

Copythorne Church of England Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116282
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379227
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll	83
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Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harvey Baker
Headteacher	Tina Daniel
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 March 2009

School address	Romsey Road Copythorne Southampton SO40 2PB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven lessons, and visited three other part lessons. A total of four teachers were seen. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and held meetings with members of the governing body, pupils and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data relating to pupils' attainment and progress. The school's development plan, lesson and curriculum plans, governing body documentation, and school policies and procedures, particularly those relating to the health and safety and safeguarding of pupils, were scrutinised. Inspectors also looked at 56 completed questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those from staff.

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

- What is the impact of the school's actions to improve attainment in writing for boys?
- What is the quality of leadership and management at all levels, particularly with regard to the monitoring and improvement of teaching and learning and development planning?
- How effective is the school's work in promoting the cross-cultural and cross-faith knowledge and understanding of pupils?
- How well are teachers using assessment information to develop appropriately challenging work in lessons for all pupils?

Information about the school

Pupils in this smaller-than-average, rural infant school come from a predominantly White British background. A few pupils come from a variety of other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently above average. The main group consists of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Currently, the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided through the Reception class. The school has been recognised through the national Healthy School and Activemark awards.

From May 2009 the infant school became a part of the Oaks Church of England Learning Federation. The executive headteacher took up the post in April 2010.

A privately run breakfast and after-school club is situated on the school site. These are subject to separate inspections.

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

The school provides a good standard of education for its pupils. It has many outstanding features including significant aspects of the pupils' personal development. Pupils feel extremely safe and have an exceptional knowledge of how to stay healthy. The impact of the two national awards can be seen in the pupils' knowledge about keeping healthy and fit. They speak with enthusiasm about growing, eating and selling their own vegetables and talk in some detail about the effects of exercise. Their contribution to the community is excellent, with particularly strong links with the local community. The pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. One parent reflected the views of other parents and carers when writing, 'The school has an excellent, caring and nurturing attitude. The school develops strong core values within the children.' The care, guidance and support for pupils are excellent with pupils saying they feel well cared for and that adults deal well with their concerns.

Children in the Early Year's Foundation Stage make good progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average and progress continues to be good. In 2011 pupils attained above average levels in reading and mathematics and average levels in writing. This constitutes good progress for the large majority of pupils and includes those known to be eligible for free school meals. Boys attained less well than girls in writing. However, school data show that they progressed at a faster rate than the girls in writing, albeit from lower levels.

The good curriculum is being well developed. It is increasingly built around exciting projects which motivate boys and gives them more opportunities to write. One parent wrote, 'My son is enjoying each day at school. I love reading about the hugely engaging and imaginative projects they are doing. The homework is excellent and the regular invites to parents to see their child singing or making bread are fantastic.'

Teaching is good and improving, with lessons typically containing a good range of activities that engage pupils effectively in learning. There remain some inconsistencies in the quality of ongoing assessment during lessons, especially to support the development of pupils' writing skills, including those of higher attainers. Opportunities are missed to assess pupils' level of understanding and, if necessary, change the course of the lesson to meet individual needs. Additionally, when questioning, not all teachers use their secure subject knowledge to revisit and pose harder questions for pupils.

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The executive headteacher has successfully overseen the forming of a detailed strategic plan and the effective distribution of responsibility to other senior leaders. Increasingly the benefits of the federation are being seen, for example, in the sharing of expertise. This is an example of the outstanding partnerships developed by the school that benefit pupils. An embedded cycle of rigorous monitoring leads to accurate development priorities being set for the school. The good governing body effectively monitors the school through visits, and governors make a good contribution to strategic planning. This, together with the good progress of the pupils, their above average attainment and the school's outstanding features, reflects a good capacity to sustain improvement.

Some inconsistencies in leadership and management remain. A few subject leaders do not have a sufficiently clear idea about attainment and progress in their area of responsibility. Subject development plans do not always show clearly enough how the subject supports the whole school improvement plan priorities. Similarly there are differences between subject plans in the extent to which success criteria are sufficiently focused and enable improvement to be measured effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment, particularly in writing, through removing the inconsistencies in teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use ongoing assessment to establish pupils' level of understanding and take appropriate action to meet the needs of individuals
 - when questioning, take opportunities to revisit and challenge pupils.
- Sharpen the skills and knowledge of subject leaders by ensuring that:
 - action plans clearly show how the subject supports the priorities identified in the whole school development plan and that development objectives have measurable criteria against which improvement can be measured
 - all subject leaders have a clearer picture of pupils' attainment and progress in their subject areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well and show an enjoyment of learning. This was seen in an English lesson based on their reading book where pupils were motivated and excited when asked to develop questions for the visiting wolf. They showed high levels of respect for the suggestions of others and sat quietly as the wolf replied to their questioning. Pupils are keen, have very positive attitudes and apply themselves well to their learning. Pupils, in one mathematics lesson, shared well and used the laptops to develop their data-handling skills; they remained on task for a prolonged period and worked independently.

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In recent years there has been a pattern of above average attainment, with well-above average levels in the 2010 assessments at the end of Year 2 and, typically, higher levels in reading and mathematics than in writing. All pupils, including those from different groups, make good progress. As a consequence of good tracking strategies and pupil reviews, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well. The gap between the attainment of boys and girls in writing is closing, and the number of higher attaining pupils gaining the higher levels in writing is increasing but there is room for further improvement.

Pupils adapt exceptionally well when participating in different social situations; during worship they are attentive and fully participate in periods of reflection. In one-to-one conversations they take turns and give serious consideration to others’ views. This was seen in a philosophy lesson where pupils shared views about a photograph. The pupils have a secure knowledge of other faiths and cultures through their studies of Judaism, and the celebration of festivals. Attendance is improving and is now above average. Pupils behave well but occasionally lose concentration when in independent or group work. The level of basic skills, coupled with gains in personal and social skills, including the teamwork promoted through curriculum projects, results in pupils being well prepared for the future.

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	2
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	1
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	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

While teaching is good overall, there are also examples of outstanding teaching. In a

¹ 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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mathematics lesson, detailed planning and preparation ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were challenged at the appropriate level through a very good range of activities. Some used bead strings to aid counting and grouping, while others were challenged to consider the difference the ‘cost of rope doubling’ or a decrease by 13 pence an item would make to their calculations involving money. Relationships are very positive and consequently pupils are willing to engage and give their views. A mathematics lesson saw pupils eagerly using small whiteboards to give answers to the questions posed by the class teacher. Teaching assistants are given good guidance by teachers, contribute well during lessons and help ensure that all pupils are able to learn. Marking is generally good with pupils clear about how they can improve their work. Lesson activities are typically stimulating and engaging. Some inconsistencies exist regarding ongoing assessment and questioning and consequently, on occasion, not all pupils’ needs are fully met as the lesson progresses.

Pupils tell of enjoying the very imaginative projects, which have been successfully developed to create cross-curricular links and make learning more meaningful. Core values, like thinking and independence, are identified for each project and the tasks and approach reinforce these. The forest projects have involved art, geography, and information and communication technology as well as aspects of literacy and numeracy. Pupils shared the experience of cooking outdoors over an open fire. Projects involve a good range of visits and visitors. This approach to the curriculum is relatively new and the full impact on pupils’ outcomes has yet to be seen.

Records and policies relating to the care, guidance and support of pupils are very detailed. The school seeks out a very good range of external agencies to aid pupils and families facing difficulties. Very careful tracking of pupils helps ensure that any need for intervention is quickly identified and appropriate action taken. Consequently barriers to learning are being lowered. The school maximises the advantages of being a small school. Adults know the pupils extremely well; pupils feel they are listened to and that any concerns are addressed. In the classroom, teaching assistants work extremely effectively to ensure that pupils requiring additional support are very well catered for and can access their learning. A particularly outstanding example of the individual attention pupils receive is the Celebration Bubble assembly where all pupils, in turn, are celebrated not only academically but also for their personal and social strengths. Individual learning journals also celebrate pupils’ individual achievements and serve as reports to parents, although they do not always make levels of achievement sufficiently clear. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are highly effective and consequently pupils settle quickly in their new surroundings.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2

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

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 executive headteacher has quickly established a vision based around the school being part of an outstanding federation. This ambition involves more accountability and a commitment to rigour in all that the school does. All staff are committed to this approach although there are some inconsistencies between subject leaders regarding the depth of their monitoring and the quality of action planning. Much has already been achieved, with rigorous analysis of data and regular pupil progress meetings held. Progress tracking shows that there are no major gaps between groups of pupils. Moreover, the pupils’ different learning styles are very well met through the curriculum project approach. They also have good opportunities to showcase their skills and knowledge during the end of project parent and carer assemblies. Hence equality of opportunity is good. The impact of the project work is extremely well monitored by leaders and involves obtaining parents’ and carers’ and pupils’ views. The close monitoring of teaching is bringing improvement in the quality of learning in the classroom. Governors, in reaction to parental enquiries, have been involved in tracking and reporting on behaviour. Much work has been done establishing the federation and drawing up detailed policies and procedures. Particular attention is paid by governors to health and safety, child protection and safeguarding policies. The training needs relating to safeguarding and safer recruitment are identified and appropriate training put in place. Safeguarding is good.

The school makes use of a wide range of traditional means and modern technology to develop links with parents. Parental engagement, consequently, is good and includes parent forums and learning walks. Besides the federation, other partnerships make a significant contribution to the outcomes for pupils. Strong links exist with the local church, pupils take part in the local Remembrance service and the very good range of local businesses provide good learning opportunities for pupils. Community cohesion is good with pupils benefiting from a range of visitors from the village and wider community. Moreover, the pupils reach out into the community through their project work and other activities. There is more to do to ensure that pupils have a more secure understanding of life in a contrasting urban area.

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

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

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall, children enter Reception with the expected levels of skills and knowledge, although it does vary depending on the cohort. However, some aspects of literacy, particularly writing, are below the expected levels. The children progress well as a result of consistently good teaching. In one session they shared ideas well when developing a sentence for a dance production. When questioned about the sentence ending, they built on the idea of one child, that what was needed was an ‘end dot’, prior to one girl suggesting it was a ‘full stop’. In another session the children showed enjoyment and enthusiasm when making moves to music which are designed to develop hand motor skills to benefit them when writing. Teachers miss some opportunities to revisit and challenge further the understanding of pupils. The curriculum is good and provides well for the development of literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge. One learning session saw the children working outdoors and very determinedly seeking to identify different mathematical shapes. Teaching assistants built well on the children’s observations and views to develop their understanding of shapes. Meanwhile the enquiry-based project approach has successfully developed the children’s knowledge of their locality; the View from the Window project saw the children visiting local shops and the garage. Leadership and management are good with very appropriate attention paid to recording and assessing. There is a good written and pictorial record of the children’s achievements available for parents. While the external area provides some good activities for learning, opportunities are missed to integrate such things as writing and number work into the outside activities.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The number of questionnaires returned is above that expected for a school of this size. The very large majority of parents and carers returning the questionnaires are happy with their child’s experience at the school. A very small minority express some concerns, including about pupils’ behaviour and progress, the school’s links with parents and its leadership and management. Inspectors judged all of these aspects to be good. They also found that opportunities are missed for levels of pupils’ work to be made clear in the pupils’ learning journals. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded feel their child enjoys school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Copythorne Church of England 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	59	22	39	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	59	19	34	4	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	20	36	22	39	12	21	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	25	30	54	9	16	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	18	32	29	52	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	17	30	30	54	6	11	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	38	35	63	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)	15	27	26	46	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	15	27	30	54	8	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	25	29	52	6	11	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	25	31	55	9	16	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	29	25	45	9	16	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	19	34	30	54	6	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	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).

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">■ 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.

11 November 2011

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Copythorne Church of England Infant School, Copythorne
SO40 2BP**

You may remember our recent visit. You were eager to tell us about your school and we listened carefully to what you told us. We believe yours is a good school.

There are many things that we believe are excellent. You told us how safe you feel in school and your knowledge of how to stay healthy is outstanding. We also believe that the way you get involved with the running of your school and in the local area is excellent. Well done!

Also outstanding is the way that the school encourages you to get along together, and to understand and respect the differences between people from various faiths and cultures. We especially liked that, for example, in philosophy lessons you are given a chance to think deeply, to respect each other's views and to discuss issues that may concern you. You obviously enjoy the projects that you do – the Forest one sounds really good!

You progress well and this is the result of the good teaching you receive. We saw ourselves that teachers give you lots of different activities to do in lessons. We have asked that during lessons the teachers check how well you understand what you are learning. You can help by telling them when you are uncertain or when you find things too easy. We have also asked that they challenge you when questioning, to think even more deeply.

Your executive headteacher leads the school well and like the other adults wants things to improve even more. The school makes good plans for the future. We believe that subject leaders can make clearer in their planning how their subject is going to contribute to school development and how they are going to measure the success of the changes they introduce. We have also asked that they build up a clearer picture of how well you are doing in their subject.

Thank you again and I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye
Lead inspector

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