

# Coxheath Primary School

Stockett Lane, Maidstone, ME17 4PS

## Inspection dates

25–26 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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 school has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in developing their speaking, listening, calculation and reading skills as they move through the school.
- Good teaching has helped to improve pupils' achievement to levels which are at least in line with those expected nationally by the time they leave. Teaching caters well for pupils of different abilities. This, coupled with positive, supportive relationships and effective learning activities, ensures pupils learn well.
- Pupils enjoy reading throughout the school as staff and helpers foster an appreciation of books and develop pupils' confidence to read unfamiliar words.
- Enthusiastic and effective teaching in the early years ensures children make a good start to their education.
- The school has a caring, supportive atmosphere where pupils develop confidence in their ability and flourish.
- Regular checks on the progress of all groups of pupils ensure that any who fall behind are quickly identified and receive appropriate additional support.
- Pupils who find learning more difficult, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are helped particularly well to keep pace with others in the school.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Consequently, pupils feel safe, behave responsibly and respect each other. Pupils are proud of their school.
- Leaders and managers provide clear, caring leadership. The headteacher, supported effectively by staff and governors, has tackled past weaknesses. They know what still needs to be done to continue the school's improvement and aim to be even better.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are occasional inconsistencies in the accuracy of pupils' punctuation and spelling.
- In some mathematical activities, pupils are not always confident to apply or use their skills in different ways.
- The outdoor play area for Reception children does not appeal to children's interests sufficiently well.
- School leaders are not always effective at sharing the school's successes with parents.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons or part lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. A number of small group activities were observed jointly with the special educational needs coordinator.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, the headteacher and other senior staff. Additionally, a meeting was held with a local authority officer.
- The inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also spoke to several parents when they brought their children to school. The inspectors took account of the 28 staff questionnaires and outcomes of a parental questionnaire recently used by the school.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school’s information on pupils’ current progress; planning and checks on the quality of teaching and assessment; the curriculum; records relating to behaviour, attendance and government sports funding; and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened formally to pupils reading in Years 2 and 6 as well as informally within lessons.

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Llyn Codling

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Coxheath is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes of staff, including at senior level. Two assistant headteachers joined the school in September 2014.
- There is a breakfast club run and managed by the school.
- Pupils attend the Reception classes full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement by:
  - checking that pupils consistently use accurate spelling and punctuation to improve the quality of their written work
  - making sure that pupils use their calculation skills and mathematical knowledge to investigate problems and apply their skills in different ways
  - ensuring that all activities in the early years, including outdoor learning opportunities, appeal to children's interests
  - sharing the school's successes with parents so they can support their child's progress more fully.
- Strengthen leadership by ensuring senior leaders communicate more fully with parents.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported by governors and senior staff, has succeeded in consistently improving the school's effectiveness since its last inspection. The headteacher has developed good teamwork among staff and a purposeful ethos to learning. This has had a positive impact on those aspects of the school's work that needed improvement.
- New assistant headteachers, who joined the school last September, have settled quickly into effectively managing different age groups in the school. They share confidently in management responsibilities. This has enabled the headteacher to focus on rigorous checks on the overall teaching quality. Leaders and staff are well aware, for instance, that aspects of writing and pupils' application of their mathematical skills need improvement. There are well-developed plans to improve these aspects of pupils' learning.
- There are well-organised routines to gauge how well pupils learn within lessons. Coaching and advice given to staff have ensured that the quality of teaching continues to improve. The performance of teachers and other staff is efficiently and effectively managed. Staff are aware that salary progression is dependent upon improvements in pupils' achievement. Visits to other schools to observe effective practice are also beginning to enable individual staff to improve their teaching skills.
- Middle leaders are clear about their roles. They take an active part in accurately checking how well pupils are doing. Along with senior leaders, they work diligently to improve the school further. Leaders effectively guide and check the activities and progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They carefully check that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well to help pupils learn.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and interesting variety of experiences covering all subjects. This includes science, art and geography, and Forest School (outdoor-based lessons) which they enjoy.
- Literacy and numeracy are taught well, enabling pupils to make good progress. However, on a few occasions, mathematical activities are not sufficiently well-planned to enable pupils to use their skills in different ways. As a result of stringent checks on teaching, the standards pupils achieve in literacy have improved well. Pupils generally write at greater length, more creatively and with greater accuracy. However, some inconsistencies remain.
- There are good opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, including helping pupils to become aware of life in modern Britain. These include weekly citizenship awards and studies in class about the meaning of a democracy. Visits from local magistrates to talk about their work helps pupils learn about the law and the consequences if broken.
- The school values its partnerships with parents and families. The school sends out informative newsletters and seeks views through questionnaires. The recent responses were largely positive, but this picture was not repeated by some responses in the Parent View questionnaire. Senior leaders recognise that the school may not always communicate the school's successes effectively to parents, an example being the school's good progress since the last inspection.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. This has been instrumental in helping the school improve its effectiveness in a relatively short time.
- The school is making effective use of the primary sports funding. This includes specialist sports coaching for pupils and training for teachers. There has been increased participation in a wider range of clubs and sporting activities such as badminton, basketball and swimming.
- The school ensures that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are secure and regularly updated. Safeguarding procedures are well organised, consistently applied and meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Since the previous inspection, governors have reviewed the way they support and challenge the school. They have reduced the number of committees, and work together in pairs to attend meetings and to visit the school. These new arrangements are starting to give governors a clear insight into the success of initiatives and pupils' achievement. Governors know that this work requires further development in order for them to be fully effective. Links with individual subject leaders are well developed.
  - Governors are aware of how well teaching has improved. They are clear about their responsibilities regarding rewards for good teaching.
  - Governors attend a wide range of training enabling them to be more confident to offer challenge to school leaders about the rate of improvement. This has contributed well to improving the school's effectiveness.
  - Governors are diligent about ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all. They do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Governors manage finances effectively, including sports funding and pupil

premium funding.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are typically courteous and kind to each other and visitors. Pupils enjoy lunchtimes and playtimes, often citing the range of activities they can do using play equipment. Morning breakfast club provides a positive start to the day for many pupils.
- Pupils value the new routines introduced to help maintain good behaviour. They are confident that if behaviour occasionally dips, it is spotted and improved quickly. Although not all parents agree, pupils say that the school deals with any bullying quickly. School records indicate that incidents are very rare and pupils agreed. Inspection findings confirmed these views.
- Pupils were unanimous that teachers are helpful in tackling occasional problems. They are confident in the school's systems to reward good behaviour and prevent bullying or name-calling. They like their behaviour charts and possibility of earning rewards for good behaviour.
- Within lessons, pupils are attentive and work enthusiastically. They have positive attitudes to their learning. Very occasionally, if lesson activities do not capitalise on their enthusiasm, then their attention wanders and their progress slows.
- Pupils like the range of responsibilities they hold, including belonging to the school council, being 'friends' to younger children and having class responsibilities. Most can recall the school's values to visitors.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in the school and know who to turn to should they need help. They also talk about what to do if they are worried and concerned. They appreciate having 'worry boxes' in the school which enable them to share their concerns.
- Staff make sure that Reception children are cared for well. Staff are quick to spot any who may be in distress or need help. Staff are up-to-date with first aid training. This contributes to ensuring children are well-cared for.
- Pupils are aware of the dangers of using unsuitable websites. They know what they must do when using the internet to secure their safety and privacy. They are also clear about how to keep safe. They benefit from advice from visitors, such as police and fire officers.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Senior leaders' concerted effort to improve teaching and overcome difficulties caused by past staffing changes has been successful. Throughout the school, teaching is clearly focused on improving the pace of pupils' learning. Teaching is typically good and, as a result, pupils make better progress than has previously been the case. Teachers set high expectations for most pupils.
- Teachers rigorously focus on improving pupils' literacy, reading and mathematical skills to help pupils make the progress they are capable of. Teaching is generally effective in these areas. A review of the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) prompted a change of approach. Pupils' reading skills develop well. However, despite significant improvements, a legacy of weaker teaching has led to inconsistencies in ensuring that pupils' spelling and punctuation have developed to the highest levels in order to support their writing.
- In mathematics, pupils develop their calculation skills well. Pupils enjoy regular timed activities which test their accuracy. However, they are less secure in applying their skills to more complex problems.
- Pupils' verbal communication skills develop well. They listen respectfully to each other and reply thoughtfully to help develop answers. One pupil told the inspector, 'As talking partners, we share ideas and learn more quickly.'
- Teachers set appropriate homework to reinforce pupils' learning. These additional activities encourages pupils to develop their research and thinking skills.
- Teaching is generally effective in helping to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the Reception class, teachers plan a wide range of activities for children to use and explore.
- Teachers use effective questioning to check pupils' understanding. Teachers skilfully reshape tasks and explanations, if appropriate. This ensures pupils learn effectively and develop a range of skills across subjects.
- Teachers use accurate and accessible information about pupils' progress. Termly checks and meetings

have raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can do. Pupils' work shows that marking is effective and gives clear and useful feedback. Pupils know what to do next to improve.

- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well-supported. The teacher with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs has introduced a range of appropriate support programmes. These are carefully checked to ensure the support aids pupils' learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils enjoy a range of activities that are matched well to their needs. This enables them to make at least similar progress to their classmates.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils' rates of progress have accelerated through the school. The proportion making better than expected progress compares favourably with all pupils nationally. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2014 was above average?. Current checks on progress indicate this upward trend is continuing.
- Pupils' ability to write confidently using a wide vocabulary has improved. More opportunities to write help boost pupils' enthusiasm, but pupils' ability to use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar is not always consistent. Pupils respond confidently to questions from teachers or visitors and enjoy explaining their ideas.
- Pupils are accurate in their number and calculation work and know how to solve word-based number problems. Many said new 'bead strings' help them count and work out how to do simple multiplication sums. However, not all pupils are fully confident in using their number skills in a variety of ways to help solve more complex problems or investigations.
- Disadvantaged pupils, supported by additional funding, now make better progress than in the past. Year 6 pupils in last year's national tests in mathematics were a term ahead of others in the school and half a term behind all pupils nationally. In reading, they were similar to other pupils in the school and two terms behind others nationally. In writing, pupils were about two terms behind others in the school and three terms behind others nationally. However, over time the gap in achievement has narrowed and disadvantaged pupils are making good progress.
- The school now provides a greater level of challenge for the most-able pupils. More pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age, than in the past.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Children in Reception classes make good progress because they have ready access to reading material and often choose reading activities. Pupils in all age groups read confidently. Older pupils can recall a range of authors, their favourite types of books and what they like reading at home.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make particularly good progress because the school identifies their needs quickly and puts in a wide range of activities suited to their particular needs. Specific support within lessons and in activities outside classes ensures that pupils' academic needs are catered for well so they are reaching levels nearer to national expectations. The school also caters effectively to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, which aids their learning.

### The early years provision

is good

- The provision for early years is good. Warm relationships between adults and children help children settle quickly into school routines and feel safe. Staff create a calm and peaceful environment for learning. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the education of their children by attending after-school discussions, such as the one held during the inspection about phonics teaching.
- When children enter early years provision their skills are slightly below what is typical for their age. Children have strengths in aspects of their personal, social and emotional development when they start school but are often weaker in their language and number development.
- Children make good progress in the Reception Year in language development and in early literacy and numeracy. This means that most are well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- Achievement over time is good because leaders are proactive in checking that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Activities are planned as a result of children's interests. They often enjoy 'planning, doing and reviewing' what they have done. Children with additional needs have effective support and this helps them to make good progress.
- Teaching is good. Adults plan interesting activities, such as bringing in children's favourite teddy bears. They enjoyed showing them to friends, painting pictures of them or trying to discover what happened over

night when the bears ventured into the play area.

- Children have good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic. For example, a child wanted to show inspectors how they could use the toy cooker in the class home corner.
- The location of the outside area has recently been changed, but is a temporary measure. It currently does not fully meet the needs of children. It is not large enough for some activities to take place and some resources do not fully engage the children's interests. Plans to develop a larger, better equipped area are well under way.
- Behaviour is good because children enjoy school. Adults have clear expectations and this helps children feel safe and secure. Welfare and safeguarding routines are secure.

## 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>	118588
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	453642
<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>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Knowles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Robinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February–1 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01622 745553
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