

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School

Coates Way, Garston, Watford WD25 9NW

Inspection dates 9–10 December 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires Improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Progress, from various starting points, has consistently improved for all groups of pupils since the last inspection. Pupils now make good progress.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders have established a climate of learning that expects the best from all pupils and supports teachers to ensure that pupils thrive.
- Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating tasks for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. They support all pupils by checking their understanding routinely throughout lessons.
- Accurate feedback in workbooks helps pupils to correct any misunderstandings and move on quickly to the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils are considerate, courteous and respectful. They are proud of their work and their school.
- Early years provision has rapidly improved to become good. Children flourish in a stimulating, caring and happy environment and make strong progress.
- Support for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with English as an additional language is personalised to each child's needs. Their progress is rigorously monitored, and they all achieve well as a result.
- Governors challenge school leaders to achieve good outcomes and are constantly striving to improve the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Senior leaders have not yet firmly embedded the recent improvements in provision to fully enhance the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Middle leaders have not yet developed a strategic view of school improvement and target their actions to deliver maximum impact for all pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen and consolidate the improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - introducing systems that track curriculum delivery and pupil progress very regularly to make certain that all pupils fully access all areas of learning
 - developing the role of teaching assistants to enable them to respond to pupils' learning needs effectively, in particular by asking more challenging questions and tailoring their teaching to pupils' levels of understanding
 - making sure that strong teaching, learning and assessment practices are routinely shared – developing a consistency throughout the school.
- Enable middle leaders to play a more strategic part in improving teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - they develop an ability to create and use action plans that show clear targets and actions, and provide opportunities to monitor and review impact
 - they are aware of how their actions fit into the strategic plans for overall school improvement
 - they recognise and work towards outcomes that improve learning for all groups of pupils in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, supported by the assistant headteachers and governors, has successfully led school improvement and established a culture of high expectations for pupils' progress, behaviour and well-being. This has resulted in pupils making good or better progress from their starting points.
- School leaders have a good grasp of the performance of the school and accurately tackle areas needing further development. Improvements are evident in pupils' performance and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupil's progress is good as a result of high expectations of teachers and teaching assistants, and routinely checked by senior leaders through a cycle of planning audits, lesson observations, learning walks and scrutiny of pupils' books. Where necessary, leaders provide effective support and challenge to individual teachers to make sure that their teaching improves. All teachers have access to a broad range of professional development opportunities.
- Appropriate systems are in place to manage the performance of teachers and teaching assistants. Targets for teachers are linked to the national teachers' standards, school pupil performance targets and individuals' own professional development. Class teachers are held to account for the progress of the pupils in their class at regular pupil progress meetings.
- An inclusive, 'family' ethos permeates through all facets of school life and results in pupils and parents feeling valued and respected. Parents who spoke to inspectors were resoundingly happy about the provision for their children and confident that the school responds to their comments and concerns.
- Leaders support teachers to be creative in the delivery of the National Curriculum – resulting in lessons that inspire pupils. The curriculum is well resourced and staff use equipment effectively to promote and support learning. Regular themed events, visitors and trips enhance curriculum delivery. The leadership team facilitate additional learning opportunities at the start and end of the school day.
- Middle leaders are not sufficiently developed to effectively improve teaching and learning across all subjects. They lack the skills to evaluate the quality of teaching accurately in order to embed good practice and target support. Several middle leaders were unaware of the whole-school development plan that linked directly to their subject area.
- Action plans do not ease the process for evaluating improvements as they do not include measurable outcomes.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven throughout all aspects of the school and embedded in its strong ethos and values. Pupils demonstrate an empathy and sensitivity towards their peers and they willingly embrace other cultures and religions. Staff demonstrate a reflective approach and it is evident that pupils adopt this style. Pupils' comments, such as 'we help each other' and 'we are grateful for other people' support the view that this aspect of the school is strong.
- Understanding of British values is evident throughout the curriculum, in displays, assemblies and school policies. Pupils demonstrate tolerance and respect in their words and actions. Pupils have a clear understanding of rules and laws and are aware of the principles of fairness and democracy.
- Leadership of the provision to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving. Provision for their individual needs is effective and results in good progress. Leaders are developing a robust system to review the impact of all interventions more strategically to determine their overall effectiveness and value for money.
- Pupil premium funding is used well and, as a result, disadvantaged pupils generally do as well as their peers. Analysis of the impact of specific interventions is not sufficiently robust.
- The primary sports grant is deployed well to provide experienced sports coaches and new equipment. Pupils are participating in a broader range of sports and taking part in local competitions.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are robust. The established systems make sure that any concerns about pupils' well-being are swiftly acted on and the headteacher is tenacious in pursuing support from outside agencies.
- Since the school's last inspection, the local authority has provided appropriate support to assist in improvement.

■ The governance of the school

- Governors have an accurate view of the school and use a variety of resources and systems to monitor and check information. They correctly recognise the strengths and areas for development and use the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection as the basis for any challenge.
 - The governing body have reconstituted and form a small group with skills that support the school successfully. They make certain that all statutory duties are met and the school finances are managed to create the best outcome for pupils. They are fully aware of the impact of additional grants and can detail how they are spent.
 - Governors hold the headteacher to account and provide additional rigour in the performance management process. They reward strong practice and work with the headteacher to tackle underperformance.
 - Governors are ambitious for the school and have high aspirations for all pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have an accurate view of pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding and plan lessons that result in pupils making good progress in a wide variety of subjects.
- Teachers capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm to learn and create a friendly, hard-working atmosphere in the classroom. This is seen in the classroom displays of pupils' work which celebrate their achievements and provide useful prompts to support further progress. Pupils enjoy learning.
- During lessons, teachers respond quickly to misunderstandings and routinely reframe learning according to the pupils' needs. To support learning, teachers frequently share pupils' work, demonstrating their expectations and praising pupils' achievements.
- Support for individual pupils is timely and allows for pupils to develop independence.
- All teachers have a rigorous tracking system that allows them to quickly identify gaps in pupils' learning and intervene to accelerate progress. In some instances, teachers meet with other class-based staff at the end of a lesson and reflect on the outcomes for all pupils, allowing them to accurately tailor the next day's learning to the pupils' individual level.
- Progress in reading and phonics (the linking of letters and sounds) is diligently tracked. Teachers help pupils to develop a pleasure in reading and as a result pupils enjoy reading.
- An improvement in school books, and more inspirational writing lessons, has resulted in pupils feeling more confident in the structure and content of their written work. This has led to an increase in pupils' writing across a wider variety of subjects and an overall improvement in attainment and progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge of mathematics, and they teach lessons that extend and challenge pupils' understanding. The majority of mathematics lessons result in practical application of a skill and all pupils make good progress. Teachers promote mathematical language and reasoning and all lessons are planned to support a mastery of mathematics.
- Marking in books helps pupils to improve. Time is allocated for pupils to respond to teachers' comments and to reflect on their next steps and this supports improved progress.
- Pupils' individual targets are not used consistently throughout the school, and in some instances pupils had written targets but were unsure what they were for.
- Teaching assistants are less skilled in providing better support to pupils. Sometimes their questioning does not extend pupils' learning and they do not adjust activities when the majority of pupils become distracted.
- Parents agree that their children are well taught and recognise the recent improvements in teaching. They appreciate the regular opportunities they are given to share their child's learning. Parental attendance at open evenings and sessions to support home learning are good.
- Homework is set in line with the school policy and is age- and ability-appropriate. It is used to consolidate pupils' current learning and prepare them for their next lesson.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take a pride in their achievements, their uniform and their school. They play an active part in the life of the school and their opinions are respected and responded to. Recently, pupils helped select school reading books that matched their interests.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to their learning and want to improve. They enjoy their successes and the successes of their peers.
- Pupils and parents are confident that any incidents of bullying will be tackled swiftly. Pupils have a clear understanding of all forms of bullying and have confidence in the response of any adult in the school to resolve any concerns or worries.
- In discussions with the inspector, all pupils showed an age-appropriate awareness of potential dangers. They were also able to describe safe and unsafe behaviours and what to do if they felt unsafe. All pupils understood how to be safe online and identified it as e-safety. Displays around the school reinforce safe behaviours, and activities such as cycling proficiency develop pupils' ability to remain safe.
- Leaders identified a need for pupils to develop the ability to work collaboratively. Board games are now played regularly and pupils are improving their ability to work and play together.
- There is a strong culture of care for pupils, and a commitment to ensuring that all pupils thrive. Staff are trained in safeguarding annually, and risk assessments are regular and relevant. Systems to make certain that pupils are happy and safe are robust.
- Attendance is above the national average for all schools.
- There is a very inclusive and sensitive approach to all faiths, cultures and specific needs. Any necessity for altered or additional support is managed discreetly and all pupils are an integrated part of the whole school community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning and generally respond quickly to teachers' instructions.
- Behaviour expectations are consistently high and clear to all. Positive adult relationships contribute to good behaviour. During breaktimes pupils play well without adult intervention.
- The transition between learning activities is generally swift, and pupils are ready and willing to learn. Any lapses in concentration, or distraction in lessons, can be attributed to a dip in the quality of teaching and this happens more regularly in teaching-assistant-led groups.
- The behaviour policy promotes positive behaviour management and this is evident in lessons and around the school.
- Recording of behaviour incidents is not detailed and does not allow for identification of patterns or prejudices.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- All pupils make consistently good progress from their starting points across a range of subjects, including mathematics and English. The improved progress has been sustained into this academic year and is evident in work seen in pupils' books and through assessment and tracking information.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to all pupils at the school, and therefore their progress is good.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils in the school, and their progress is tracked individually. Across the whole school all disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points and they frequently achieve at the same level as, or above that of, their peers.
- In the Year 1 phonics check, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards was above the national average. This demonstrates sustained improvement in phonics teaching, and phonics assessments during this academic year indicate that the high standards will be maintained. Pupils retaking the phonics check in Year 2 exceed the national average.

- Disabled pupils and those who have a special educational need are making good progress from their starting points. The school supports their additional needs well and this enables pupils to access a broader range of learning opportunities – helping them to overcome their difficulties.
- Historically, girls have outperformed boys in overall attainment. This is no longer the case and in several classes the gap between boys’ and girls’ attainment is narrowing significantly and boys are making accelerated progress.
- The most-able pupils make good progress as a result of work that is challenging and helps them to develop a mastery of their subjects. The proportion of pupils who achieve at a higher level in Year 6 is improving and is above the national average in all subjects except writing. Evidence in pupils’ books and learning observed in classes indicates that this trend of improvement will continue.
- All pupils are given regular opportunities to read and write across a broad range of subjects. Teachers support pupils to make appropriate and interesting book choices and provide time for pupils to reflect on and respond to their reading. Pupils in Year 1 are developing a range of phonics strategies to support their reading. Pupils in Year 6 have a much broader range of strategies and read for meaning and pleasure. Pupils and teachers have recognised that pupils’ increased pleasure in reading has improved the quality of their writing. This was evident in examples of writing seen for all throughout Key Stage 2.
- The transitions into and between phases, and on to secondary school, are good. Older pupils are well supported in their preparation for secondary school, and staff are fastidious in ensuring that more vulnerable pupils make a smooth transition into the next phase of their education.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years provision has improved rapidly since the last inspection. This is as a result of strong strategic leadership and effective support from the local authority. The early years leader has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement and is aspirational for the setting.
- Children enter the Nursery class with skills, knowledge and understanding that is typical for their age. They make consistently good progress through the Nursery and Reception classes in all areas of learning, and are well prepared for starting Year 1.
- Historically, boys have not progressed at the same rate as girls. Improvements in the quality of the provision mean that this is no longer the case. In the majority of subject areas, boys now broadly achieve at the same level as girls.
- The inside and outside learning environments are inviting and stimulating, and promote all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are creative in planning activities that match children’s interests and inspire and engage them.
- Children’s behaviour is good. They work and play together well – demonstrating good personal and social development. By the time children enter the Reception class they are able to maintain concentration and follow the regimes and routines of the school day. They are able to listen without fidgeting or shouting out. Children consistently put up their hand if they wish to answer a question.
- Teaching is good. Teachers and other adults have a sound knowledge of the curriculum and the learning processes of children. All staff know the children in their classes and support their learning needs – in some cases providing children with additional one-to-one or small-group sessions. As a result, all children make good progress from their starting points.
- Learning journals are precise and well presented. They do not always provide sufficient evidence to ensure that all children access all areas of learning and their progress is accurately tracked.
- Parents are involved in many aspects of their child’s education. They provide valuable information before children enter the setting, and during home visits. In both Nursery and Reception, parents are regularly invited to class sessions, and attendance is always good.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 117340 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10001901 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 227 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Tony Ellis |
| Headteacher | Steven Wells |
| Telephone number | 01923 670341 |
| Website | www.coatesway.herts.sch.uk |
| Email address | admin@coatesway.herts.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23 October 2013 |

Information about this school

- Coates Way is an average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the additional pupil premium funding is significantly below the national average. The pupil premium funding is for pupils who are, or have been, eligible for free school meals at any time in the last six years, and children who are looked after.
- Over one third of pupils are from a variety of ethnic minority groups, and one fifth of the pupils have English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is significantly below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment in all classes. Three lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher or an assistant headteacher. Both inspectors listened to reading in Year 1 and Year 6 and looked at work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons, around the school and during breaktimes. The lead inspector met with boys and girls from Key Stage 2 and Year 2. An inspector attended a singing assembly.
- Inspectors took account of 63 responses to Ofsted's parent survey and 19 responses received via SMS. The lead inspector also held an open meeting for all parents which nine parents attended.
- Twenty four members of staff completed the Ofsted staff survey and account was taken of their responses.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and middle leaders. The lead inspector also met representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspection team observed the day-to-day workings of the school and looked at key documents, including the school development plan, the self-evaluation, assessment information, behaviour and attendance records, and information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Deborah Pargeter, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Bartlett

Ofsted Inspector

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