

Coopers Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	100676
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	376437
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2012
Lead inspector	Sue Rogers

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	499
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Beresford
Headteacher	Steve Davies
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 June 2009
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	19–20 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sue Rogers

Additional inspector

David Hatchett

Additional inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 35 part-lessons, taught by 16 teachers. They also made shorter visits to all classes to look at displays and observe individual pupils and groups at work. At these times, they heard younger pupils read. Inspectors also scrutinised lesson and development planning, talked to pupils and looked at their work. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school leaders. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at safeguarding records, monitoring files on progress and the school development plan. They met with parents and carers at the school gate and analysed survey responses from pupils and staff, as well as 118 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is gradually increasing and now constitutes approximately half the pupil population with Black African, Black Caribbean and Other White backgrounds being the largest groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is average, while the percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is low. There is specialist resource provision at the school for seven pupils with hearing impairment. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. The quality of education provided for all pupils is good and they respond well. The school is not outstanding because, although teaching has improved and is now good, it is not yet outstanding and some inconsistencies remain. While most teachers plan challenging activities for more-able pupils, this is not consistently the case in all lessons. Senior leaders have been successful in improving attainment, but subject leaders are not yet playing a full enough role in improving teaching and learning and accelerating pupils' progress still further.
- The vast majority of pupils are now making good progress in most classes in English and mathematics, and pupils achieve well overall. Progress is satisfactory in Year 1, corresponding with teaching that is satisfactory. At times, some more-able pupils also make progress that is satisfactory rather than good.
- There has been a successful drive to improve teaching and it is now good overall. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are rightly complimentary about their teachers. Teachers' planning is thorough in supporting pupils who are behind with their work or have special needs, including those in the hearing impaired unit.
- Staff have worked effectively to make sure that pupils feel secure. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Pupils from all backgrounds work and play together harmoniously.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and therefore lead the improvement of teaching successfully and manage performance well. While subject leaders are making an increasing contribution, they are not yet targeting improvement sharply enough, and are not sufficiently involved in monitoring, to support senior leaders and accelerate pupils' progress still further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by making sure that planned tasks always challenge more-able pupils sufficiently.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in all subjects, especially in Year 1, by ensuring that subject leaders are:
 - accurately informed about specific areas for development in their subjects
 - more fully involved in implementing and monitoring improvement and setting measurable targets.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the school in both Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are accurately analysed by the staff and shown to be below those expected of typical three- and four-year olds. This is mainly because of the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Most pupils achieve well from their starting points. Consequently, pupils now attain above average scores in national test results in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' progress is not entirely even across the school as it is a little slower in Year 1, where teaching is not always matched to suit pupils' needs. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported, because small group work is effectively planned. Learning and behavioural needs are clearly identified and teaching assistants are well briefed. Pupils from the hearing impaired unit also make good progress, because of well-planned group sessions that are specific to their needs and effective integration into class lessons. Staff are especially successful in utilising resources, such as microphones, to ensure that these pupils can follow the lesson and are fully included. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well. The gap is closing for those known to be eligible for free school meals as they also make good progress. Leaders have been successful in increasing the proportion of pupils who attain the higher Level 5 in Year 6, but less attention is paid to improving the progress of more-able pupils in classes for younger pupils.

Reading and writing have recently improved, as there is a strong emphasis on making sure that younger pupils know their letter sounds (phonics). This has been particularly effective in assisting the small groups of pupils who speak English as an additional language. It helps pupils to gain confidence with the language and enables them to successfully access the full curriculum. These pupils make particularly good progress. The 'Dream Team' of specially trained parents and carers help to make sure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage read regularly and have fun with their books. Consequently, despite the pupils' low starting points, results in reading at the end of Year 2 are average, and by end of Year 6, are above average.

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Results in mathematics have improved, as leaders have developed teachers' understanding of how pupils learn this subject. Learning is now delivered in smaller, more achievable steps. Leaders have also been very successful in improving pupils' involvement in their learning, through a motivating system of target setting. In mathematics, this is based on travel through different continents, and pupils are very keen to reach their targets so they can visit the 'Passport Office' and move on to the next part of the world. As a result, all pupils are very clear about what they have to do to reach the next level in their learning, and want to do well. This is exemplified by one boy who wrote in his book, 'I love my work now as I am improving.' Pupils, and parents and carers, feel that pupils make good progress, and inspection findings fully endorse their views.

Quality of teaching

Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, as teaching is robust in covering what is required. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They make sure that learning is broken up into achievable chunks, and they use effective questioning and demonstration so that pupils understand. For example, in an English lesson in Year 6, pupils were carefully supported in learning to organise information in other, similar, situations before they used persuasive writing to promote their school tuck shop. Pupils were especially enthusiastic as they had been actively involved in applying for posts, and managing the ordering and financing of the shop themselves. This shows how teachers are increasingly making sure that the curriculum helps pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils make good progress in whole-class information and communication technology (ICT) lessons, because of good teaching in the ICT suite. However, they are not given enough opportunities to use computers and practise their ICT skills in other lessons across the curriculum.

Teachers mostly plan carefully in order to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities and needs. This usually includes tasks designed to extend the more-able, although on occasion, these are not sufficiently challenging, or not introduced early enough in the lesson. Teachers invariably check that those pupils who speak English as an additional language or have hearing impairment understand what is wanted. Well-informed teaching assistants are effective in supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and making careful assessment notes on their progress so that teachers can plan suitable work for future lessons. Target setting is effective in ensuring that pupils know the next steps in their learning. Marking has improved since the previous inspection, but is not yet entirely consistent in ensuring that pupils have the necessary opportunities to revisit specific areas identified for improvement.

The school is a cohesive community because of teachers' success in promoting strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the pupils. Their consistent application of school policies ensures that pupils work well together and respect each other. The target-setting process contributes to pupils' self-awareness and sense of achievement. The vast majority of pupils say that they enjoy school and teachers foster good relationships. Pupils are rightly very positive about their teachers and the

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quality of teaching, as are most parents and carers. One parent said, typically, 'My daughter has had the best primary experience that we could wish for. She is always happy to come to school and loves to be there.'

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most parents, carers, and pupils rightly say that behaviour is good over time. The teachers' consistent approach has resulted in pupils who are polite and helpful. Pupils behave very well in lessons, although there is occasional inattention if teachers talk for a long time. Pupils' attendance has improved, thanks to the school's rigorous procedures, and is now average.

Pupils develop well personally because of the school's effective use of whole-school themes. Currently, for instance, they are celebrating personal success by identifying with athletic achievement in the Olympics - 'Striving for Excellence'. There is very little racist behaviour and no homophobic bullying reported. Pupils say that bullying is not common and that any kind of bullying is very swiftly dealt with, and school records confirm this. The pupils also state that they feel very safe at school and are confident that there is always someone they can talk to if they have a problem. This view is supported by parents and carers, and inspection evidence. The teachers make sure that pupils are informed about internet safety before they use the computers.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have successfully raised standards and improved teaching through a sustained focus on teaching skills. There has been well-planned professional development and regular monitoring. Where teaching has been less effective, swift and appropriate action has been taken. The curriculum is currently being revised, but it is already broad and balanced. Pupils especially value the school trips and the wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including, for example, fencing. The curriculum also makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through the promotion of a school motto, 'Always be proud to say that you work and play at Coopers Lane School'.

The school's middle leaders manage their respective areas, namely pastoral care, the use of assessment, the Early Years Foundation Stage, the inclusion of all pupils and the teaching of the hearing impaired unit, effectively. The work of subject leaders, including English and mathematics, is developing. They have played their part in school improvement through supporting colleagues and leading training. However, these leaders do not yet set sufficiently measurable targets or do enough rigorous analysis of pupils' work to identify and improve specific areas of weakness in learning in their subjects. The governing body has improved in its ability to support and challenge the school. They, together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses, and keep careful track of the impact of the school's work. It has ensured that arrangements for safeguarding children, including child-protection policies and procedures, are robust.

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Statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination effectively. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that most pupils achieve well and are largely effective in closing the gap between groups of pupils. The headteacher has pioneered his own national project called 'Dad's Matter' which has been influential in harnessing the skills of the parents and carers to develop cohesion still further. For instance, fathers are encouraged to participate in school life and support pupils' learning by taking on roles such as coaching sport or mentoring pupils. Improvements to date demonstrate that the school has strong capacity to improve still further.

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).

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.

21 March 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Coopers Lane Primary School, London SE12 0LF

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school to carry out our inspection. Thank you also to those of you who filled in questionnaires and special thanks to those of you who gave up time to speak to us. We enjoyed talking to you. It was good to hear how much you like your school and to see how hard you try in your lessons.

Here is what we decided about your school.

- This is a good school and there have been good improvements since the previous inspection.
- Most of you make good progress in your lessons in both English and mathematics. In one or two classes, pupils make satisfactory progress.
- The teaching is good in most classes and you really enjoy your lessons. Sometimes the work is a little too easy for some of you.
- You all behave well and feel very safe at school.
- The headteacher and the senior leaders manage your school well.

Although your school is a good one, we think that you and the teachers could make it still better by:

- making sure that the teaching gets even better to become outstanding because teachers' planning always challenges all pupils, particularly those of you who find learning easier.
- improving pupils' progress still further in all subjects by involving subject leaders more effectively in school improvement.

With best wishes for your continued success

Yours sincerely

Sue Rogers
Lead inspector

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