

Cobden Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107963
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	356272
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Wright
Headteacher	Miss Paula Head
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2008
School address	Cobden Road Leeds West Yorkshire LS12 5LA
Telephone number	0113 214 3567
Fax number	0113 210 9967
Email address	headp01@leedslearning.net

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Inspection number	356272

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 Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed ten lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, parents and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including the school's documents for self-evaluation, the tracking system used to monitor pupils' progress and the work pupils were doing in their books. Inspectors studied the 44 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- Whether standards for Year 6 pupils last year represented part of an upward trend that is continuing into this academic year.
- Additional information about progress in The Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to support the view that learning and progress are good overall.
- Information about pupils' attendance.
- Knowledge held by pupils about the own learning and their understanding about the next steps they need to take.
- The current rate of progress being made by pupils and whether it is good enough given the changes in teaching that have occurred lately.

Information about the school

Cobden is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic heritages or those learning English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below that found nationally.

Since the school's last inspection, it has experienced significant changes in staffing and a period when temporary teachers were employed to cover absences. The number of pupils joining the school partway through their education is higher than is typical nationally. Since its last inspection the school has gained the following nationally recognised awards: advanced Healthy School status and Investors in Pupils.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Cobden is a good school. In the very large majority of cases, pupils learn well and make good progress despite the changes in staff since 2008. Underpinning the school's ability to overcome these potential barriers to learning are the good leadership provided by the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, the energy and commitment of the revitalised governing body and the solid teamwork of the staff. Some parents sum up the school's strengths in a way that echoes the thoughts of pupils and staff: 'We are delighted with Cobden: it is such a happy place and brilliantly run.'

Some aspects of the school are outstanding. Care, guidance and support and the school's rigorous system of safeguarding its pupils are overriding strengths, which lead to pupils feeling extremely safe. The school engages outstandingly with parents and carers in ways that make many agree how 'very supportive and helpful' the school has been for them and their children. The school guides pupils extremely well in how to have a healthy lifestyle, including being stronger emotionally which leaves them more able to cope with life's challenges.

Good teaching ensures that attainment is average by the end of Year 6, which represents good progress. There is a little inconsistency between classes in the quality of teaching and how pupils learn but nothing like the differences caused last year by the significant changes in staff. The school has worked very hard to minimise the effect of these changes on pupils' learning and has succeeded to a great extent.

Leaders and managers have a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. Successful self-evaluation has helped to pinpoint exactly how to raise attainment even further. The school has succeeded in helping pupils relate well to their local community. Collaboration between schools nearby, for example, is beneficial in beginning to broaden their horizons. However, by contrast their understanding of faith and cultural issues at a national and international level is limited. Nevertheless, the quickening of progress in Key Stage 1, some dramatic improvements in attendance, the advances in children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the forthright management of difficult staffing issues demonstrate a good capacity to sustain and improve on the school's good and some outstanding characteristics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further by reducing the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure that all pupils know how to reach the next level of attainment
 - tackling discrepancies in the level of challenge provided for higher attainers.

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

- Provide pupils with at least a good understanding about the diversity of faiths and cultures beyond their local community, at national and international level.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well from starting points that are well below typical levels. Lessons are often joyful and engaging. Sometimes pupils cheer just because they feel so positive about what they are doing and how their teachers are treating them. This is why learning in Key Stage 1 is accelerating faster this year than in the past. Moreover, some pupils in Year 5 loved watching a video of their learning and commenting on how they had tackled certain aspects of it. Finding the perimeter of a shape was never so much fun as when pupils in Year 4 had to work out how to find the length of the chalk line marking out the body of a murder victim.

Sometimes learning and progress are outstanding, but they are predominantly good because pupils' understanding of how to progress to the next level often lacks depth. Moreover, adventurous methods are not always used to fully challenge those who can achieve above-average levels. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well owing to the methods used and the concerted teamwork between teachers and a host of experienced assistants who show the utmost concern for pupils' learning and welfare.

Current standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average. Achievement in the last three years has been predominantly good in Key Stage 2, building on previous satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. However, now learning and progress are good across the school owing to the improvements in teaching that have been introduced. This all the more remarkable given the number of pupils that join the school partway through their education.

The school promotes first-rate personal qualities in the pupils. The school council is very proud of the school and their contribution to it. Behaviour is good. Pupils are rightly proud of how safe they all feel. Levels of attendance have improved dramatically this year because pupils take far fewer holidays in term time. The school has worked very well with parents and carers in this respect. Pupils know about how to lead healthy lives and try hard to practise what they have learnt. They use their basic skills in English and mathematics well, particularly because the curriculum offers many chances to develop them. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good although pupils' perspective concerning faiths and cultures is limited at a local, national and international level.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching results in smoothly planned lessons that capture pupils' imaginations. Teachers use a variety of well-chosen techniques to develop pupils' skills across the board. For example, each class is equipped with cameras and digital microphones to add variety to the way that ideas are communicated: writing is important but speech is developed carefully as well. Those who need extra help owing to a special need receive good support from well-trained teaching assistants. On the other hand some of the more-able pupils do not learn as rapidly as they might. They are given harder work but occasionally lack the opportunity to practise more challenging skills such as choosing their own means to solve demanding problems.

Assessment conducted by teachers is generally good but pupils' involvement in it is satisfactory. Teachers have a firm knowledge about where pupils are up to in their work. Marking is thorough and leaves pupils with useful tips about necessary improvements. Classrooms are displayed well with prompts in terms of targets and guides for learning. However, since much of the detailed guidance from teachers is relatively new, pupils are not yet fully confident about what they need to do to raise their achievement to the next level.

The curriculum is good in that the promotion of basic skills and personal qualities across a wide range of activities has a positive effect on pupils' achievements. For example, pupils in Year 6 grew in stature during a day devoted to robotics. They learnt a great deal, such

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

as how to work in groups and about electronics in society. Moreover, One World Week allowed pupils a chance to practise Irish dancing and play steel pans. Growing their own vegetables puts pupils in touch with local allotment holders and their methods. The excellent care, guidance and support provided for vulnerable pupils and their families ensure that no one lacks the opportunity to reach their potential.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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 and the acting deputy headteacher lead with a good level of ambition and drive. They have tackled effectively some difficult issues in the last two years with firm resolve. As a result, pupils' learning across the school is back on track, with far fewer variations in their performance. The senior leaders have been helped well by a very supportive governing body and effective middle leaders. Governance is satisfactory in its effect; the new chair and vice chair are wisely upgrading the ways that governors are involved in challenging the school and inducting new colleagues. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and their families receive top-quality care, guidance and support. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils are excellent. For example, risk assessments are very thorough and augmented by the opinion of pupils who are represented by Year 6 safety officers.

The school's welcoming ethos and its positive links within the local community are most beneficial to pupils' development. Moreover, the engagement of parents and carers is excellent. National and international perspectives on faith and culture lack depth, which is why community cohesion is satisfactory and not yet good overall. The school has just made links with an international school in Cambodia, but there has not been time for this project to have had an impact.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall, most children make good progress. Despite ending their Reception year at below expected levels in several aspects such as writing and emotional development, they reach expectations in key areas such as the way they collaborate with others, and the early stages of reading and mathematics.

The new leader has provided a fresh vision for this section of the school. As a result, the close-knit team of staff operates well to discuss how children have learnt and what they might do next. Skilfully, the planning for learning is built up over the week so that staff can respond to children's changing interests and how they are succeeding. First-rate relationships between adults and children generate an ethos of good behaviour and excellent consideration for safety. Some aggressive behaviour by boys in particular prevents behaviour from being outstanding, but adults deal with this in firm and sensitive ways, which helps to maintain the calm atmosphere of learning. Learning flows freely between the classroom spaces and the outside area. Children love the 'discovery wall', which is an outstanding facet of the curriculum. Interesting starting points are displayed, such as the oil leak in Mexico, and children discuss what they would like to do to learn more. In this case, children chose to look closely at how some oil reacted with water while one child actually wrote to Barack Obama.

The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which includes purposeful teaching, leads to interested children who learn well. Overall effectiveness is not yet outstanding, despite some very strong features of planning, assessment and the curriculum because writing and some personal qualities could be even better. Nevertheless, plans for development exist to advance these issues and superb relationships with parents and carers help to provide the bedrock for further improvements.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The inspection questionnaires show that all parents and carers who responded hold positive views with regard to how happy they are about their child's education overall. There are very few negative opinions and any theme emerging from these views is related to the disruption to children's progress that occurred at the height of the staffing changes. Inspectors agree with the positive views and found that in 2009/10 the disruptions did cause a period of slower learning in the lower juniors. However, the school tackled these issues very well and currently learning is good in the vast majority of cases throughout the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cobden Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 193 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	77	10	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	77	10	23	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	70	13	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	77	10	23	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	70	12	27	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	70	12	27	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	70	13	30	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	68	9	20	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	70	13	30	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	66	13	30	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	68	13	30	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	68	14	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	77	10	23	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



19 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cobden Primary School, Leeds, LS12 5LA

Thank you for your help when my colleagues and I visited your school.

We thoroughly enjoyed our two days with you. The 'Well Done' assembly told me a great deal about the interesting things that you do: the One-World Week, day trips to interesting places and robotics' workshops are just some of the events that stick in my memory.

Your questionnaires show how very positive you are, particularly how very safe you feel and how all the adults do such a good job. Those of you to whom we spoke were very positive as well. The pride that you have in the school council and in the pupils acting as safety officers was plain to see.

You go to a good school. Your progress in lessons combined with some excellent features in your personal development, including some first-rate attitudes to leading healthy lives, ensure that you enjoy school a lot. You have all done well to cope with all the recent changes in staff. This has helped the school, so well done.

I know everyone wants to do even better, so I have asked your school to do two things to improve. Your teachers need to iron out any parts of their teaching that prevent learning from being good or outstanding for some pupils. The school also needs to improve your knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures that exist in Britain and in other countries of the world such as Cambodia where one of your former teachers now lives.

Best wishes to you all, especially when you share your joy of school life with others abroad.

Yours sincerely

Mr Roger Gill

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.