

Coupe Green Primary School

Coupe Green, Hoghton, Preston, PR5 0JR

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Not enough pupils make the progress that is expected, given their starting points.
- Pupils' writing has been a particular weakness in recent years.
- There is not enough good teaching. Too often, work is not hard enough for the most-able pupils and sometimes too hard for the least-able.
- Teachers often talk for too long in lessons and do not give pupils enough opportunities to work in small groups and develop their thinking skills.
- Leaders and managers have not successfully implemented a strategic plan to resolve the long-standing weakness in writing.
- Delegation of management roles is insecure and not enough has been done by leaders and managers to improve teaching.
- The governing body has not been quick enough to check up on last year's disappointing results and act with sufficient haste to establish the reasons and ensure that the school is improving.

The school has the following strengths

- There is outstanding provision for children in the Reception class; as a result, children get off to an exceptionally good start.
- Year 1 pupils comfortably outperformed the national expectation in a reading assessment at the end of last year.
- Pupils' attendance is particularly good.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well; parents and pupils alike express great confidence in the school's ability to make sure that the school remains a place of safety and high quality care.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who are eligible for pupil premium are supported by experienced staff who enable them to make progress similar to that of their peers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of seven lessons, three of them being joint observations with the headteacher; all teachers were observed at least once.
- Meetings were held with senior staff, a representative of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Many informal discussions took place with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 26 parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also the responses of parents to a questionnaire circulated by the school last year.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work and school data about their past and current progress.
- Documents relating to school improvement and the safeguarding of pupils were reviewed.

Inspection team

Alastair Younger, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus is smaller than average.
- There are no pupils supported through a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- There are currently no looked-after children in school.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British.
- According to the most recent validated data the school meets the current floor standards set by the government for all schools.
- Unfortunate circumstances last year resulted in significant changes in staffing and associated responsibilities.
- The headteacher is due to leave at the end of the current term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning to promote better progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers always set work that fully challenges the higher-attaining pupils and also those average attainers who are tantalisingly close to exceeding expectations and reaching higher levels
 - ensuring that lower-attaining pupils are set work that they can realistically attempt with as much independence as possible
 - adding more variety to lessons and ensuring that they move at a brisk pace with more time for pupils to encourage each other as they collaborate and generate their own ideas.
- Promote better progress in writing, especially in Key Stage 2 by:
 - making sure that pupils recognise the quality of good writing and know what they need to do to reach this level
 - insisting on higher standards of presentation in pupils' written work
 - developing a more consistent approach to the promotion of writing across the whole curriculum, especially within creative curriculum themes
 - reinforcing the different purposes and styles of writing, for instance in letter writing or recording dialogue
 - ensuring that grammar and punctuation skills are embedded at each stage and used accurately by pupils.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - improving the delegation of leadership roles and ensuring that rigorous monitoring of teaching effectively raises the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that there is a strategic plan to raise attainment in writing and that the governing body becomes more proactive in checking standards.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception class with a range of skills and abilities that are typically seen amongst children of their age. They make exceptional progress in the Reception class because they are taught outstandingly well in a stimulating environment that strongly supports learning and development through exploration, experimentation and play. As a result, children are encouraged to be creative and to think critically and to leave having considerably exceeded expected levels of development. This is a recent phenomenon; improvements over the past two years have been exceptional.
- By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 attainment is usually above average, but the progress they have made is not always good enough from Year 1 to Year 6 and requires improvement.
- The pupils who were assessed at the end of Key Stage 1 last year did not have the benefit of current arrangements in the Reception class. They entered Year 1 at a broadly average level and left Year 2 equally average. Current attainment is similar, but there is a little underachievement amongst the more-able and talented pupils. Reading is stronger than other subjects and pupils make effective use of their letters and sounds to tackle new words.
- For the first time in five years, standards in Key Stage 2 fell to slightly below average last year. Although a good number of pupils made better than expected progress in mathematics and reading, none did so in writing. Attainment is currently returning to closer to average
- Although writing is improving, the rate is too slow. For example, although pupils are taught the correct use of capital letters and full stops, many in Year 6 are still making repeated errors. Handwriting is not always neat and pupils are unsure of the correct requirements for writing in different styles, for example, when drafting letters.
- Small cohorts mean that there are many fluctuations, from year-to-year, in the performance of different groups. None of these is consistent or significant. The small numbers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or believed to be eligible for the pupil premium reach levels very similar to those of all other pupils.
- Writing is an area of weakness and there are insufficient signs of it improving. Analysis of work in pupils' books and files reveals deficiencies. Although pupils in Year 3 are taught the importance of consistent use of capital letters and full stops, many in Year 6 are still making repeated errors. There are examples where presentation and handwriting have not improved over the course of a year and where common conventions for drafting letters and punctuating dialogue are ignored. Too many pieces of work in pupils' books are devoid of context, for instance when pupils have completed comprehension exercises with words or phrases rather than complete sentences.

The quality of teaching

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and in a few other lessons is good. Newly appointed staff are bringing new skills and ideas. However, good teaching is not yet consistent and teaching overall requires improvement.
- Outstanding teaching in the Reception class sets an example that all should aspire to. Planning is diligent, assessment constantly on-going and accurate, children's achievement is meticulously plotted and recorded and individual needs are being met expertly. The excellent 'Learning Journey' records compiled to demonstrate individual progress are a model of good practice that all staff could follow to guide their own practice.
- In the best lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2 teachers plan exciting activities and the pace of learning is good. When teaching is less effective there is a degree of complacency and a lack of urgency to challenge individuals to the best of their ability and to demand high standards of

presentation in pupils' work.

- Although lessons are planned to ensure a clear structure there is not always a precise purpose to the learning. This leads to teachers paying more attention to what they are going to teach than what they are expecting pupils to learn.
- The timing of lessons is not always balanced carefully and too much teacher talk limits the time pupils have to get on with their work. It is not uncommon for introductions to lessons to extend into the second half of the lesson. This is denying pupils the opportunity to assume more control of their learning and to develop their independent thinking skills.
- A few teachers promote literacy skills very well. In a Year 5/6 history lesson pupils took bullet-pointed notes as they observed first-hand sources relating to the experiences of evacuees in the Second World War. This was followed up in a subsequent lesson by pupils using those notes to compose letters and postcards to the loved ones they had left behind. This effective teaching is not always evident, when pupils complete comprehension exercises with words or phrases, for example, rather than writing independently.
- Most classrooms provide a conducive, bright and stimulating environment which encourages learning but not enough is on display to celebrate the best examples of pupils' writing or to show them what is needed to raise the standard of their writing to the next level.
- Work is not always matched sufficiently well to the varying abilities of different pupils. This leads to some lack of challenge especially for the more-able pupils. A good example of the importance of this was the difference between two lessons taught by the same teacher. In one, learning objectives were the same for all pupils with resultant underachievement for about a half of the class, but in another the objectives were matched to different ability groups with the result that more made good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave exceptionally well. There have been no exclusions in recent years and there are very few instances of serious misbehaviour on record. There is no evidence of bullying or harassment on record. Staff say that behaviour in school is good and pupils and parents tend to agree. Apart from very minor indiscretions during the inspection, the inspector saw a very happy school with very well behaved pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive but not exceptional. A few of the higher-attaining pupils are too complacent and content to do enough, but no more. A few lower-attaining pupils content themselves with getting things wrong without asking for help.
- Attendance is outstanding Apart from a few instances where parents tend to look upon 10 days of authorised absence per year as a target rather than a limit. Pupils attend whenever they can. Absence is far lower than the national average and punctuality is good.
- Pupils feel safe at school, they are unanimous in saying that if they were worried about anything they would know who to approach about it and would be confident that the problem would be resolved quickly.
- The youngest children, in particular, get on very well with one another. They play contentedly, share considerately and show a good awareness of each other's feelings.
- The school has a very happy, caring ethos.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Over the past year the school has been struck by misfortune and tragedy. Management effectively sustained the quality of care and the highly positive ethos of the school which strongly promotes equal opportunities. Morale amongst staff remains high and parents are very happy with the school.
- The apportionment of leadership and management responsibilities falls too much on the

headteacher and this has had an impact on standards. Where teachers are given responsibility they welcome it and feed improvement, such as in the development of the creative curriculum. Newly appointed and less experienced staff are currently being more active in sharing ideas and raising progress and promoting better teaching. This is generating a greater capacity for the school to improve.

- Tracking of progress is leading the school to gain a clearer view of what the school does well and what needs attention. However, changes are not being made fast enough, especially in writing.
 - The headteacher has demonstrated her perceptive evaluation of teaching and learning but has not been forceful enough in eliminating weaker teaching. Not enough attention has been paid to ensuring that all teachers have a target to improve pupils' writing within their performance management schedule; for instance, better practitioners have been exempted when a useful target could be set to share their expertise.
 - The curriculum is improving because a perceptive teacher is moving it from a subject-based entity to a more outward-looking one, with more adventure and relevance incorporated. There remains a weakness in the cross-curricular promotion of literacy.
 - The local authority has supported the school effectively during some very difficult times. Amongst other input it provided highly effective consultant support in the Reception class, at a time of staffing change and also the services of an acting headteacher to cover the extended absence of the headteacher at the beginning of last year.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Ensures that statutory duties are fulfilled, including safeguarding requirements.
 - Is aware of the longer-standing strengths and weaknesses of the school, but relies too much on the headteacher to provide information about the current state of the school.
 - Ensures that finances are spent correctly including the use of pupils premium funds which, although very small, contribute to the provision of support staff and the funding of opportunities to expand pupils' experiences such as school trips.
 - Does not plan ahead enough because it holds its annual general meeting, informed by the headteacher's report, in November which is too late to be involved in decisions about the coming year.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119319
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	403382

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	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Cass
Headteacher	Karen Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	16 July 2008
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