

Colden Common Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116174
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	395538
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2012
Lead inspector	Stephen Lake

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Collins
Headteacher	Sharon Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 February 2008
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	4–5 July 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Stephen Lake

Additional inspector

Jill Thewis

Additional inspector

John Collins

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. A range of lessons was observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In total, inspectors visited 27 lessons or parts of lessons and observed 10 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors` examined a range of documents, including curriculum planning, documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, records of pupils' attainment and progress and records relating to the monitoring of teaching. Some parents and carers were spoken to at the start of school. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and 103 parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

This school is slightly larger than most primary schools. The large majority of pupils are White British with only a few from other ethnic groups. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils who have disabilities or are supported at school action plus or have statements of special educational need is below average. Main areas of need include speech, language and communication and behaviour, social and emotional difficulties. In the last few years there have been a number of disruptions to staffing through illness and changes of staff. Five teachers, including the headteacher, and three teaching assistants are new to the school this year. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because too few of the pupils who attain highly in reading and mathematics achieve the higher Level 5 in writing at age eleven. Systems for analysing data about pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently refined.
- Pupils achieve well overall. Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This accelerates as they move up through the school. Achievement is improving rapidly after the decline of the last two years, especially in mathematics. Achievement in writing, particularly spelling, is satisfactory, but remains lower than in reading and mathematics. The school is introducing a new system for teaching letters and sounds (phonics) to address this.
- Teaching is good. It has improved considerably in the last year, but a few inconsistencies remain. Higher attaining pupils are not challenged well enough in writing. Marking does not always provide enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and the marking of writing, especially spelling, in subjects other than English is not rigorous enough.
- Behaviour and safety are consistently good as are pupils' attitudes to learning. The school is an orderly community where most pupils show respect for each other and adults and know how to stay safe.
- The new headteacher, supported by the effective governing body and revised senior leadership team, provides strong leadership. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and uses this information effectively to promote school improvement. Performance management is used well to improve teaching, to support teachers new to the school and develop leadership skills. Rigorous and effective systems are in place to monitor the progress of pupils, but the systems for analysing the data are cumbersome and make it difficult to have an easily accessible picture of overall school

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performance to compare easily with the national picture.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013 ensure that achievement in writing rises to match that in reading and mathematics by:
 - embedding securely the strategies for improving achievement in writing, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - ensuring that marking in subjects other than English includes the marking of pupils' writing, especially spelling
 - ensuring that the phonics programme being introduced is used consistently across the whole school to support pupils' spelling.

- By December 2012 provide easier and quicker access for leaders and governors to the performance of different cohorts of pupils by refining the systems for analysing data on pupils' attainment and progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires think that their children make good progress and that children's needs are met well. Most pupils say that they are learning well. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make good progress to achieve standards that overall are above average. By the end of Year 6 attainment in reading is above average but in writing it is broadly average.

Children start in Reception with skills similar to those normally found at this age. They make satisfactory progress overall to enter Year 1 with broadly average skills. Achievement in communication, language and literacy remains satisfactory as children's writing skills are not quite as strong as other aspects of communication. Children make good progress in their mathematical development due to effective teaching in this area and start Year 1 with above average standards in mathematics. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good and attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average. Attainment in reading is particularly good due to the consistent emphasis upon teaching letters and sounds. Good learning was observed in a mathematics lesson on shape where well-focused questioning and a wide range of activities linked to shape engaged all children. More able pupils were challenged particularly well and showed a good understanding of how three-dimensional shapes could be sorted according to different characteristics. In the last few years staffing disruptions contributed to a decline in achievement in Years 3 to 6, especially in 2011. This decline has been successfully reversed. Achievement in mathematics has risen for several years and achievement in reading is now considerably improved from 2011, with a large majority of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in both areas by the end of Year 6.

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Although reading skills are high at both ages seven and eleven, the school has correctly identified that in Years 3 to 6 too little emphasis is placed on learning letters and sounds to support improvements in pupils' spelling. This contributes to the comparatively lower achievement in writing at age eleven. To address this, a new whole-school programme that focuses upon letters and sounds (phonics) is being introduced in September to support improving pupils' achievement in writing.

Pupils with disabilities are supported well to keep them fully included in lessons and making the same progress as other pupils. The small proportion of pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language also makes similar progress to other pupils and some make accelerated progress to close the gap between their attainment and that of their peers.

Quality of teaching

Teachers work in close and effective partnership with teaching assistants and use a wide range of strategies to make learning interesting and enjoyable for pupils. Information and communication technology is used well particularly to support learning and motivate pupils. A very large majority parents and carers and most pupils think that teaching is good. Inspection evidence confirms this. The quality of teaching is improving as a result of the good quality professional development over the last year. Appointments in this period have strengthened the quality of teaching further.

Behaviour is managed well with unobtrusive, but effective, interventions that reflect the high expectations of behaviour that are shared by all adults. A significant strength of the teaching is the way teachers use the creative curriculum to make lessons meaningful and motivating. For example, in a lesson observed in Years 1 and 2, pupils made outstanding progress as they wrote an account from the perspective of a barn owl flying and hunting prey. The video linked to this and their visit to a centre to see birds of prey not only motivated pupils to write at length but also made a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In most lessons, questioning is used effectively, not only to assess what pupils have understood but to challenge them to move on in their learning. Books are marked frequently and regularly, for example mathematics books often contain helpful comments to pupils on how to improve their work, but this is inconsistent, especially in English. All books have detailed long-term targets that pupils understand and highlight to show when they have achieved them. These are helpful but shorter term targets, especially in writing, are not always precise enough to show what pupils should achieve in a shorter period of time, such as a week. Marking does not consistently tell pupils what they need to do to improve their writing, especially their spelling. The school system of highlighting work with 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' is not used consistently and this slows learning a little, especially in writing for older pupils. Information on pupils' attainment and progress is mostly used effectively to plan lessons matched closely to pupils' needs. This is less effective in

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writing in Years 3 to 6 where tasks set do not always challenge more able pupils well enough. Too few opportunities are taken to assess pupils' writing in lessons such as history and, where necessary, intervene so that pupils improve their writing skills in different situations where they are used. The teaching of spelling is not consistent enough. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs receive good support that ensure they learn effectively and are included in all lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The very large majority of parents and carers feel that their children are safe in the school and that there is a good standard of behaviour. A small minority were concerned that the school does not deal with bullying well enough or communicate what has been done to parents. Discussions with pupils show that they have a good understanding of bullying including name calling, physical bullying and cyber bullying. They say there is very little bullying and they trust adults to deal effectively with any that might occur.

Inspection evidence shows that behaviour and safety over time are good and that the school deals with the few incidents of bullying effectively. The new headteacher responds personally to parents who bring concerns about bullying to her and questionnaires sent out with these letters show that the vast majority are happy with the way incidents are dealt with. Pupils have good opportunities to bring concerns to the attention of adults, including a 'worry box' and two emotional literacy support assistants who are available for pupils to talk to. Attendance is above average.

A key feature of the good learning observed that enables good progress is the mature and thoughtful way that the large majority of pupils show respect for adults and each other. Nevertheless, the behaviour of just a few challenging pupils causes a small minority of pupils to say that behaviour is not always good in lessons. Inspection evidence shows that these pupils are supported well to keep any disruption to an absolute minimum.

Leadership and management

The new headteacher has developed, with the leadership team, an ambitious vision of how the school can improve further, that is shared by all staff. The governing body has enough information to challenge performance rigorously and understands the school's strengths and areas for development. The governors provide clear direction to the work of the school and ensure that performance management is used effectively to improve the quality of teaching. In the last two years effective budget management has eliminated an agreed deficit rapidly. Performance management is well organised and effective, covering teaching issues based on school performance, development of leadership skills and personal development.

The well-planned curriculum is broad and balanced and ensures a creative environment. To extend this senior leaders and governors are looking at innovative ways of developing pupils' skills in understanding information and communication

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technology as well as using it to support learning. Class blogs are used effectively to inform parents about pupils' learning activities. Participation in events, such as Zimbe, (a multicultural choral event) in Winchester Cathedral, makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Training in child protection and safeguarding for staff and governors is up to date and procedures for safeguarding, especially those for child protection, are robust and firmly embedded.

The school ensures equality of opportunity and prevents discrimination through frequent monitoring of the progress of all pupils, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The information gained is used effectively to provide good quality support for these pupils. The good quality data on the performance of individual pupils are shared well with all leaders and teachers. Nevertheless, sophisticated analysis of data to judge school or cohort performance is not as accessible as it should be to leaders and governors, as the systems make this a lengthy process. Strengths from the previous inspection, including achievement in Years 1 and 2 and in reading overall, have been maintained. Areas for improvement from the previous report, especially achievement in mathematics, have been addressed effectively. The well-targeted actions to improve the quality of teaching have addressed the drop in standards of the last few years. This indicates a secure capacity to improve further.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



6 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Colden Common Primary School, Eastleigh SO50 6HW

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We all enjoyed talking with you and finding out how well you learn.

Yours is a good school that is improving. You achieve well to attain standards better than those in most schools. Here are a few of the things that we particularly liked.

- You achieve well because of the good teaching you receive.
- We agree with you that adults look after you well and help you understand how to stay safe, especially when you are using the internet.
- The school works hard to provide exciting experiences that make your learning interesting and fun.
- Your good behaviour and positive attitudes make the school an enjoyable place in which to learn.
- Your school is led and managed well and all leaders and managers, including the governors, are working hard to make the school even better.

In order to help you learn even more effectively we have asked the school to:

- help you improve your writing across the school by planning lessons that contain tasks that challenge all of you to do your very best writing and to make sure that your spelling skills are improved. You can help by learning your spellings and always checking your work to see if you have spelled everything correctly
- refine the systems that are used to analyse the information on how well you are learning, so that it is easier for school leaders and governors to compare your school with others.

Thank you again for making us so welcome.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake
Lead inspector

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