

# Cockwood Primary School

Cofton Hill, Cockwood, Exeter, EX6 8RB

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, well supported by governors, has brought about extensive improvements since the previous inspection.
- Attainment in mathematics, reading, speaking and listening is above average and for some pupils well above average, particularly in reading by the end of Year 6. Some pupils reach the highest levels in mathematics.
- Children in Reception and all groups of pupils in the rest of the school, including more-able pupils, achieve well. Any differences between the progress of different groups of pupils have either narrowed or been eradicated completely.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have improved their achievement considerably and now make outstanding progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They love coming to school. Attendance has improved considerably.
- Pupils feel very safe and the school has very good arrangements for ensuring that pupils are well cared for.
- Teaching is good. The school teaches a wide range of subjects and topics well. Pupils love the many opportunities the school provides for activities outside school, such as visits. Out-of-school clubs and activities have a very high take-up.
- School leaders check the quality of teaching and learning very rigorously. Staff unreservedly support the school's drive to maintain improvements and strive for excellence.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. The school involves them closely in their children's learning.
- The school places great value on giving pupils a wide range of artistic, musical and dramatic experiences.
- There is good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are taught well and make good progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not always make clear enough what they want pupils to learn in lessons, with the result that occasionally pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- Progress in writing is not as rapid as in other subjects, partly because pupils have limited opportunities to write in the depth and to the quality of which they are capable.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector, accompanied by the headteacher, observed teaching and learning in six lessons. The inspector also observed some part lessons, and sessions taught by teaching assistants.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other staff, six members of the governing body and pupils. He also talked to some parents and carers and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took into account 45 responses from parents to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 10 questionnaire responses from staff.
- The inspector observed the school’s work and examined a range of documentation. This included the school’s view of its own work, minutes from governing body meetings, the school’s assessments of pupils’ progress, safeguarding documents and the school’s improvement plan. The inspector also looked at samples of pupils’ work.

## Inspection team

John Laver, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller-than-average primary school in which almost all the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding is much lower than in schools nationally. In some year groups there are no such pupils, and in other year groups, very few. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Children in Reception are taught alongside pupils in Year 1. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are taught in two other mixed-age classes.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum government expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school holds the Gold Artsmark award.

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

- Improve teaching to outstanding by making sure that teachers always make what they want pupils to learn very clear in lessons so that pupils make as much progress as they possibly can.
- Raise achievement in writing by giving pupils more encouragement and opportunities to write in depth and at length in all subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is very ambitious for the school. Other staff support her unreservedly in her determination to continue building on the significant improvements already made since the previous inspection.
- The school's actions to improve teaching, assessment, the achievement of pupils, especially the more able, and efforts to make more effective use of computers, have all had a marked impact on the school's performance. The leadership has addressed some previous weaknesses in teaching and provided much appreciated training opportunities for teachers to improve their skills and confidence.
- The leadership now ensures that there are clear links between teachers' targets, pay and pupils' progress.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching and learning rigorously. There is an ambitious plan for improving the school further and the school judges its own strengths and areas for development very accurately. Other staff who have responsibilities for particular subjects or other aspects of the school, such as assessment, also work hard to support colleagues and lead developments in their areas. The school shows every sign of being able to improve further.
- The school has planned, and continues to develop, its curriculum very effectively. Despite the school's small size, it gives pupils many opportunities not just to learn basic skills but also to do a lot of art, music and drama, both in the school and elsewhere. This success has been recognised in the award of Gold Artsmark status. The school also enriches pupils' wider experiences through a range of visits to places as diverse as London and Dartmoor. It uses the local area for exciting opportunities, such as the Forest School.
- The school makes sure that pupils have many opportunities to further their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The results have been very positive. The inspector saw opportunities for pupils to reflect on important personal qualities in assembly and in their books. Pupils help to raise funds for charity and take on responsibilities like being play leaders, in order to help others.
- Pupils make the school a very friendly, supportive community. The leadership also makes sure that pupils learn about events in the wider world and how these and various beliefs and ways of life relate to British values and their own experiences.
- The leadership has used the primary school sports funding very constructively to increase opportunities in the school. The school employs a specialist sports teacher, who has helped to improve teachers' skills and the range of sports for pupils. There is a high take-up of activities and pupils have a good record of success in competitive sport.
- Staff involve parents and carers very successfully both in school and in helping with their children's learning at home. For example, the school gives parents and carers advice on how to manage homework.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has been used to provide more assistance and resources for these pupils, who now achieve as well as, or in some cases even better than, other pupils in the school. This also confirms the school's success in making sure there is no discrimination within the school and that all pupils have the chance to do well and enjoy what the school provides.
- The local authority has great confidence in the school. When the school asks for it, the local authority provides some good support such as training opportunities for staff.
- The leadership greatly values its links with other schools in the area. These have helped staff, for example in providing joint training opportunities in mathematics and enabling subject leaders to liaise with colleagues. Pupils also benefit from the links. For example, more-able pupils have opportunities to go to the local secondary school for additional specialist teaching. As a result, some pupils have succeeded in reaching the highest levels in mathematics.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

Governors are very knowledgeable about their school. They are very active in coming into school to support events, in one case even accompanying pupils on a residential trip. They do their own checks on the school's performance. The governing body has every confidence in the headteacher, but also challenges her to justify results and any developments in the school. Governors talk to pupils as well as staff. They understand the pupils' performance data very well, so they know how the various groups of pupils in the school perform in comparison to others. They also know the strengths and areas to improve in teaching. Governors were able to explain to the inspector how pupil premium funding has had a positive impact on the pupils concerned. They also check that sports funding has benefited both pupils and staff. Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that the school has the requisite policies and procedures in place to ensure that it meets all safeguarding requirements. The governing body has a firm grasp on the budget and has planned prudently for possible future changes in the school site in order to

improve it and cater better for the increasing number of pupils. Governors understand and check the process by which the school now links teachers' pay increases closely to performance.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils consistently show their keenness to learn. They not only listen very well to staff, but also work very well when collaborating together, trying to do their best. The inspector saw this in several lessons. He also saw pupils taking pride in their written work and their projects. They told the inspector that they found learning 'fun'.
- Pupils understand very well what behaviour the school expects from them and they live up to expectations. Parents and carers confirmed this to the inspector. Pupils get on very well together and are sensible in the playground and when they are moving around the school, even in cramped conditions.
- Pupils' enthusiasm to participate confidently was very evident in an assembly which the inspector attended. Pupils ask questions and give their opinions readily. They enjoy taking on responsibility. They can talk about how the school council has raised money for charity and how the school supports a disadvantaged school overseas through their own initiative. Older pupils help others in the playground.
- In recent years there was a dip in attendance, mainly through illness. Attendance is now well above average, reflecting the school's efforts in this area and pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the trips they go on and the clubs, which include sports but also a range of other activities such as singing.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils and parents and carers confirm that there are no concerns about safety in school. Relationships between pupils and with staff are very good. Pupils learn about the various aspects of bullying, including misuse of the internet, but do not express any concerns. The school also gives parents and carers advice on aspects such as e-safety. The leadership keeps up-to-date records, which confirm that there have been no reported instances of racism or other untoward incidents.
- Parents and carers were very keen to tell the inspector how much they value the high quality of care and support for their children.
- Pupils' sense of well-being and security in the school is also a key factor in their increasing achievement in learning.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- The good teaching has had a very positive impact on pupils' progress in reading and mathematics, although it has had a less consistent impact on writing. A feature of the good teaching is the way teachers mark pupils' work in detail. Teachers usually give pupils constructive comments on how they can improve their work. They usually make sure that pupils respond to their comments, for example in correcting errors.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable part in many lessons, either supporting the teacher or helping groups of pupils improve their skills and understanding. For example, the inspector saw a teaching assistant teaching mathematics to a group of younger pupils effectively. Support staff also help individuals or small groups of pupils outside the classroom, and this has had a marked impact on improving achievement and progress, for example of pupils with special educational needs.
- One of the reasons the standard of reading is so high is because teachers encourage pupils to read regularly.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy the wide range of books and other resources available, and confirmed that they usually find learning fun. For example, they enjoy learning through practical activities and problem solving. More-able pupils have improved their progress since the previous inspection through tackling more challenging tasks.
- Pupils also benefit from checking each other's work. Most pupils value their targets as a way of helping them improve.
- Occasionally teachers' aims in lessons are not made clear enough. For example, pupils sometimes willingly do a series of activities such as competitive games, which are geared to the relevant subject matter.

However it is not always clear exactly what level of understanding they should be aiming for. The inspector saw, for example, some pupils being unclear about why one way of solving a mathematical problem was better or worse than the method adopted by someone else. The result was that the quality and depth of learning did not match the pupils' enthusiasm.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- In such a small school, levels of attainment on entry into Reception have been variable. However, recently children have joined Reception with levels of skill and understanding typical for their age, although weaker in communication and literacy skills. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, their attainment is above, and increasingly well above, average. Test results in recent years confirm that most pupils make progress at a faster rate than expected nationally.
- Progress in reading is particularly good for all groups of pupils. Many pupils attain well above average standards of reading. This is confirmed by the school's own assessments as well as test results. The inspector heard pupils reading with confidence, fluency and accuracy. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors.
- Progress in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection, partly because staff have become more skilled and confident in the subject themselves. There is good progress especially in pupils' ability to apply mathematical skills to everyday problems.
- Pupils lower down the school make good progress in phonics (learning letters and the sounds they make). This has been reflected in the results of recent phonics checks.
- Where there were gaps in the rates of progress between different groups of pupils, the school has worked hard and very successfully to narrow the gaps and in several instances eradicate them completely. There are no longer significant gaps in the progress of boys and girls in reading, partly because the school has reviewed the resources teachers use and how they teach reading. Gaps have been largely eradicated in other subjects also.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs used to underachieve compared to similar pupils nationally. This is no longer the case. These pupils now attain at a higher level than similar pupils nationally, and several are now making outstanding progress.
- More-able pupils did not achieve as well as they should have done in the past. Recent results show that these pupils are now attaining at the higher levels in all subjects. This is because they get a better match of work to their ability than at the previous inspection, and the school has worked hard to provide these pupils with more challenge. This has improved results, for example in mathematics.
- The school has very few pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding. The school provides well for these few pupils, and they make progress at least at the same rate as other pupils and sometimes better.
- The rate of progress in writing is improving, but it has not improved at the same rate as in other key subjects. This is partly because pupils do not do enough writing at the depth or length of which many are capable, both in English and other subjects, for example when doing topic work on a subject like the Tudors in history. The leadership has recognised this as an area for development.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children make a good start to their time in Reception. Although the early years leader recognises that there is further work to be done in strengthening the links with pre-schools and nurseries, the children joining Reception settle very quickly and make good progress. This is because it is a very friendly and secure environment.
- Children learn routines quickly and soon develop confidence, either when working alongside Year 1 or as a group by themselves.
- Children in Reception are also confident because their parents and carers are welcomed into the school and made to feel at home. They join their children for in-school events, and the school also encourages them to support learning at home.
- A particular success has been the use of the 'learning journey' files. Parents and carers greatly appreciate these. They show children's progress in detail and staff annotate them very thoroughly.
- Staff make the best use they can of limited space and resources. The outdoor environment in particular has limited space. However, to compensate for this, staff make use of a nearby area for the Forest School, which is popular with children.
- There are good teaching and leadership in Reception. There is a mixture of activities, including

presentations and the use of resources like 'monkey'. Children develop their independence and ability to work and play together constructively and their behaviour is excellent. They make very good progress in developing basic skills such as language and numeracy. The inspector saw children, for example, enthusiastically learning how to count to 20 and in other units. There is good adult support for children in lessons.

- Staff assess children's progress accurately and use the information to plan a range of activities.
- Despite the constraints of their surroundings, staff prepare children very well for their transition into Year 1.

## 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>	113194
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	448445

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	90
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tania Weeks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lorraine Curry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7–8 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01626 890471
<b>Fax number</b>	01626 891425
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