally mature. In a French lesson for the same class, pupils made excellent progress in learning to read in French. They were captivated by their teacher's performance on video where she spoke in French and they were motivated to match her spoken sentences to those written on cards.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Their enjoyment of and participation in sport is a striking feature of their enthusiasm for school, including the daily 'wake and shake' session. Pupils feel safe in school and know that teachers will help and support them with any concerns or worries. The whole school sits as a 'school council' and each pupil's contribution is highly valued. The school council is currently very proactive in contributing ideas to the school's forthcoming 150th Anniversary, which will be a major event in the village and local community.

Currently pupils in Year 6 are designing leaflets to promote their school in the community as part of a unit of work where they combine literacy and ICT skills. Interestingly, a number of them, with no prompting by an adult, used 'Every Child

Matters' as a sub-heading in their front covers. Such an input reflects pupils' understanding that as individuals they do matter in their school. Pupils in Year 6 take their additional responsibilities seriously, especially their role as 'Play Leaders' where they organise and manage playing games with younger pupils at lunchtime.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

How effective is the provision?

High quality teaching engages and motivates pupils, with the result that they make excellent progress and achieve high standards in many subjects. Teachers' relationships with pupils are excellent and they have very high expectations in relation to behaviour. High standards of presentation are the norm across the school. Teachers are skilled at using ICT to support pupils' learning, both in preparing lessons and in the use of interactive whiteboards as a tool for introducing new learning and demonstrating skills and techniques. Teachers are very proactive in encouraging discussion and in successfully engaging all pupils in wanting to make a contribution. Pupils are very confident about the support they receive. As one said, 'If you get stuck or don't understand something, teachers will always help you.' Teaching assistants are used very effectively in lessons, especially in supporting pupils with learning difficulties. They are highly skilled in endeavouring to ensure that pupils are included fully in all lessons, but are also sensitive to those pupils who occasionally need the benefit of closer one-to-one support.

The curriculum is good and very effective in providing pupils with many opportunities to use and apply key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. It is adapted successfully to meet individual needs. Extra-curricular provision is very good for a school of this size, with a high number of pupils taking part in lunchtime and/or after-school clubs. The curriculum is enriched through French, a high take-up of

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

peripatetic music lessons, and every child, over the school year, taking part in a lunchtime cookery club where they make vegetable soup and scones. The inspector can personally vouch for the high quality scones! The very small hall restricts the development of pupils' gymnastic skills. The school's personal, social and health education programme has a positive impact on the outstanding outcomes for pupils. Currently, the curriculum does not promote pupils' understanding of life in multicultural Britain sufficiently well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's outstanding leadership and vision are instrumental in creating a staff team united behind her in driving school improvement. Since her appointment, staff have embraced ICT as a powerful tool in both their teaching and in how they track and improve progress, especially for individual pupils. The needs of every pupil are at the centre of the school's work and it is very effective in supporting those who have learning difficulties. The headteacher is imaginative and creative, especially in effective budget management, so that teaching groups in the school are varied over the week. The commitment to teach pupils in Year 6 as a separate group at times during the week has a significant impact on their high standards.

Governors are hard working and very supportive. They take their monitoring roles seriously and provide constructive feedback following their visits to the school. They challenge the school and are aware of areas of relative underperformance. Governors ensure the school works closely with the local community, including the church. However, they have not been sufficiently challenging of the school in relation to its links with the wider ethnic diversity of communities within the United Kingdom.

The school works hard to promote links with parents, being especially conscious of the fact that most families come from outside the village. Procedures for children starting the Early Years Foundation Stage are effective and appreciated by parents. The school works hard to welcome parents whose children join the school later during their school career.

The school complies fully with all statutory responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding its pupils. It has excellent links with a wide range of outside agencies in order to support vulnerable pupils, especially those with learning difficulties.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition	1
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and driving improvement	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

With very small year groups, there are significant year-on-year variations in children's attainment when they start school. Based on their individual starting points, outcomes for children are excellent. By the time they start Year 1, they meet or exceed expected standards in all six areas of learning. Children are happy, confident and enthusiastic learners. They enjoy being in a class with their fellow Year 1 classmates and are very much part of the school family. Progress in key skills is excellent because of outstanding teaching. The class teacher and the highly skilled teaching assistant work as a very effective team to meet children's needs. Planning fully embraces the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Children receive a very good balance of adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. Currently, they are learning about 'minibeasts' and, in an outdoor learning activity, a group said, 'We are going to make a camper van to take our minibeasts on holiday.' Children know that spiders are arachnids and not insects, and that insects have six legs, an abdomen and a thorax. Day-to-day assessment is excellent, with planning adapted to meet the needs of children as the result of tracking and monitoring their progress. Leadership and management are excellent. There are strengths in providing children with their full entitlement to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum within a mixed-age class. Staff willingly embrace in-service professional development, including recent training to underpin their expertise in judging children's outcomes against the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Most parents are supportive of the school, particularly in the way it motivates their children and engages their enthusiasm. One parent wrote, 'This is an excellent school, fantastic teaching and well run. I am a happy parent.' Another wrote, 'Coberley is a truly unique school where every child and parent matters.' A small number of parents expressed individual concerns about aspects of the school, but there was no pattern or trend. The inspector found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns, although these were summarised and reported to the school without identifying any individual.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Coberley CE VC Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspector received 19 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 42 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	6	0	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



23 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coberley Primary School, Coberley GL53 9QZ

Thank you so much for the very warm welcome I received at your school. I must say a special thank you to Class 1 for their 'Show and Tell' where I saw all the wonderful things they do. Equally, I must thank Year 6 for giving up part of their lunchtime to give me their thoughts and views of the school. I am delighted to tell you that you go to an outstanding school. There are so many things that are brilliant in your school that I cannot mention them all, but these are the ones that really stand out:

- You make excellent progress in your learning and reach high standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT, RE, art and design, geography and history.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You enjoy lessons and value the help and support teachers give you.
- You really enjoy taking part in the many clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants help you to feel safe in school and support you if you have worries or concerns.
- Your headteacher and teachers are determined to give you the best possible education.

While your school is outstanding, inspectors always encourage schools to try to be even better. From my findings, I have asked the school to:

- Give you a greater understanding of schools and communities in the United Kingdom which have a wide range of pupils from other cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

I really enjoyed my two days with you and being part of your fantastic school. I wish I could have stayed longer. I know that you will continue to work hard and enjoy all the activities your school offers you.

Yours faithfully

David Curtis
Lead inspector

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