

# Cottesbrooke Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103323
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	355363
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	332
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Keith Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Luciana Allsopp
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Yardley Road Birmingham B27 6LG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 16 lessons and saw 14 teachers. Detailed scrutinies of pupils' work in their writing books and topic folders were carried out. Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 66 parents and carers and 15 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which changes in provision have succeeded in raising boys' achievement.
- The extent to which leaders have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and assessment.
- The effectiveness of actions taken by leaders to improve provision since the previous inspection.
- The extent to which staff have been successful in improving children's literacy skills.

## Information about the school

Cottesbrooke is larger than most infant schools. The majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. One third of pupils speak English as an additional language but only a small number are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two part-time Nursery classes and three Reception classes. A Before- and After-School club operates on the school site. This is managed by the school and was observed as part of this inspection.

The school has Enhanced Healthy Schools status and holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Cottesbrooke is a satisfactory school. Children get off to a sound start in The Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle quickly and develop their social skills well. Some opportunities are missed to use assessment to plan next steps in children's learning and to enable them to learn independently. The outdoor area is not utilised fully to extend children's experiences. Attainment in Year 2 has dropped over the last four years and was significantly below average in 2010. Over this time girls have consistently attained better than boys. School data for 2010 shows that both boys and girls in Year 2 made satisfactory progress from their unusually low starting points. Current Year 2 pupils, both girls and boys, are attaining in line with national averages. While this cohort is more able than its predecessors, these pupils have benefited from a literacy programme which is now embedded in the school's work. Participation in a focused initiative to improve numeracy skills has resulted in impressive gains for some Year 2 pupils this year. Overall, outcomes for all groups of pupils are satisfactory and this means Cottesbrooke prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stages of their lives.

Most pupils enjoy school and recognise that they are well cared for. There are evident strengths in their personal development. Pupils respond well to the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles and have a good awareness of how to stay safe, including e-safety. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix well in lessons and at play. They make full use of sports' equipment to exercise vigorously at break-times. Within overall satisfactory teaching there are some weaknesses with regard to the quality of planning, challenge and pace of lessons. Questioning and verbal feedback are not used sharply enough to develop pupils' speaking, listening and thinking skills. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills in separate lessons for literacy and numeracy, but opportunities, for reinforcing and extending these skills through other subjects, are limited.

The school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory. Leaders have tackled the development points identified in the last inspection report, but the impact of actions taken has been uneven. Changes to the leadership team are in progress and the monitoring roles and responsibilities of most leaders, including members of the governing body, are not yet fully established. While the school maintains full records of lesson observations, this information is not used purposefully enough to promote best practice. Self-evaluation is more secure in relation to the pastoral, rather than the academic aspects of provision.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment by:

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- ensuring assessment information is used more effectively to plan work which consistently challenges all pupils, especially the more-able
- making better use of questioning and oral feedback to extend pupils' speaking, listening and thinking skills
- ensuring that all lessons move at a brisk pace
- developing further opportunities in other subjects to reinforce and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing expertise and increasing opportunities for leaders other than the headteacher to contribute more purposefully to improving provision
  - using information gained from lesson observations more rigorously to develop good or better practice in teaching
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - extending opportunities for children to learn independently
  - using assessment more consistently to plan the next steps in children's learning
  - making better use of the outside area to broaden children's learning experiences.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Their attainment when they join Year 1 is broadly average, but is a little lower in literacy and numeracy. Over the last three years attainment has been broadly average at the end of Year 2. Attainment has improved this year as pupils have had more opportunities to improve the quality of their sentences through pieces of extended writing. Boys' motivation for writing has improved through the incorporation of more 'boy-friendly' elements into the curriculum. A few more-able pupils are able to think creatively and apply their knowledge well. Sometimes, progress for more-able pupils is restricted when they spend too much time on undemanding tasks. Pupils enjoy opportunities to discuss points with their partners, but occasionally use a limited range of vocabulary to express their ideas. In wider contexts, for example when speaking activities are integrated into their work in information and computer technology, pupils make good progress in developing their speaking skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities working with less-able pupils make satisfactory progress, for example, when drafting their account of their very recent trip to Middleton village.

Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy their opportunities for physical exercise and choose to eat healthily in school as reflected in the school's award. They can explain why it is important not to divulge too much personal information on the internet and understand the purpose of regular fire drills. They are polite and friendly to each other and welcoming to visitors. They are respectful of individual differences and feelings. A large majority understand the consequences of their actions and cooperate readily with each other and adults. Pupils benefit from very diverse opportunities to exercise responsibility, for example as 'office angels' or in setting up playground equipment for break-times. Other pupils act as trained mentors on 'playground patrol.' School councillors have gained a wider perspective on citizenship through discussions with older pupils from other schools. Pupils are active in the local community,

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for example in planting trees to cover graffiti in the park. Attendance rates are broadly average and the vast majority of pupils arrive punctually to school. Overall, pupils' workplace skills are satisfactory due to their average attainment in literacy and numeracy.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teaching is satisfactory but has some strengths. Teachers relate well to their pupils and mostly, manage and encourage them well. They usually make effective links to prior learning and explain learning objectives clearly so that pupils are aware of the purpose of lessons. Teachers draw on pupils' first-hand experiences, such as school trips, to devise interesting contexts for pupils' learning. While planning is clear, expectations for the amount of work pupils, especially the more-able, can cover in the course of lessons are sometimes not high enough. Occasionally, too much time is spent on paired-partner routines or on lesson starters. When pupils do not immediately grasp a concept, opportunities are sometimes missed to re-phrase questions or use visual clues to help them understand. Insufficient use is made of verbal prompts to develop pupils' range of vocabulary and ideas. Consequently, the pace of learning is not always as brisk as it should be. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and successfully adapt their marking format to suit different levels of ability.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed and is adequately matched to pupils' needs. It successfully promotes pupils' personal and social skills. Trips to contrasting localities in the

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neighbouring countryside or seaside are used well to extend pupils' horizons and sense of national community. Pupils achieve less well in subjects other than English and mathematics, as reflected in the quality of their topic work. There is an appropriately wide range of programmes to assist pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and data analysis is now starting to be used more sharply to support their progress. Pupils have ample opportunities through the extra-curricular programme to follow their interests.

The school provides a welcoming and safe environment for its pupils. The circumstances of 'at-risk' pupils are comprehensively documented. These pupils are carefully monitored and helpfully supported, for example through the nurture group, as they move through the year-groups. Effective links are maintained with external agencies to supplement the school's internal support structures. These include the pyramid club, tasked with enhancing the self-esteem of identified pupils. Colleagues in the Before- and After-school Club record observations of children and pupils to share with relevant staff, including in Nursery and Reception. Pupils enjoy the good balance of adult-directed and free choice activities in this club. The school promotes attendance strenuously and has succeeded in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides effective leadership, especially in pastoral matters, and a clear vision for the school's future. The school development plan contains appropriately identified and prioritised areas for improvement. An honest and determined attempt has been made to address weaknesses and to improve provision. Due to current changes in the leadership team this work is ongoing. Currently, much monitoring depends on the headteacher and a few roles are under-developed. Lines of accountability, for example between the responsibilities of subject leaders and those of phase leaders, are not sharply drawn. Targets for pupils' progress are moderately challenging. Governance is satisfactory. Members of the governing body contribute well to the regular review of school policies and the school's good arrangements for safeguarding. Their contribution to the school's self-evaluation processes is limited. The school promotes equalities satisfactorily, as reflected in satisfactory outcomes for all groups of pupils. Very effective contributions from the home-school support worker enable the school to build productive relationships with parents and carers. The school is responsive to the needs of the local community and promotes community cohesion well. The global aspect has been strengthened through initiating an exchange of letters with children in India.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children's starting points vary from year to year but are usually below expectations for their age. Children make steady progress, with good gains in their social development and in their disposition and attitudes towards learning. Staff have implemented a letters and sounds programme; this has reduced but not eliminated the gap which exists between girls and boys in literacy by the end of the Reception year. Children's relationships with adults are positive and trusting. Consequently, they are happy, behave well and settle well into the routines of the day. Parents and carers appreciate the support given for a smooth transition into school. Children understand the need to keep themselves safe and healthy and know why they wash their hands before eating. One child said, 'We need to get rid of the germs or we might get sick.' Children enjoy opportunities to make their own choices throughout the day. However the daily routine involves too much time when children follow instructions in whole-class lessons or in groups, which sometimes limits their exploration, problem-solving and independent learning skills. Children have access to a recently improved safe and secure outdoor area. However, this is not fully utilised to best effect. Teacher's observations of children's activities to plan next steps in their learning are not conducted consistently. However, records are well kept and enable the coordinator to acquire a secure knowledge of trends, strengths and needs and to plan accordingly to develop provision.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was below average. The statistical responses, as reflected in the table below, indicate that most parents and carers have a positive view of the school's effectiveness. Few written contributions were received and these do not reveal any consistent thread of positive or negative comment.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cottesbrooke Infant 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 332 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	50	27	41	6	9	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	50	31	47	1	2	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	39	32	48	8	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	33	37	56	6	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	32	38	58	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	29	41	62	6	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	39	39	59	1	2	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)	17	26	41	62	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	29	40	61	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	21	41	62	5	8	5	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	30	37	56	5	8	4	6
The school is led and managed effectively	19	29	40	61	3	5	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	36	34	52	7	11	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



13 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cottesbrooke Infant School, Birmingham, B27 6LG**

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school recently. This is what we found. Yours is a satisfactory school and there are some good things about it.

The staff care for you well, making sure you are secure and happy in school.

You practise healthy life-styles well and know what to do to keep yourselves and each other safe. You respect and care for each other.

You behave well and enjoy helping each other and the staff by carrying out lots of useful jobs. You are polite and friendly.

When you leave school at the end of Year 2 your attainment is broadly average. Overall, your progress is satisfactory. To raise your attainment and help you learn better, there are some things we have asked the staff to do.

Match activities in lessons more carefully to suit the needs of everyone, especially those of you who find learning easier.

Make sure your lessons move at a faster pace. Question you better to improve your speaking, listening and thinking skills.

Give you more chances to improve your skills in other subjects.

Make sure leaders, other than the headteacher, can help to improve the school.

Make better use of records of your lesson observations to improve teaching.

Give children in Nursery and Reception better chances to learn for themselves.

Make better use of the outside area, and the checks staff keep on children's progress to plan what children need to learn next.

You can help by attending school every day and by continuing to work hard with the staff to improve your skills.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken

Lead inspector

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