

Coney Hill Community Primary School

Coney Hill Road, Gloucester, GL4 4NA

Inspection dates 20–21 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Children enter school with skills well below the levels expected for their age and leave at the end of Year 6 with high attainment. Achievement is outstanding because they have consistently made outstanding progress throughout their seven years in school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly develop a wide range of skills and catch up rapidly in all the areas of learning.
- Outstanding teaching over time ensures that children are encouraged in what they learn and are supported through the dedication and expertise of all teachers and teaching assistants to exceed expected progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The very strong, vibrant curriculum engages the pupils and makes their learning enjoyable. Little time is wasted and every opportunity given to learning, with relentless pace and commitment.
- Monitoring is thorough and leads to constant awareness of strengths and areas for development so that plans for improvement are clear.
- The inspirational headteacher, superbly supported by the dedicated assistant headteachers and governors, leads the school strongly, so that this school has become a beacon of excellence.
- All staff have high expectations of themselves and each other, which is reflected in the high level of care and commitment given to the personal, social, emotional and academic needs of pupils, so that no child is left behind.
- Pupils' attitudes to each other, and all adults, are supported by a wide range of curriculum opportunities which enable outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness to be seen in all areas of school life. Behaviour is consistently outstanding.
- In reading, pupils' achievement would be even higher if they had greater understanding of their current skills and next steps.
- Parents and carers support their children and contribute greatly to their achievement because communication between home and school is seen as vitally important by everyone, and is a key factor in the success of this school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, or part lessons; four of these lessons were jointly observed with either the headteacher or one of the assistant headteachers.
- Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body and local authority, and staff, including middle and senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the results of the recent parent and carer questionnaire surveys, as the online Parent View responses were unavailable. They also spoke informally with parents and carers.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, governors’ minutes, the school’s own checks on how well it is doing, achievement data, monitoring records and documents relating to the safeguarding of children.

Inspection team

John Croghan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jane Banting

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school is additional funding provided by the government for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is not English is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are both above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- No pupils are taught in any alternative provision.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is one Reception class.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Share the current detailed and accurate individual assessments of reading with all pupils and their parents and carers, to enable them to better understand their skills and next steps in reading.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Many children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding at well below the levels expected for their age. They make outstanding progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage so that a majority are near average at the start of Year 1, giving them a secure start to the next steps in their learning.
- In Key Stage 1, the outstanding progress children made in the Early Years Foundation Stage continues, so that the number of pupils achieving the progress expected throughout these years continues to increase consistently, so that attainment by the end of Year 2, in most areas, is well above the national average.
- This excellent progress is maintained and increases throughout Key Stage 2 so that by the time children leave the school, the levels they attain are significantly above those found nationally in all areas, because of the outstanding progress they consistently make throughout their seven years in school.
- The ongoing progress and high levels of attainment are reflected in the very good assessments used to track pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school, so that learning is applied and spread across the school and subjects. The careful and regular assessment in subjects, such as science, art and history, ensures significant challenge and attainment in these subjects, as well as supporting their achievement in mathematics and English.
- The outstanding progress and high levels that pupils attain also apply to those disabled or with special educational needs as well as those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Those who qualify for the pupil premium support make outstanding progress and achieve above national expectations. Consequently, gaps in attainment in both English and mathematics, as measured by average point scores at the end of Year 6, are narrowing for all vulnerable groups.
- Year 1 pupils have a good knowledge of key words and use phonic (linking letters with the sounds they make) strategies, and in Year 2 they are using this knowledge to self-correct. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils are reading widely and selecting their own books.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide different work for pupils that is challenging enough to stretch every pupil and to move them on in their learning. Pupils who are struggling are given highly effective support to help them catch up.
- Little time is wasted during the school day and short, sharp, focused tasks, interspersed with longer subject lessons, ensure that pupils are constantly learning and developing. Where progress is good rather than outstanding, teachers do not always allow pupils enough opportunities to establish and confirm their progress for themselves, particularly in reading.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The outstanding progress made by pupils in recent years supports the view that the quality of teaching has been outstanding over time. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was outstanding with none less than good. The excellent standard of work seen in books confirmed that this high quality of teaching has been sustained over time.
- Overwhelmingly teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations that pupils will participate to the best of their ability and this is seen in lessons and in pupils' books, where marking and assessments give clear guidance to them about the level of their work and what they need to do to improve. Sometimes more opportunities to respond to the constructive comments of the teachers would enable greater pupils' understanding of the next steps.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is founded on purposeful and well-structured practical activities, indoors and outside, which show an excellent understanding of how young children learn. Children respond with enthusiasm and work happily with adults or other children, with an excellent balance between child-initiated opportunities and those created by staff. A strong focus on speaking and listening supports the progress of all children, including those

eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

- The very best teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is highly successful because work is very well matched to the needs of the children and the organisation of class groups is based on accurate assessment and real understanding of pupils' needs and skills. There is very clear understanding by all teachers and teaching assistants of what pupils are expected to learn and in almost all lessons seen, they encourage pupils to think deeply and not just accept the first answer. Occasionally, adults in lessons spend too long explaining, when pupils could be starting their work.
- Pupils are highly involved in their own learning, assessing for themselves how well they have done, and in meaningful activities that maintain their interest. There are many opportunities for small-group activities and pupils enjoy their learning. All groups, including those supported through the pupil premium, enjoy learning because of the specific targeted support and the wide variety of activities available, well planned for them by both teachers and teaching assistants. Homework is set and marked regularly and there is an expectation that pupils will complete it.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to practise basic literacy and numeracy skills. This has helped to raise standards in English and mathematics. Consistent awareness of strengths and weaknesses has enabled teachers and teaching assistants to constantly adapt and improve their teaching. Excellent teacher and school checks currently identify that, although reading results are high, pupils need better information about their next steps, as they have for their writing. The high attainment of pupils in Year 1, as measured by the national phonics check last year, is due to the good teaching of phonics in a systematic and enjoyable way.
- Teaching provides many opportunities to develop the outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of children through the encouragement of small-group work, content of the lessons and the positive working environment created. Teachers and teaching assistants have very good subject knowledge, which they use to plan lessons, extend pupils' learning and address any misunderstandings. 'Teachers try very hard to help us, without giving away any answers'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' very positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour contribute greatly to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show keenness, enthusiasm and a secure ability to work together in lessons and around school. These skills were observed many times during the inspection, because there is a very strong sense of community, where adults and pupils get along well together and behaviour is based on mutual care and respect for each other.
- In discussion, pupils are immensely proud of their school. They love school and take advantage of the many opportunities on offer to talk about their work and experiences. Pupils' conversations revealed how much the school philosophy is one of 'whole family' involvement, where they have seen and appreciate the help given to their parents and carers, which in turn they appreciate helps them.
- The thriving family support service within school has been instrumental in significantly improving the engagement of families in need, which has allowed children to feel emotionally secure, listened to and confident. It is a vital element in creating the ethos of real care and concern that permeates every classroom, and supports the outstanding behaviour of all pupils.
- Any rare incidents of bullying or racism are recorded carefully by the school and swift action is taken to ensure that there is no recurrence. The school has been highly successful in dramatically reducing incidents, and this is recognized by the pupils and particularly appreciated by parents and carers, who commented very positively on this issue in the recent questionnaire.
- Pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to stay safe, and say they feel very safe in school. Reception class children talked confidently about the risk assessment record they were maintaining in their classroom. Safeguarding procedures are very robust and pupils understand how to avoid the dangers posed when using computers and the internet.
- Attendance is currently above average. This is another real success story. Efforts to reduce the

number of pupils who are regularly absent have been very effective, although the school is still working with families of a small number of pupils who are absent from school too often.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This is a school with a culture of continuous improvement where there is no room for complacency. The headteacher has high expectations of herself and of the staff. School leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and plan well to build on the former and eliminate the latter.
- Rarely do all groups of pupils as achieve as highly as they do here. The monitoring of their progress is constant, with a culture of care, love and excellence that can be felt from the moment anyone enters the school. All staff and governors in this school have the unique quality to enable them to care with rigour, which creates the passion to ensure all pupils achieve.
- Performance management is a key strength of the school, because it is embedded and provides a consistent focus on improvement through the monitoring of performance. This focus is also supported by high-quality staff development, so that all Coney Hill staff are developed to become leaders themselves.
- The secondment of the headteacher, together with the absence of three other senior leaders during the autumn term 2012, showed the strength of leadership in depth. The systems and structures that support the vision of the school enabled the support for pupils to be maintained, with care, progress and attainment continuing at their usual very high levels.
- The curriculum contains a range of subjects and activities that are rich and exciting, making pupils keen to learn. Excellent planning and policies ensure all groups of pupils are provided with very good opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and communication skills across all subjects.
- The school places great emphasis on equality of opportunity and ensures that every child, regardless of ability or background, is given the best education possible. Pupils are very well prepared to live in a diverse society.
- The local authority regards this as a highly successful school and consequently offers very light touch support and the school fully meets all safeguarding requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is outstanding. Governors know the school exceptionally well and, like the staff and pupils, they are extremely proud of it. They provide a high level of challenge and are actively involved in school planning. They understand that their role as 'critical friend' is an important part of helping the school to continue to improve and they carry out this role very well. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school through regular visits; they understand performance data and accurately compare the school's performance with primary schools nationally. They have a clear view of the quality of teaching, attainment and progress, visiting lessons and being part of pupil progress meetings. They act to ensure that good teaching is appropriately rewarded and hold the headteacher to account for tackling any underperformance. The governing body has used the pupil premium highly effectively to provide additional staffing to ensure that eligible pupils receive enhanced support and attention. The outstanding progress made by these pupils shows that this approach has had a strong impact. Governors play a role in strategic decisions, for example they have been involved in the leadership of the school during the secondment of the headteacher, as well as ensuring that senior and middle leaders are prepared for the next stage of their careers. Governors take part in relevant training and this has helped them to carry out their role more effectively.

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	115603
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	403269

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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Bainbridge
Headteacher	Rachel Wadley
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 March 2008
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