

Inspection of a good school: Copthorne Community Infant School

Rodgers Lane, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7FF

Inspection date: 29 March 2022

Outcome

Copthorne Community Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe at this school. They say that bullying is rare. They are confident that adults will take good care of them if they ever have any worries. Pupils say that they like coming to this school because they have friends to play with. They were keen to tell inspectors that, 'It's amazing because you can learn so much.'

Leaders and staff have high expectations of all pupils. The well-established routines mean that pupils know what to do. When lunchtime ends, pupils line up with no fuss ready to come back into class. In lessons, pupils behave well. They listen to adults and are keen to answer questions.

There are many activities for pupils to enjoy outside the classroom. They sing to residents at a local nursing home. They can represent their classmates on the school council or take part in sporting activities. Pupils can play with a wide range of equipment at lunchtime, including in table tennis and badminton and riding bicycles. They grow tomatoes in the school greenhouse and recently, they hatched ducklings.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

A high priority at this school is to teach pupils to read. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. The new programme is well taught. Leaders spotted that some pupils needed extra help to catch up with their phonics following the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff provided these pupils with the additional support they needed. When they read, pupils use their knowledge of phonics to help them sound out the words. Some of the books that pupils are given contain words with sounds that they have not yet learned. When this happens, pupils struggle to read fluently. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy reading. They like stories. They listen intently as teachers read stories to them at the end of the school day. Children in early years join in enthusiastically with the words that are repeated through the book.

The curriculum for mathematics is well planned and well taught in all classes. Pupils grasp new ideas because teachers build step by step on what they have learned in the past. In Reception Year, children accurately count pebbles and match them to the number written on a card. Staff reinforce children's understanding of numbers by singing songs such as 'Five little men in a flying saucer' with them. In key stage 1, teachers use their good subject knowledge to demonstrate clearly how pupils can solve mathematical problems. They make sure that pupils understand important vocabulary.

The curriculum in all subjects is planned from the start of Reception Year through to the end of Year 2. In each subject, leaders have set out what they want pupils to learn and remember, the activities pupils should participate in and the skills they should master. However, in some subjects, the details are not as precise. Occasionally, it is not clear exactly what pupils must know and be able to do to complete an activity successfully.

Pupils remember what they have been taught. For example, they talk confidently about different religions and artists.

Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour because pupils behave well and are attentive. Pupils listen to staff, offer answers to questions and talk about their ideas with their friends. They share equipment sensibly. In an art lesson, for example, pupils shared the tools. They politely asked each other for shape-cutters, plastic cutlery or rollers as they formed their dough to make a sculpture.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive just the right support and guidance they need to learn alongside their friends. Teachers carefully consider whether extra equipment or a different approach is needed to support these pupils.

Pupils learn about religions and beliefs that may be different from their own. They enjoy visits from a pantomime. Leaders are determined that Copthorne Community Infant School will play a full part in the community that is represented proudly in its name. For example, pupils sing at a local supermarket. They visit local churches, take part in Christmas tree festivals, make Harvest festival donations to local residents and raise money for charities.

Governors know the school well. They receive reports from leaders at all levels and ask well-considered questions. Along with senior leaders, they keep a careful eye on staff workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff keep a close eye on pupils' welfare. They know the signs of potential abuse to look out for. They know how to report any concerns that they may have about pupils. Leaders make effective use of external agencies to provide support for pupils and families.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of the potential dangers of using the internet, including of cyber-bullying.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced a new programme to teach phonics. It is implemented well. However, some of the books that pupils are given to read do not match the sounds that they have learned closely enough. Sometimes, pupils struggle to read fluently. This slows their progress. Leaders must ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds they have learned, so that pupils master the phonic code quickly and read with fluency.
- Leaders have set out the curriculum in all subjects. They have included information about what knowledge pupils will learn and the key activities they will complete in every year group, in every subject. In some subjects, it is not exactly clear what knowledge pupils must acquire to complete an activity. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity about the knowledge pupils should learn in every subject and every year group.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged school to be good in January 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	112687
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10211642
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Sharp
Headteacher	Nichola Way (Executive Headteacher) Liane Allen (Headteacher)
Website	www.cophorneinfants.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school federated with Leys Junior School in September 2018. The schools share an executive headteacher and a board of governors.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors did deep dives into reading, mathematics and art and design. They spoke with leaders about the curriculum, visited lessons, examined pupils' work and listened to pupils reading. They also spoke with teachers and pupils about these subjects.
- The lead inspector discussed the curriculum in a wide range of subjects with leaders. She met with the leaders responsible for pupils with SEND.

- Inspectors held meetings with three members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors examined the single central record of vetting checks. They held discussions with leaders, staff and governors about the safeguarding of pupils. They examined a range of documentation related to safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils around school, during lunchtime and in class. They spoke with parents and carers as they collected their children from school and considered the responses that parents had given to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Clive Lawrence

Ofsted Inspector

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