

Corby Old Village Primary School

High Street, Corby, NN17 1UU

Inspection dates 20–21 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils, parents, carers and staff are very proud of Corby Old Village Primary School, which is strongly led by the headteacher and other leaders.
- Changes introduced by leaders to improve reading and writing are raising pupils' attainment further and helping the school to improve.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress. They are well prepared for the move into Year 1.
- From last year's broadly average results at Key Stage 2, attainment is rising. In the current Year 6, in reading, writing, mathematics, the vast majority of pupils are on track to attain the nationally expected Level 4 and more than half are on track to attain the higher Level 5.
- Pupils now make better progress than in the past. Pupils currently make good progress over their time in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Their positive attitudes to learning contribute to the good progress they make during their time at school. Pupils are very friendly, polite and welcoming.
- Pupils feel safe at all times because of the school's strong procedures to promote their welfare and safety.
- Actions taken by school leaders and governors have led to the development of a strong new team of staff.
- Because of effective leadership, teaching has improved and is good. Teachers typically provide interesting and well-planned activities which pupils enjoy.
- The curriculum is varied and very effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education and for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although pupils' attainment in writing has improved, the progress of a minority of, notably boys, is not as rapid in writing as in reading and mathematics.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and do not check the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in order to accelerate progress in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- In the early years, there are opportunities for children to learn through outdoor activities but these do not include the use of large-wheeled equipment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 lessons. Two of these visits were conducted jointly with the headteacher. While visiting lessons, inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their learning. They also carried out a short walk around the school to observe behaviour.
- A group of pupils from Key Stage 2 talked to inspectors about the school's curriculum, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, and pupils' behaviour and safety.
- In addition to looking at pupils' books during lessons, inspectors reviewed pupils' work and heard individual pupils read. They also observed playtime and lunchtime activities.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior staff, and staff with responsibility for leading achievement and different subjects. Inspectors also met with governors and spoke with a representative of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke informally with members of staff and pupils as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors viewed the results of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They spoke informally with parents as they attended a class reading session and when they collected their children at the end of the day. The 21 questionnaires submitted by members of staff were taken into consideration.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, which included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and its plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body and the senior leadership team; information about pupils' progress; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Terrance Mortimer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joseph Figg

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Corby Old Village Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the Reception class full time.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The large majority of pupils are White British; a very small percentage are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Just over one sixth of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is around the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils previously known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club on site.
- Since the appointment of the headteacher in September 2012, half of the teaching staff have left the school and been replaced by other teachers. Three senior leaders, including the early years leader, have been appointed since Easter 2013.
- The school is a member of the Corby primary school cluster, which provides support for small schools, and also the Inspire Teaching Alliance, which provides support to leadership at different levels, including in the early years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to further raise pupils' achievement, especially in writing, by;
 - increasing rates of progress and attainment in writing, particularly for boys, by giving them more opportunities to express their own ideas
 - developing the pupils' writing skills more quickly by making sure that pupils of all abilities are set consistently challenging work
 - making more effective use of the alliance support partnership in order to share good practice to further improve the quality of teaching.
- Improve learning and progress in early years by increasing the opportunities for children to explore and learn in the outdoor area.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by ensuring that subject leaders check on the quality of teaching and how well pupils learn in the subjects for which they are responsible.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Upon appointment, the headteacher completed a rigorous audit of the school and acted to address previous shortcomings in assessment, teaching and learning. Supported well by the senior teacher, her drive and determination have contributed considerably to improvements in teaching, assessment and curriculum development. The morale of the staff is high and they appreciate the good support and guidance that the headteacher has given them.
- Inadequate teaching has been rigorously challenged and has resulted in marked improvements in the quality of teaching. The results at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were the result of a legacy of previously inaccurate assessment and poor teaching in Key Stage 1, rather than the current quality of teaching in the school. The local authority has verified that the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress have, in the past, been inaccurate.
- Leaders accurately evaluate the school's data and identify appropriate priorities which inform the improvement plan. Their checks on teachers' assessments are helping teachers to target work more accurately to improve pupils' performance.
- Teachers have individual targets that clearly focus on improving pupils' progress. Good levels of support for teachers and well-planned training have underpinned improvements to the quality of teaching. Decisions about teachers' salaries are directly linked to evidence of the impact teachers have had on pupils' achievement.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through many opportunities within the curriculum. The school encourages pupils to show respect for each other and to recognise that each pupil is unique and should be appreciated for themselves. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain, as leaders ensure they have a good understanding of British values, such as democracy. Pupils in Year 4 talked to the inspectors about their recent trip to London, and how they have discussed the role of Parliament and democracy. They linked this to their own elections for the school council. Pupils understand the need for rules and expectations, and the benefits they bring, and have respect for different faiths and beliefs.
- The curriculum is planned to engage and interest pupils in their learning. The school has introduced new initiatives to broaden pupils' writing experiences and these are showing early signs of success, although the impact on boys' writing is less evident than the improvement so far seen in the work of the girls.
- The primary sport and physical education premium provides additional clubs and activities after school and at lunchtimes. It has also been used to provide additional specialist training for all staff to develop the teaching of physical education. As a result, more pupils now take part in competitive sports. For example, the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 took part in a triathlon organised in Corby town centre for primary pupils. On their return, they talked about how exciting it had been to be there.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to help eligible pupils make the same good progress as their classmates. It has been used to support pupils in smaller teaching groups; for example, in the Year 5 and 6 group. Leaders and governors ensure there is no discrimination and everyone has an equal chance to achieve.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements and are effective. The learning environment is safe and calm.
- The headteacher is supported by an effective team of leaders and staff, especially in areas such as inclusion and special educational needs. However, she is fully aware that new subject leaders appointed in the past term are not yet contributing enough to the raising of standards by checking pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching in their subject areas. She has rightly targeted this as a priority for the

rest of this year and beyond.

- The early years is well led and managed. Links with parents of children in the Reception class are good. Parents throughout the school contribute well to their children’s learning. For example, they come in to school on a specified day to hear their children read. Parents are also used as volunteers to hear reading on a daily basis in Key Stage 1.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors at the school gate and during ‘parental reading time’ are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They speak extremely positively of the headteacher and staff, saying that they are approachable and know pupils well as individuals. They are very supportive of the changes made by the current leadership. The school creates and maintains strong links with families of children whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. This contributes to these pupils’ good progress and achievement.
- The local authority has provided effective support, advice and training. This has helped to improve pupils’ achievement, provision in the early years, and the effectiveness of the governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have gained a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and pupils’ performance by asking searching questions, receiving regular reports from senior leaders, and coming into school to see for themselves. The governors compare the school’s performance to that of schools locally and nationally, and identify where further improvement is needed. Governors each have links to individual subjects and specific areas of the school development plan so that they are kept well informed. They know that staff training has been effective in helping the school to raise standards.
 - Governors receive detailed information on teachers’ performance, and have only rewarded teachers with pay increases if they are satisfied that staff have met the targets they have been set.
 - Governors know how well the pupil premium and primary school sports funding are used. For example, they know that the teacher specifically employed to work with the pupil premium pupils has strengthened their achievement. They also know that the sports coaches have improved teachers’ practice and helped to further develop the health and well-being of pupils.
 - Governors’ support for the school and knowledge about pupils’ performance are good. They work well with all staff, and work closely with the school to ensure that it maintains its drive to raise standards. Together with senior leaders, governors take care to ensure that the school’s arrangements for safeguarding its pupils are effective and meet all statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school is a very calm and orderly community where pupils are known well as individuals.
- Pupils are keen to learn and they work hard. Positive attitudes towards learning can be seen in the levels of concentration evident in lessons and their good levels of cooperation.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about the way their teachers make learning fun, using games and many interesting activities in lessons to help them learn in different ways. They behave sensibly and are proud of the school.
- Pupils are polite and show care and consideration for others and adults. They are keen to share their work with others and to talk about the work they are doing. For example, a group of pupils were keen to share with an inspector what they had discovered as part of their work in seed dispersal.
- The school has effective systems for identifying, reporting and addressing any inappropriate behaviour, including racist or discriminatory comments. The school deals effectively with any issues.

- Around school, pupils behave well. They move sensibly round the building and at break time play well together, making good use of the resources and equipment available.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in the school's very well-organised dining hall during lunchtimes. The school's catering staff have put in much time and effort to make sure lunchtimes are very happy social occasions.
- A scrutiny of records and observations during the inspection showed that behaviour over time is dealt with well by the school and remains good.
- While there are relatively few opportunities provided for them to take on school responsibilities, pupils are proud to be school council members and they offer to help the lunchtime supervisors clean up after lunch.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Record keeping and follow up with parents about safety issues, including minor injuries, are effective.
- Pupils take great care of one another. For example, pupils in Year 2 say how much they appreciate how the older pupils help them during playtimes and lunchtimes. They know that their teachers are there to make sure they are safe.
- Pupils say that bullying does not take place. They have a good understanding of all forms of bullying, including the potential dangers presented on the internet. They have regular e-safety training. Recently this was provided by the secondary school, whose Year 8 pupils explained the issues.
- Pupils know they should never talk to strangers. They understand that adults who come into school have to wear a visitor's badge to show them they are safe to talk with.
- Pupils told the inspectors how they are well informed about keeping safe when they go on educational trips or to outdoor activity centres. These opportunities have a positive impact and ensure they learn about safety beyond their village community.
- One parent told the inspectors that her children 'love the school because they know the teachers care for them'. This reflects the confidence families have and why the vast majority who responded to Parent View say they would recommend this school.
- Attendance is above national levels. This reflects how much the pupils enjoy being at school and the excellent way in which the school works with parents.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The leadership of the school has placed a sharp and effective focus on improving the quality of teaching. Teaching across the school is now consistently good and some is better, which supports the improving rates of pupils' progress. This has ensured that all groups of pupils are currently achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Good relationships and effective class management are features of the teaching in most lessons. These help pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and ensure that they almost always concentrate fully on their work. Parents state that they believe teaching to be good.
- Teachers establish positive relationships with pupils and expect them to achieve their best. Pupils respond well to their teachers' high expectations, and this results in good learning and good behaviour. Classrooms are well organised, with wall displays that promote pupils' interest in learning and encourage them to aim to reach higher standards.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all groups achieve well. For example, in Year 6, inspectors observed groups of pupils, encouraged by the teaching assistant and the teacher's questions, writing an exciting narrative in the third person to describe a video that had left them gasping at the unpredictable ending. Several metaphors, similes and alliterations were being used, with connectives such as 'however', 'furthermore' and 'consequently' to create complex sentences.
- Support for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to plan support for these pupils and to encourage them to improve their vocabulary by talking about what they have learned.
- Teaching in the Reception class is good. The range of activities develops children's skills and abilities well. Here, and in the rest of the school, teachers make sure that learning is interesting.
- Teachers are highly proficient in developing pupils' reading skills. Children gain a good understanding of phonics (letters and sounds) in the early years. Good practice is maintained through Key Stage 1 and continued in Key Stage 2. This results in the rising attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards of reading across the school are currently high.
- In mathematics, teachers' clear explanations deepen pupils' understanding of calculation and mathematical methods. Pupils are provided with many varied opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills.
- Teachers assess pupils' work frequently to plan future activities. In all classes, marking is used successfully by pupils to improve their work. Pupils' self-assess their work identifying 'what went well' and 'even better if'. All teachers respond to these comments and set further challenges for the pupils so that they know what they need to do to improve their standard of work. The quality of marking in mathematics books is just as strong across the school as it is for literacy.
- Although work in pupils' books shows that, over time, teaching has ensured good progress for all groups of pupils, not enough opportunities are provided specifically to develop boys' writing skills. They are not given enough encouragement to express their ideas. There are occasions when pupils are set writing tasks that are not sufficiently challenging.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Currently children make good progress from entry to the Reception class in their reading, writing, number and shape and space work. In 2014, when they left the Reception Year, however, most children had not reached a good level of development. This was due to poor teaching and leadership of the early years, which the school has rectified. Currently, standards are rising and the children are this year expected to reach standards above the national average figures for 2014.
- Progress data in the Year 6 national tests in recent years reflect previously inaccurate assessment, which had indicated that, in Key Stage 1, pupils had achieved better than was actually the case. This was verified by the local authority following the appointment of the current headteacher.
- Year 2 pupils in 2014 made steady progress in the second half of the year in reading, writing and mathematics, to reach broadly average attainment.
- The data and the work seen in books and lessons indicates that the pupils currently in Year 2 are expected to achieve outcomes above those attained in 2014 and to be above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. It also shows that the school is supporting boys and girls from all backgrounds well and that they are making more consistently good progress and previous gaps are closing.
- Pupils develop good reading skills. They make good progress in phonics due to skilled teaching. Year 1 pupils' results in the national phonics check showed that an above-average proportion reached the

expected level. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to read and improve their competence in reading and their comprehension. They have been effective in encouraging parents to listen to their children reading at home.

- In 2014, Year 6 results were broadly average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. These results demonstrated the legacy from inaccurate Key Stage 1 assessments, so that it looked like they had made less progress than was actually the case.
- Pupils in Year 6 made steady progress in the second half of 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment and progress of current pupils has risen rapidly and the school is on course to exceed previous levels of attainment in both key stages.
- Progress has accelerated in Key Stage 2, so that many pupils are working at or above levels that are expected for their age, especially in reading and mathematics. This is due to the good teaching and support provided. However writing is not rising at the same rate, especially that of boys.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils has been patchy over time. They performed better at Level 5 in mathematics in 2014 and one attained the highest Level 6. They made much better progress in mathematics and in reading than they did in writing. Currently, assessment information shows that the achievement of the most-able pupils is improving across the school and their progress has accelerated. Many more are reaching the higher levels in mathematics and reading.
- In 2014, the number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was too small to comment on their attainment without risk of identifying individual pupils. Throughout the school, however, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is generally in line with or better than that of other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from the extra help they receive. In lessons, their progress is similar to, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils. This success is due to the school's good monitoring, which ensures their individual learning needs are identified early and appropriate support provided to meet them.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, achieve as well as other pupils in the school. In many cases, in Key Stage 2, they make faster progress than their peers.
- In 2014, boys at the end of Key Stage 2 were more than a year behind the girls in all subjects. The current school data shows that this gap has narrowed in mathematics and reading to less than a term. However, although the gap is also narrowing in writing, it is still wider than in the other two subjects. The school has recognised this and is giving extra support to boys in writing to help them make up further ground.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are assessed by the school as generally below those typical for their age, especially in the areas of language, number and social and emotional development. The progress made in 2014 required improvement, as the proportion reaching a good level of development was lower than the national average. However, since the change of leadership in the early years, the progress of the children has much improved so that the vast majority of the children are on track to make a good level of development and so will be well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years is well managed. The new early years leader has created an effective team which is committed to ensuring that the children are not only happy and safe, but also do well. She is well supported by the local authority and the Inspire Teaching Alliance in developing clear plans for the future development of the provision, including the outdoor facility.

- The children settle well in the early years because of good links between school, home and outside nurseries. Early assessment by staff identifies the likes and dislikes of the children, and staff plan for their particular learning needs and interests well. This helps children, including the most able and those with additional needs, to make a good start to their learning.
- Adults help children learn to adopt good manners towards each other and the adults around them. Children take turns to play with different equipment and automatically say 'please' and 'thank you' when sharing. They behave well in lessons and during breaks. Children make very good progress in self-confidence, self-awareness and hygiene.
- Staff teach phonics well. Adults accurately model how the different sounds are made and link phonics work closely to writing activities. Children acquire a thorough knowledge of sounds and letters, and develop their skills in reading and writing well.
- In lessons, staff have high expectations and make sure that learning is purposeful and well focused. They provide opportunities for children to play and explore, and make sure that children are suitably challenged. As a result, children learn quickly and make good progress in all areas of learning. This includes disadvantaged children as well as disabled children and those who have special educational needs.
- Good use is made of the indoor and outdoor environment. However, children have few opportunities to use large-wheeled toys and bicycles.
- Staff assess and record children's progress regularly and accurately using the 'learning journeys', which record children's work and progress and which are regularly shared with parents. They use this information to plan activities to extend and challenge the children further.
- Children are well motivated and show very good attitudes to learning in a safe and caring environment. The provision in early years makes a strong contribution to children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being, as well as to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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	121808
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	456000

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	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Eden
Headteacher	Paula Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2012
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