

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



24 March 2017

Julia Thomas
Headteacher
Coteford Infant School
Fore Street
Eastcote
Pinner
HA5 2HX

Dear Mrs Thomas

Short inspection of Coteford Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 21 February 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in January 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your enthusiasm for ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Staff share your vision and work as a cohesive team to create a nurturing climate for learning. This is reflected in the respectful behaviour and attitudes demonstrated by pupils and staff alike.

Leaders and teachers work together effectively to improve outcomes for pupils. Staff are keen to learn from each other and share examples of good practice. Where necessary, leaders provide teachers with additional personalised support to strengthen their teaching.

Teachers make regular checks on how well pupils learn and achieve. They work closely with each other to ensure that assessment information is accurate. Teachers use this information carefully to spot gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. This enables teachers to plan work that consistently helps pupils move forward with their learning.

As a result of effective teaching, the majority of pupils make at least good progress from their starting points. Pupils are quick to develop the skills they need to read and write well. In the 2016 national phonics check, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who achieved the required standard was above the national average. This includes pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The most able pupils are routinely challenged in their learning. In the 2016 key stage 1 assessments, a greater proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics than was the case nationally. The most able disadvantaged pupils did as well as other pupils nationally. However, you recognise that not all pupils achieve to the very best of their capabilities in mathematics. This is because they are not routinely tackling more demanding mathematical problems which stretch their understanding and skills.

Pupils enjoy school and are keen to do their best during lessons. However, absence rates for disadvantaged pupils are too high. Your work to tackle this is beginning to have an impact, but there is still further work to do. This is reflected in the school's current plans for improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose. The procedures for staff recruitment meet statutory requirements and include all the necessary steps to check that adults are suitable to work in the school. The single central record of these checks is well maintained.

Staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to promote pupils' welfare and safety, including those set out in the latest statutory guidance. High-quality records show that staff are vigilant in identifying and reporting concerns. Consequently, leaders can build an accurate picture of pupils who are vulnerable and require additional support. Effective partnerships with external agencies and families ensure that the needs of these pupils are assessed carefully so they receive the right level of protection.

Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school. Warm and positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute significantly to pupils' sense of well-being. All of the 43 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their child felt safe and happy at school. This view was also shared by the 35 staff who completed the online questionnaire. Pupils are aware of the steps they can take to keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, pupils could explain how to use the correct procedures when crossing roads. Year 2 pupils were able to describe the action they would take if they saw something on the internet that made them feel worried.

Inspection findings

- For my first line of enquiry, I considered children's achievement in writing in the early years. For the last three years, the proportion of Reception children who achieved the expected standard in writing has been lower than the national average. This is particularly the case for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Your work to improve children's writing outcomes is proving successful. I found that children have rich and varied opportunities to develop their writing skills. My visits to classrooms showed that teachers consider carefully which resources and

activities will capture children's imagination and motivate them to write. For example, in one classroom, children were enthusiastically writing recipes and lists of ingredients in the 'class bakery'. In another area of the classroom, children were pretending to be vets and were busy writing out appointment lists, recording why an imaginary pet needed to visit the clinic. Children's excitement about writing was palpable with one child saying, 'I can't wait to write more.'

- You have ensured that these well-planned opportunities are complemented by high-quality phonics teaching. Children quickly develop the basic skills they need to record their ideas with confidence. As a result, writing in children's books shows that they are making rapid progress from their different starting points. This includes children from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those that are the most able. Your current assessment information also indicates that a greater proportion of children, including those who are disadvantaged, are on track to achieve the early learning goal in writing.
- For my second line of enquiry, I focused on pupils' achievement in mathematics in key stage 1. In 2016, statutory assessments showed that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was broadly similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils working at the higher standards was above the national figure. However, you have accurately identified that pupils' achievement in mathematics could be even better. This is because the teaching of mathematics needs to give greater emphasis to the development of pupils' mathematical reasoning skills.
- My visits to classrooms and work in books show that pupils practise their basic calculation skills regularly. Teachers think carefully about how to present calculations in different ways to deepen pupils' understanding. Well-chosen resources and images help pupils understand how to carry out a calculation and work out for themselves whether their answer is correct. This approach contributes successfully to the good progress made by all groups of pupils.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they are not routinely challenged to apply their knowledge to solve problems or tackle mathematical investigations. Leaders have already taken steps to address this. However, the clear impact of their work is not yet consistently evident in pupils' outcomes.
- I also considered leaders' work to improve attendance. Overall, pupils' attendance is broadly average. However, the attendance of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is lower than their peers, both in the school and nationally.
- You recognise that this needs to be tackled urgently. Parents now receive personalised half-termly letters to reinforce your high expectations for attendance. The school's breakfast club provides valuable support for families and contributes well to your drive to reduce absence. You have also rightly focused on ensuring that good habits of attendance are established in the Nursery and Reception classes. Staff identify concerns promptly and these are followed up rigorously through regular meetings with parents. Families and pupils now receive additional support at the earliest possible stage. Effective links with the local authority's education welfare service contribute well to this support.
- Leaders' work to reduce rates of absence is beginning to have an impact. This is particularly evident in Year 2, where the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has

improved considerably this year. However, there is still further work to do, predominantly in the early years and Year 1.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- in mathematics, pupils' knowledge and skills are extended through routine opportunities to solve challenging mathematical problems
- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils improves quickly, so that absence from school does not slow their progress.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hillingdon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Murphy-Dutton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- meetings with you and other leaders to evaluate the school's work to improve outcomes for pupils
- visits to classrooms and scrutiny of work in pupils' books
- listening to a group of Year 2 pupils read, as well as talking to them about their behaviour and attitudes to learning
- scrutiny of documentation related to the safeguarding of pupils, as well as meeting with you to review arrangements to support the most vulnerable pupils in the school
- a meeting with representatives from the governing body and a telephone discussion with the local authority's school's improvement partner
- a meeting with you to discuss the school's current attendance information, and the action taken to tackle poor attendance for different groups of pupils
- reviewing responses to Ofsted's online surveys, including 43 responses from parents, 50 responses from pupils and the 35 staff responses.