

# Corby Old Village Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	121808
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380326
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	139
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jim Wade
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	High Street Corby Northampton NN17 1UU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 202359
<b>Fax number</b>	01536 202359
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons; two of these in partnership with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher. In total, seven teachers were observed. The inspector heard pupils read and spoke with them about their reading. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body. Planning documents and school tracking data were analysed. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at: documents concerning safeguarding and child protection; the most recent school improvement plan; records of teaching observations; headteacher reports to the governing body; and the reports written by the school's external adviser. Questionnaires were analysed from 51 parents and carers and those completed by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

This school is much smaller than most schools of its type. A very large majority of the pupils come from families of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above that found nationally, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Children are taught in six classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class, with children in Years 1 and 2 taught in separate classes. There is a class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, another for pupils who are in Years 4 and 5 and one class for pupils in Year 6. There have been several changes in staff since the previous inspection, including the appointment of the current headteacher. Since the beginning of the academic year, in addition to leading this school the headteacher works part of the time as an executive headteacher for another local school.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school which is much appreciated by parents and carers. It is improving with many outstanding features. Exceptionally good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins pupils' exemplary behaviour. Pupils great enjoyment of learning is reflected in their above average levels of attendance.
- Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, the school successfully meets its key aim to provide all pupils with an excellent curriculum which is exciting, relevant and creative. The themes chosen to focus the curriculum are engaging and provide rich experiences and interesting tasks. There is always something to engage learners of all abilities and aptitudes and this generates positive attitudes to learning.
- All groups of pupils, regardless of their starting points or differences in their backgrounds, achieve well in English and mathematics. They make good use of their key literacy, mathematical and technology skills in other subjects.
- The school has successfully focused on improving the quality of teaching. Good and often outstanding teaching ensures pupils make good progress. Some teaching of reading results in pupils making exceptional progress in a short space of time. Assessments are regular and effective, and lively teaching is linked to the very well adapted curriculum. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Staff have high expectations of themselves and their pupils, although they do not systematically share the very best practice evident in the school.
- The very effective headteacher is supported well by senior and other staff and members of the governing body. Leadership and management are widely shared and focused well on evaluating the work of the school accurately. As a result, the priorities in the school development plan focus rightly on the most important areas for improvement for the school.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more teaching is outstanding in order to further raise achievement by:
  - continuing to share the best practice in the school.
  - using on-going teacher assessment in lessons and pupils' self-evaluation of their understanding to confirm their learning and, if necessary adjust lesson planning.
  - ensuring pupils have time to respond to the comments made in their books when teachers mark their work.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

The school systematically improves the quality of learning through effective monitoring and checking of pupils' progress which is at least good in the majority of lessons. Accurate tracking ensures that those pupils who are not achieving as well as expected are identified quickly and appropriate support provided. Positive action to increase the richness of curricula experiences is increasing pupils' enjoyment and boosting achievement, particularly in their writing. In lessons, pupils listen well, take turns, speak confidently and enthusiastically, and they help each other to clarify their ideas and thinking. The school is extremely successful in promoting an interest in reading and in books. Pupils read with increasing accuracy and expression as they progress through the school. Pupils who struggle to decode words understand the phonetic principles they need to apply. All groups of pupils make at least good progress to reach above average attainment in their reading by the end of Year 6.

Most children join the Reception class with levels below those expected for their age. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage support children well by providing a rich range of high quality activities. The variety of these enjoyable activities challenges children's thinking and fosters active learning which enables them to make good progress overall. They join Year 1 with emerging strengths in communication, language and literacy and aspects of numeracy. Children settle quickly and happily in the warm, friendly atmosphere in the Reception class and develop an eagerness to learn. This is because of the high quality relationships the children enjoy with adults. At this early age, the school successfully instils in children a clear sense of values, self-belief and above all, a desire to learn.

Pupils make good progress in mathematics, reading and writing during Key Stage 1. This good progress continues during Key Stage 2 so that at the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics, with increasing numbers reaching the higher level 5 in English. Assessment information is used well to provide targeted support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Adults'

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good knowledge of individuals and their learning needs ensures all pupils make good progress. Outstanding practice in using more active and engaging teaching styles is being identified and this needs to be shared more across the school. Lesson observations during the inspection confirmed parents' and carers' positive views regarding their children's achievements.

### **Quality of teaching**

All pupils achieve well over time as a result of good, and sometimes, outstanding teaching. This was evident in lessons and when the inspector looked at pupils' work. Teachers have high expectations and motivate pupils well. This was observed as younger pupils linked their reading and recount of Cinderella to learning how to sequence the writing of the story. Carefully laid out clues and exciting and imaginative resources, ensured high quality work detecting who Cinderella really was. It also helped pupils' reading, communication and information technology skills.

Teachers mostly plan well to meet the varying needs of pupils within their class from the youngest upwards. This is a key factor in the good rates of progress made by different groups of pupils, including those working in mixed-age classes. Outstanding practice was observed where frequent checks made on pupils' learning through on-going teacher assessment in lessons led to lesson plans adjusted, but this is not frequent enough. Other opportunities for outstanding learning are sometimes missed when occasionally, teachers spend too long recapping previous learning or explaining the lesson's tasks before extending pupils' learning. The school's marking policy is well understood by all pupils. Teachers give regular feedback through verbal comments, noting progress towards targets, and marking in books. However, marking is not always as effective as it might be, as pupils are not routinely expected or given the time to respond to these comments.

The inspector found several strengths in all lessons observed. Activities are lively in all classes and quickly gain pupils' attention and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding extremely well. This was especially evident when children in the Reception class, for example, marveled at the branch of a tree frozen in ice. They chipped away to set it free as they learned to take turns and work as a group. The contribution made by teaching assistants, especially but not exclusively, to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is a particular strength. Typically, they promote pupils' learning with supplementary explanations or questions, while avoiding over-directing pupils. The planned curriculum takes account of the interests of the pupils and covers all subjects in a creative manner. Classrooms are bright and inviting, with displays that encourage pupils to look and think about the topics they are studying. A higher than usual percentage of parents and carers returned inspection questionnaires and all agreed that their children were taught well.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour is a significant strength of the school. The coveted 'golden brick' awarded each week by teachers to pupils for personal achievement is greatly appreciated, as is the 'golden brick tea' that is held afterwards. Pupils' excellent attitudes and their calm, sensible and thoughtful behaviour make a strong contribution to the exceptionally good climate for learning in lessons. These attitudes support the accelerating progress being made and the clear improvements in reading. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what might be seen as bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that there is virtually no bullying and any minor bullying that does occur, is dealt with extremely quickly and effectively by the adults. There are no recorded incidents of racism and there have been no permanent exclusions for a significant period of time. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the safe learning environment. They show great care and sensitivity to those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, ensuring that they are fully involved in all activities. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities for helping with the daily organisation, for example helping at lunchtimes or leading games at playtimes. The elected school council ensure that pupils' views are considered, and they play an important role in decision making. This school is at the heart of the village. Pupils enjoy their local heritage work and are fully involved in local events, such as the 'community arts project'. Their attendance is consistently above average and they are always punctual arriving to their lessons. Their enthusiastic attitudes to all learning enable them to take full advantage of a wide range of artistic, sporting, community and cultural activities provided to support their development and well-being. For example, a group of pupils was observed totally committed, practising their dance routines as part of the presentation on Africa they were going to make to the whole school. Pupils, parents and carers correctly agree that pupils are safe. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers speak very highly of behaviour

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership; she is skilled and committed and provides clear direction and ambition for the school. Senior staff and members of the governing body share her high ambitions for the school and there is a realistic appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses. A key strength is the impact of strategic professional staff development on pupils' learning in the classroom. The effective management of teaching and learning, through close and accurate monitoring, helps teachers and teaching assistants to develop their skills. Members of staff at all levels, demonstrate their commitment to improvement in their positive response to this feedback and to school initiatives.

Since her appointment, previous strengths in supporting good learning have been successfully developed and improved by the headteacher. For example, the outstanding curriculum provides a rich range of experiences within which pupils effectively develop their skills. It promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils extremely well because of the breadth of experiences pupils

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have and the focus of staff on encouraging pupils to think more widely. Topics, such as 'Africa', are selected to enrich pupils' understanding of the world around them. Links such as these add interest for pupils and also give them good opportunities to apply their key skills in a variety of topics. The effective use of partnership working is a particular strength. The support the school has recently given to the leadership of a local school in challenging circumstances is an example of this.

The school's extremely positive engagement of parents and carers ensures that they are well-informed about all aspects of school life. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a variety of social settings in the local and wider community and are given every chance to take responsibility in helping shape school decision-making. The way that all groups are valued and nurtured and the close monitoring of the progress of different groups are symptoms of the seriousness with which leaders at all levels promote equality and tackle discrimination. The governing body is increasingly confident and robust about holding the school to account for the outcomes achieved by pupils, by improving its understanding of the pupils' assessment data. The governing body contributes to effective arrangements for safeguarding which meet current requirements with recommended good practice adopted.

Strong leadership at all levels have brought about significant improvement since the school was last inspected. Consequently, achievement has improved with more pupils gaining the higher levels of which they are capable. Pupils' achievement in writing has also improved significantly. This, and the improvements taking place to ensure that all teaching is consistently thought-provoking and challenging, demonstrates that the school's capacity to improve is good



## Glossary

### 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.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



13 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Corby Old Village Primary School, Northampton, NN17 1UU**

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when I visited your school recently. I should like to say a special thank you to all those pupils who read to me, talked with me and showed me their work. I understand why you and your parents and carers value the school so highly. Corby Old Village is a good school, which has a number of strengths. Here are some the many good things I found.

- You behave excellently, your attendance is very good and you work hard and take pride in your work.
- Your teachers have worked hard to give you plenty of interesting things to learn and do.
- You make good progress in your learning and achieve well because the teaching you receive is good.
- Your teachers work well as a team to meet the needs of you all, including those who need extra help to learn.
- Your headteacher and the other staff in charge lead the school well and have made sure it keeps on improving.

In order to make the school even better, I have asked the school to do a few things.

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and learning by sharing their very best ideas more often.
- Make sure all your teachers check your learning carefully during lessons and give you even more opportunities to think about what you are doing well and what you could do next so that they can help you make rapid progress.
- Make sure that you have time to do what your teachers ask you to do through the comments they make in your books.

I hope you will carry on learning and working hard to make your school even better and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely  
Susan Thomas-Pounce  
Lead inspector

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