

# Cotmanhay Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112569
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	378513
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Tim Bristow HMI

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Linda Burns
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nigel Carr
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2010
<b>School address</b>	Beauvale Drive Ilkeston DE7 8RR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed eight teachers and visited 16 lessons. They held meetings with governors, a representative from the local authority, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, lesson plans, school policies and responses to questionnaires from 52 parents and carers, 99 pupils and 28 staff.

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

- Whether achievement in English and mathematics has improved since the last inspection so that it is no longer inadequate.
- Whether teaching and the use of assessment has improved consistently across the school.
- The capacity of school leaders to drive forward and sustain improvements to teaching and learning.
- The effectiveness of the school in managing the behaviour of pupils.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well below average. Just over half the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, this is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A minority of pupils experience circumstances that may make them vulnerable.

When the school was inspected in November 2010, it was judged to require a notice to improve. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2011. The school shares a building with the local infant school. Areas, such as the dining hall and reception, are shared by both schools. Pupils can attend a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school's overall effectiveness is now satisfactory because of the satisfactory teaching and curriculum which has resulted in satisfactory achievement. Robust procedures to check and improve the teaching, progress and behaviour of pupils have been driven by school leaders since the last inspection and are well supported by the local authority; these have been instrumental to this development. Consequently, the school demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment in English and mathematics is low. However, assessment information shows that it is rising strongly across the school and the gap between national expectations and the school's attainment has reduced considerably. This is because progress has accelerated rapidly. It is now satisfactory overall. The proportion of pupils that are now making good progress is much higher than at the last inspection. For example, approximately half the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those that are known to be eligible for free school meals are now making good progress. Teaching is satisfactory overall in all subjects, but a growing proportion of lessons are good. For example, pupils benefit from lessons in English and mathematics that are often good. This is resulting in a much better quality of learning in lessons and the necessary acceleration in progress over time. In the minority of English and mathematics lessons where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not use assessment information well enough to pitch work at the correct level for a small minority of pupils. There is also a tendency for teachers in these lessons to talk too much which reduces the time for pupils to get on with their work.

Behaviour and the extent to which pupils feel safe are satisfactory. Nearly all pupils and their parents and carers report that they are safe in school. However, there are a minority of parents and carers who are concerned that the school does not manage behaviour well. Shortly after the last inspection behaviour declined rapidly so that in a number of lessons it interfered with learning. The new headteacher dealt effectively with this and behaviour has improved considerably. Nearly all pupils behave politely and sensibly in lessons and around the school. One impact of this is the good contribution pupils now make to the school and wider community. School leaders have also reduced the incidents of bullying effectively. However, pupils spoken to demonstrate a limited understanding of what constitutes bullying. In addition, parents and carers have not been as well informed as they could be about the recent improvements in behaviour, or the procedures used by the school to

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tackle misbehaviour and bullying when it occurs.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers have rightly prioritised the need to improve the curriculum for English and mathematics and this is now good. However, links are not as well established with other subjects so that pupils can apply and practise their literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, there are fewer practical opportunities than there could be for pupils to develop their creativity and problem solving skills, or their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity nationally and globally.

Care, guidance and support are good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for the minority of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are strengths of the school.

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?**

- Ensure that the teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good to eliminate the attainment gap by:
  - using assessment information more effectively so that all groups of pupils receive work tailored to meet their needs
  - increasing the time pupils spend working independently by reducing the time teachers talk
  - sharing the good practice that exists in the school and in the infant school more effectively.
  
- Strengthen and enrich the curriculum by:
  - establishing much better links between subjects so that pupils can practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
  - providing more practical opportunities for pupils to develop creativity and problem solving skills
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to appreciate and gain a broader understanding of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom and beyond.
  
- Equip pupils with a greater understanding of what constitutes bullying and anti-bullying strategies, and ensure the wider community is aware of how the school manages unacceptable behaviour by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about anti-bullying
  - engaging better with parents and carers so that they are fully aware of the effective work done by the school to improve behaviour
  - consulting with parents and carers about the school's procedures to combat bullying and misbehaviour.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Unvalidated assessment information shows that the attainment in English and mathematics of pupils that left Year 6 this year was low. This is a result of the weak teaching they had experienced and consequently the slow progress they made during most of their time in Key Stage 2. Now progress has accelerated rapidly because of the considerable improvement in teaching and a greater proportion make good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall, but the proportion making good progress is rising fast because of good provision.

In English and mathematics lessons, nearly all pupils engage with their work and cooperate sensibly with each other. For example, in a good Year 6 mathematics lesson, challenging shape problems engaged pupils enthusiastically in their work and they cooperated well together to solve them. The large majority of pupils in each group are now making accelerated progress in lessons. For example, in a Year 4 reading lesson, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities were making good progress because of the effective balance of challenge and support they received from teaching assistants. Occasionally in lessons a few pupils lose concentration and become distracted. This occurs when the teacher spends too long talking, or has not tailored the work sufficiently precisely to meet the needs of these pupils.

The school council takes an active part in the life of the school. For example, they have organised fundraising activities for charity and implemented improvements to lunchtimes and playtimes. Pupils who are Yellow Caps are very good at helping to supervise the smooth running of lunchtimes. Pupils have an adequate understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and they enjoy taking part in physical exercise. Those spoken to report that they would like more opportunities for physical exercise. Attendance is broadly average, with most pupils attending school regularly. Pupils are demonstrating a growing respect for each other and the school. They demonstrate that they understand the difference between right and wrong and the large majority adhere to the school rules. Their appreciation of the diversity of society in Great Britain is less well-developed than it could be.

*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>	4
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

<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

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<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of English and mathematics lessons is consistently better than at the time of the last inspection. For example, in all lessons teachers ensure that pupils know what the objectives for learning are and the steps they need to take to be successful. They are now much more effective at pitching work at the correct level for the majority of pupils. Where teaching is good in lessons they ensure that nearly all pupils receive work that is well tailored to meet their needs. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils were learning multiplication and were working on different activities that were sharply focused for each group so that nearly all of them made good progress. Teachers now have a much better grasp of the progress of pupils in their care because of the much better use of assessment information. Marking has improved and in English it is good. Pupils benefit from useful advice on the next steps they need to take to improve their work and they are given the necessary time to respond to this advice.

School leaders have concentrated rightly on the priority to improve the curriculum for English and mathematics. In some other subjects of the curriculum pupils make good progress. For example, Year 4 art and design work is of a good quality. However, while the curriculum adequately covers all the necessary subjects it is not yet sufficiently enriched and varied to facilitate the quality of learning to be better than satisfactory overall.

The school cares extremely well for the significant proportion of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Provision such as the Star nurture group and the Year 6 transition group are excellent. Pupils thrive in these groups. They are successfully developing social skills and strategies that enable them to manage their behaviour better and to be more successful learners. Within the school there are a few pupils whose behaviour is extremely challenging as a result of their personal circumstances. In the past, the school has had a great deal of difficulty managing their behaviour but since the last inspection this is much improved so that the exclusion rate has dropped considerably and their progress has accelerated. Another significant improvement is the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Highly effective leadership from the special educational needs

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coordinator has ensured that pupils benefit from a broad range of activities and provision, often led by well-trained teaching assistants, that is accelerating their progress rapidly. Pupils thoroughly enjoy attending the breakfast club. They report that it gives them a good start to the day. There are a range of adequate procedures to encourage good attendance which are effective at ensuring the regular attendance of the large majority of pupils.

*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?**

Leadership at all levels is now much more effective than at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have very successfully changed the attitude of staff to what pupils can achieve and now expectations are much higher. A sharply focused development plan accurately prioritises where improvement is needed. Effective procedures, such as the meetings about pupils' progress ensure that all teachers are held responsible for pupils' progress. Some middle leaders who, in the past, have been less effective are now making a very useful and decisive contribution to school improvement. For example, following an evaluation of the teaching of reading, school leaders implemented good-quality guided reading lessons in all classes that has resulted in the gap between reading attainment in the school and national expectations narrowing rapidly. The governing body is knowledgeable and supportive of the work of the school. They are beginning to take a more active role in holding senior leaders to account for the strategic development of the school.

Three changes in headteacher over the last two years have understandably been a cause for concern for a few parents. Procedures to engage parents in the work of the school are adequate. However, school leaders and the governing body are rightly aware that more decisive steps need to be taken at this time to engage parents in the work of the school. The good partnership with the local authority has been instrumental in bringing about the necessary improvements in provision and outcomes. In addition, there are good partnerships with outside agencies to ensure the well-being of the pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The partnership with the infant school, such as the transition procedures from Year 2 to 3 and the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is strengthening. However, school leaders are aware that more could be done to share the good practice that exists between the schools to strengthen the continuity of education across the primary phase.



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All the necessary safeguarding policies and procedures are adequate in ensuring that pupils are looked after safely. Some are currently in need of revision. Procedures to safeguard those pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are good. Much better tracking of pupils and a rise in the attainment of all groups has resulted in equality of opportunity now being satisfactory. School leaders have accurately prioritised and worked hard since the last inspection to promote community cohesion effectively within the school’s boundaries by making the necessary improvements in behaviour and by raising expectation of what pupils can achieve. They are also effective at combating racist abuse in an area where this is particularly challenging by creating an environment where pupils are naturally curious about differences, but respectful. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to broaden their understanding of cultural diversity.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers are happy with their child’s experience in school and agree that they enjoy school. A minority of parents and carers do not agree that behaviour is managed well. This concern has been addressed in the report. There are a small minority of parents and carers who do not agree that the school helps them to support their child’s learning, or do not feel well-informed about their child’s progress or think the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns. This was pointed out to school leaders who agree that more needs to be done to engage parents and carers in the work of the school to address these concerns.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cotmanhay Junior 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	37	26	50	6	12	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	46	27	52	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	15	29	29	56	8	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	31	29	56	5	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	14	27	36	69	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	13	25	27	52	10	19	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	35	31	60	2	4	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)	18	35	31	60	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	15	29	28	54	6	12	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	31	18	35	12	23	4	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	19	31	60	7	13	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	12	23	28	54	4	8	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	14	27	30	58	6	12	1	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.**



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Cotmanhay Junior School, Ilkeston, DE7 8RR**

My colleagues and I were very pleased to see the important improvements to your education that the headteacher, teachers and other adults have made. The school is now providing a satisfactory standard of education and no longer requires a notice to improve.

Thank you for the welcome you gave us, we found your views and opinions to be very helpful when carrying out the inspection. You can be proud of the improvements to your behaviour. Nearly all of you are polite, friendly and enthusiastic about school. You told us you feel safe in school and that behaviour has improved, but some of you are a bit confused about what bullying is and how to deal with it. You make a strong contribution to the life of the school. The school council is always looking for ways to improve the school. You are working harder and doing much better in English and mathematics lessons.

Your teachers have worked hard to improve your lessons and to give you better help with your work.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements.

- Make sure that you do even better in English and mathematics lessons by giving you more time to complete your work and checking that it is not too easy or too hard for you.
- Improve the lessons in other subjects so they are much more exciting and practical, and also to teach you more about people from different backgrounds in this country and abroad.
- Improve your understanding of anti-bullying and include your parents and carers in this work.

You can help by continuing to behave well in lessons and around the school and by coming to school everyday.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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