

# Cove Junior School

Fernhill Road, Cove, Farnborough, GU14 9SA

**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Teaching does not provide precise enough guidance to ensure pupils make consistently good progress, for example too many learners do not have a clear idea of their current levels of attainment.
- Achievement is not good enough over time, particularly in mathematics, despite some recent improvement.
- The current Year 6, although making better progress now, did not achieve as well in previous years, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The setting and checking of targets for pupils have not, until very recently, been challenging enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress and achieve well in every year group.
- The governing body does not hold the school to account with enough rigour because it does not effectively review the impact of the work of the school on the pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The work of the leadership team is improving the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics.
- Most pupils are making good progress in reading. Provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is strong and effective and as a result they make good progress.
- Governors have a good understanding of how extra money provided under the pupil premium initiative is spent. They have funded some highly effective activities for Year 6 pupils who had not achieved well in earlier years, resulting in accelerated progress.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and well looked after by the adults around them. Behaviour is good, attendance high and the school is a harmonious community.
- Pupils and their families value the extra curricular activities. These generate enthusiasm and build pupils' self-confidence.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors spent a total of 12 hours observing 14 lessons , including one observed jointly with the headteacher. Other activities included a learning walk to review the support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in their classes and a lesson to pupils who had not achieved well in previous years designed to help them to catch up.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and local authority as well as with senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with parents and carers during the inspection. They also took account of the views of staff through meetings and the responses to 16 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of the pupils’ work in books.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s own data for the current academic year as well as previous years. They scrutinised planning and monitoring documents, records related to pupil safety and welfare including the school’s single central record of checks on staff, behaviour logs and attendance data.

## Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Diane Wilkinson	Additional Inspector
David Mankelow	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cove Junior School is a larger than average junior school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium (extra money provided to schools by the government) is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are less than half the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are below the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards for attainment and progress expected by the government.
- After a period of staffing problems, due partly to the departure of experienced staff and difficulty in arranging adequate cover for a Year 5/6 class last year, the school now has a more settled teaching team with new appointments to the senior leadership group.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils are helped to make progress by:
  - ensuring all teachers' marking is consistent and gives pupils precise guidance about the steps that they should take to improve their work
  - planning lessons that are structured to meet the individual needs of pupils with different starting points
  - building on the pupils' good attitudes to increase the pace of lessons and encourage pupils, particularly the more able, to take responsibility for more open-ended tasks that fully stretch them.
- Improve achievement so that, by July 2013, it is consistently good in both mathematics and English by:
  - ensuring all pupils have specific targets to work towards and that they have a clear understanding of precisely what they must do to improve their work beyond their current attainment
  - checking progress made in lessons by all groups of pupils regularly and frequently enough to plan and provide support for pupils who are not improving at a fast enough rate
  - involving the pupils in tracking their own progress.
- Improve the impact of governance by extending the skills of governors to hold school leaders to account more effectively for the progress made by pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, over time, attainment in mathematics in Year 6 has been below the national average and last year attainment in writing fell.
- In previous years, and until a recent improvement in monitoring procedures, expectations of progress, particularly in Year 3, were insufficiently ambitious and there was considerable variation among classes in the success with which pupils achieved even these targets. For example, with the exception of one class, fewer than half of the current Year 6 made good levels of progress in writing when they were in Year 5.
- Attainment in reading is higher than in mathematics or writing. The most recent school data show that progress among year groups and between classes is more consistent. This is because of the good support for the teaching of phonics, scheduled guided reading sessions for all classes and a motivating reward scheme for pupils whose book reviews are countersigned by class teachers. In addition, because the school has initiated well received workshops for parents and carers, pupils are helped to enjoy reading at home.
- Progress for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving in all years. This is a result of more effective screening and monitoring by a newly appointed coordinator of the support that is shared between class teachers and learning support assistants. The school's own analysis shows good progress for the disabled Year 6 pupils and those with special educational needs, given their starting points. A majority are now on track to attain the same levels as their peers in other groups.
- The pupil premium funding has been used effectively to support booster sessions that are now enabling targeted pupils in the upper school to make accelerated progress and close the gaps between them and their classmates in reading and writing.
- Attainment on entry is currently broadly as expected nationally for this age group. Recently revised arrangements for monitoring pupil progress in the school have provided data that show increasing proportions of pupils, in Years 3 to 6, making faster progress this year in both writing and mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress, especially in mathematics and writing, has been at best adequate as a result of historic weakness in teaching. In the past, teachers' expectations of pupils' progress were too low.
- Marking is inconsistent and not all teachers indicate to pupils how a piece of work can be improved and few make systematic reference to pupils' individual targets. Targets set for pupils are not always specific enough to help them to understand how to develop their responses or check themselves how well they are doing and this limits their progress.
- The school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching shows that inadequate teaching in the past has had a negative impact on pupil performance in the upper school. Teaching has now improved and that seen during the inspection was good, matching the school's own view and validating the headteacher's judgements. The current quality of teaching is helping to improve pupils' achievement well, although there is not enough evidence yet to suggest that progress over time is better than adequate. This is largely because until this year expectations were based on satisfactory rather than good progress.
- Planning is generally secure and well structured but could be improved further by designing precisely tailored activities to support faster progress among pupils who have been identified as having fallen behind the levels of which they are capable. Similarly, older more able pupils are not consistently stretched to achieve well.
- The quality of teachers' questioning is varied. The best teaching raises questions that are well

matched to the pupils' ability and move pupils on quickly from their starting points. In other lessons, the pace is slowed by a less focused approach or opportunities that are missed to use pair or small group discussion to enable pupils to refine and extend their responses.

- When the pace is brisk and pupils involved in setting the objectives, they are fully engaged. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson the teacher took the role of a highwayman. Pupils were excited as the teacher responded to questions and helped them to extend the vocabulary they used in devising similes and metaphors. However, not all teachers maintain a rigorous pace in group tasks and some pupils consequently do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The subject knowledge of teachers and learning support assistants is good and behaviour is usually well managed to sustain a good learning environment. However, in a few less stimulating lessons pupils can become inattentive and this hinders progress.
- Learning support assistants provide helpful guidance for pupils. They have strong knowledge of how to teach the links between letters and sounds, known as phonics, and teach pupils effectively to use the skills that they need to develop and improve their reading.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly good and sometimes exemplary. It is only when teaching is less than good that pupils' attention wanders. Behaviour is good rather than outstanding because pupils identify some behaviour that distracts, albeit not very often.
- The pupils know what is right and wrong and have very positive views of the behaviour of others most of the time. Although some disagreements do take place, the playground buddies are seen by pupils as an effective way to resolve minor issues by themselves. Pupils feel well looked after by the adults whom they can approach for support when needed.
- Behaviour is rightly viewed as being good by all of the school's community – pupils, staff, parents and carers, and this was confirmed by a recent local authority audit. Pupils are very well mannered and courteous.
- Bullying is very rare and many pupils say that it never happens. Those who accept that there is some low level unkind behaviour say that it is always well managed. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to them and address their concerns.
- Pupils have a good awareness of personal safety including road safety, 'stranger danger' and cyber safety. Parents believe that their children are safe at school.
- Attendance is high. Pupils enjoy coming to school and participating in all the activities it offers.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because they have not fully addressed weaknesses in teaching and the progress pupils make. Expectations have not been ambitious enough until recently because they were based on pupils making adequate rather than good progress.
- The headteacher and her newly established senior leadership team have been effective in beginning to raise the standard of teaching. Similarly, the acting deputy headteacher is now steering a revised and more rigorous system of tracking pupils' achievement. Such actions have had some positive impact on pupil progress, as shown in the most recent teachers' assessment of pupils' work across the school. However, it is still too early to see the full impact on raising standards and securing good progress.
- Newly appointed subject leaders have been the skilled and enthusiastic driving force behind recent improvements in teaching. They have made effective use of training opportunities to develop their colleagues' teaching skills in mathematics and reviewed the consistency of writing assessments across different year groups. However, they have yet to be fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching.
- The school leaders demonstrate a determination to further develop the school's effectiveness.

Coupled with self-evaluation that focuses accurately on the areas requiring improvement, they show the school has the capacity to move forward and improve. The staff are fully supportive of the leaders and managers in their efforts to improve the quality of teaching and to tackle underperformance that has occurred in the past.

- The use by governors and senior leaders of performance management targets related to increases in salary are starting to better reflect improved quality of teaching and teachers' impact upon their pupils' performance. In the past senior leaders were set targets which were based on pupils making expected rather than good progress and this limited success rates. This has now been rectified.
- Curriculum developments, including the adoption of learning values such as creativity and collaboration, support pupils' social and moral development well. Residential visits, participation in theatre festivals, sessions in the secondary school science and information and communication technology laboratories enrich the pupils' cultural development effectively.
- The local authority provides good support for the new leadership team, becoming involved for example in developments that foster improved mathematics teaching and pupil interactions in personal and social education. However, it was previously less successful in challenging the school regarding the decline in attainment.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Committed and supportive governors fulfil their statutory obligations regarding safeguarding and ensure pupils are kept safe. Along with other leaders they carefully reviewed the use of the pupil premium grant in raising achievement for targeted learners and allocated these funds well. However, until recently they did not expect good progress in all year groups and they need further training to challenge and monitor the school effectively to secure accelerated pupil progress among all groups. Governors understand from the headteacher's reports how performance management is being used to improve teaching, where teaching is good and where and how it requires improvement.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116140
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401564

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

<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>	273
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Caroline Pickup
<b>Headteacher</b>	Katherine Young
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18–19 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 542941
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