

Copthorne CofE Junior School

Church Road, Copthorne, West Sussex, RH10 3RD

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, supported very effectively by governors, have brought about improvements since the school was last inspected, ensuring that pupils' outcomes are improving.
- Governors have a comprehensive knowledge of the school. They challenge and hold senior leaders to account to improve teaching and look at how pupils develop positive attitudes to school.
- Leaders ensure that the extra money given to the school to support disadvantaged pupils and to improve pupils' sporting and physical education (PE) experiences is used well.
- Almost all groups of pupils now make good progress, particularly in reading and writing, where high numbers use language effectively and write maturely.
- Confident, self-assured pupils and effectively planned lessons help pupils to develop good attitudes to their work. Behaviour around the school and outside on the playground is good.
- All teachers promote a culture of respect where pupils are polite, courteous and listen to one another so they can consider the points of view of their friends.
- Pupils learn about the events that are happening in the world around them and, as a result, they understand how modern Britain works.
- All adults in the school provide effective levels of care and guidance to help pupils make sensible choices. As a consequence, pupils say they feel safe and have someone to turn to if they feel worried.
- Safeguarding arrangements are successfully targeted on keeping pupils safe. Staff are trained to be vigilant and pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet, are strongly reinforced.
- Most parents are positive about the school, noting that there have been improvements in some key areas recently. However, they are keen to understand more about how well their children are doing.
- The attendance of a few groups and individual pupils has not been regular enough. The school has worked to improve this but some pupils still miss too much time, which limits their learning.
- The information the school holds on pupils is accurate but the analysis of this by a few leaders is sometimes not crisp enough. This means teachers occasionally do not adapt their teaching to stretch the learning of more-able pupils, particularly in mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the use of assessment information by leaders and teachers so that:
 - the information it provides helps leaders measure the impact of their work
 - progressively more demanding activities are devised to challenge most-able pupils, particularly in mathematics
 - the school informs parents more clearly about how well pupils are learning and progressing.

- Reinforce the need for regular attendance for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The focused and determined leadership of senior leaders has brought about improvement since the previous inspection. Sustained work on driving up the standards in the quality of teaching has reaped rewards. For example, decisive action to change the way that English skills are taught has resulted in a significant increase in the quality of pupils' writing and increased fluency and comprehension when reading.
- Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and their self-evaluation is accurate. This is because they are a regular presence in classrooms. They use frequent checks on the quality of teaching and of pupils' books to tailor support and training for teachers.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have an aspirational vision for the school. Leaders recognise that they have achieved significant steps in improving the school but are also clear about what still needs to be done. Everyone is working towards these goals.
- Some developments are still relatively new. For example, the tracking of pupils' achievement has not been in place long enough to help senior leaders understand in detail the impact of their decisions. The drive by leaders to ensure that all teachers use this information consistently to challenging more-able mathematicians is also underdeveloped.
- Leadership for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. As a result, adults plan carefully for these pupils' needs and this has ensured better progress in core subjects.
- Leaders and staff work supportively with parents. This is evident in the large number of parents who attended school information meetings on online safety. However, a few parents who talked to inspectors and who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, wanted better information about how well their children were doing in school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, combining a strong focus on English and mathematics with thematic approaches in subjects such as science, history and geography. The approach to studying science is very strong, with science books showing deep and meaningful understanding of, for example, the rules governing light, its reflection and how we see.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of British values. Respect and tolerance of others runs as a key theme throughout the school. Assemblies on how to treat others and a focus on the school's values help ensure that pupils treat each other well. Pupils learn about different faiths and share their knowledge with others. Pupils vote on those who take on roles and responsibilities in the school and consequently develop a good understanding of democracy.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that extra funding is used to support those pupils known to be disadvantaged. As a result, the progress that they make is at least in line with other pupils nationally and significant numbers are on track to do better than this.
- Funding to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used successfully to improve school facilities and provide an extended range of sports available to pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well through a broad curriculum. Leaders challenge stereotypes and help pupils to understand a wide

range of cultures and lives, for instance through displays and in religious education lessons.

- The local authority has provided appropriate support in improving English outcomes and in leadership skills which have been welcomed by the school. Their validation of the school's actions has helped governors evaluate the progress being made.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. The governing body of the school knows the school well and has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are ambitious and want to see pupils do well.
- Governors make planned and purposeful visits to the school to meet leaders and pupils. They receive regular updates from leaders. For example, a recent meeting with the PE coordinator helped them to check on the effectiveness of their decisions about spending the primary PE and sports premium.
- They know that staff should only receive a pay award if pupils make good progress and undertake the headteacher's performance management robustly.
- The governing body is confident that the school keeps pupils safe. They ensure that they review the school's arrangements for safeguarding regularly so that these meet requirements. They know they have a responsibility to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and the safeguarding policy includes a paragraph about safeguarding pupils from radicalism and extremism.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All pupils who spoke to inspectors stated that they are kept safe in school. The latest child protection policy provides adults with a useful document to help staff keep children safe. Staff are diligent during lunch and break times to ensure that pupils are well cared for. All checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work with children have been undertaken and are recorded in the single central register and risk assessments for off-site visits are kept up to date. All staff have been trained so that they know what to do if they have safeguarding concerns about a child and the very latest guidance has been used to reinforce this message. Any reports or referrals about pupils the school feels may be vulnerable are stored safely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Most of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school identified in the last inspection have been eradicated due to good training and development opportunities. In discussions, many pupils told us that the best thing about their school is their teachers: 'because they help us to learn'.
- In most lessons, teachers plan work that builds on and extends pupils' learning and understanding. In the strongest lessons, pupils make rapid progress because teachers have high expectations and are clear what pupils need to do to succeed. In a Year 4

lesson, for example, pupils reinforced their understanding of myths about the moon by discussing and then acting out the story of the myth. As a result, they were clear about the way the story was made up of a sequence of events and they used rich and varied vocabulary to describe their actions with great expression.

- Assessment systems are beginning to enable leaders and teachers to discuss pupils' progress. This is not yet developed fully to encourage more able pupils to work at even greater depth. As a result, opportunities to move pupils on are not always taken, particularly in mathematics lessons.
- Evidence from pupils' books and discussions with them shows that teachers plan activities that encourage enthusiasm for learning. This was seen where pupils in Year 4 applied their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling and showed accurate history skills when writing applications for jobs in a Victorian house. One noted 'I am extremely good at sewing and was top of my class', as a reason for being employed. Science work is also well recorded, with good levels of scientific vocabulary and high-level understanding when pupils describe, using measurements in degrees, the way light is reflected.
- Pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills in literacy lessons and across a wide range of subjects. Pupils talked about reading and read to inspectors. They talked about a broad range of books and favourite authors and were able to describe their love of reading.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning. They reflect the good level of questioning seen from class teachers, encouraging pupils to be resilient and persevere when faced with difficulties. Most teaching assistants know what is expected of them because they receive detailed information about the learning and have appropriate subject knowledge.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide useful feedback and guidance to the pupils in accordance with the school's marking policy. This gives pupils the next steps that they need to improve. It generates a useful dialogue so that pupils respond to further questions raised by their peers and teachers.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use the internet to find things out for themselves. They help pupils to develop high levels of skills in writing computer code and controlling robots through writing accurate sequences of instructions.
- Teachers encourage links with parents through setting homework so that learning continues at home and complements the work they do at school. On Parent View, most parents agreed that their children receive a suitable amount of homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work in school. They participate in lessons with enthusiasm and confidence. They are proud of their achievements and share their success with visitors keenly. In discussion, pupils talked with obvious pride

about their successes and the way the school helps them all to learn.

- The school's work to promote understanding and respect for people of different faiths and cultures leads to a positive environment where pupils value each other's differences. During lessons, pupils collaborate exceptionally well, discussing their learning with one another and sharing ideas to solve problems or improve their writing. In a Year 5 lesson, this mature discussion and cooperation helped all pupils to achieve an effective understanding of the book they were reading and how it made them feel.
- Pupils say that they welcome everyone to their school, no matter what their differences. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, particularly that associated with being online. They are taught about prejudiced types of behaviour and say that this is not an issue at their school. Pupils know how to keep safe and are able to protect themselves.
- Pupils' physical well-being is promoted through encouragement to participate in a sound range of sporting activities and the governors' diligence in ensuring that the outside spaces of the school provide opportunities to exercise.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils listen to their teachers carefully during lessons and respond to instructions quickly and without fuss. Their positive attitudes towards their learning contribute strongly to the progress that they make.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered around all areas of the school. During lunchtimes and break times, pupils play well alongside and with each other despite the relatively small space to play in. Adults ensure that pupils are well supervised and act as strong role models.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. However, the attendance of a few pupils from vulnerable groups has been lower than other pupils nationally and they were more likely to be persistently absent. While attendance is now average, leaders recognise that even more work is needed to ensure that these pupils continue to attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The previous inspection highlighted the need for pupils to do better particularly in writing. As a result, leaders and governors took decisive action to develop teachers' skills and subject knowledge in this area with the result that this has secured improved rates of progress for most pupils.
- Last year, by the end of key stage 2, the progress pupils made in reading, writing and mathematics broadly matched that seen in other schools nationally. This year, from their different starting points, pupils are making stronger progress. Evidence seen in pupils' books and in lessons shows an increased level of understanding of the techniques of writing and skills in reading across the school. Pupils in the current Year 6 are able to use sophisticated sentence construction, a varied vocabulary and effective

punctuation and grammar.

- Pupils make effective progress and attain expected skills in mathematics work, but fewer work at greater depth because occasionally some teachers do not plan sufficiently demanding tasks to deepen pupils' understanding. This is because checks on what pupils know and can do are not used well enough to move pupils on in lessons so that they reach more complex levels of knowledge and skill.
- Middle leaders have ensured that the additional assistance for disadvantaged pupils is being used methodically in their subject areas. This means that pupils are more confident and, along with those with better starting points, they improve their basic skills effectively. This is especially the case in reading and writing where their knowledge is improving faster than other pupils nationally.
- Those pupils known to have special educational needs and/or disabilities now make good progress so that differences diminish with other pupils nationally. This is particularly strong in reading, where effective support and well trained teaching assistants work diligently with pupils in developing their phonics knowledge.
- The majority of pupils attained expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2016 national tests. Classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that the focus on improving writing through a programme to improve pupils' reading skills is having a positive impact.
- Pupils make strong progress in the other subjects of the curriculum. They apply their high-quality writing skills in subjects like history and science and record their research carefully. They frequently show that they have good historical and scientific skills as a result. Pupils in Year 6, for example, apply their knowledge of how plants adapt to different conditions to suggest why human beings are different.
- Good attitudes to learning, well-developed computer skills and improved literacy skills, prepare pupils well for the next stage of the education when they leave Year 6.

School details

Unique reference number	126013
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10019899

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Knight
Headteacher	Joanna Francis
Telephone number	01342712372
Website	www.cophorne.w-sussex.sch.uk/
Email address	head@cophorne.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and there have been staffing changes.
- The school is about the same size as the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average and there are proportionally more boys in the school than is usual in most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who leave and join the school throughout the year is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium is below average but the number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or

disabilities is broadly average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 16 lessons across the school. Most of these were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- They held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders, teachers and pupils. A meeting was held with four representatives of the governing body and an officer of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start and end of the school day
- They observed the school at work and considered a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, safeguarding documentation and governing body papers and policies.
- Pupils' books from different year groups were scrutinised.

Inspection team

David Cousins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rob Crompton

Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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