

Inspection of Corby Old Village Primary School

High Street, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 1UU

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Early years provision | Good |
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| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |
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What is it like to attend this school?

The five core aims of Corby Old Village Primary School are: challenge, opportunities, values, pride and success. The concept of 'challenge' has been used to shape the curriculum. Leaders have the highest expectations of all pupils. They want every pupil to be aspirational and achieve their potential.

Staff and pupils are proud of their school. Pupils are cheerful. They enjoy learning and being together. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. Staff model the positive attitudes they want pupils to take on. Pupils are polite and well behaved. They look after the school. For instance, pupils volunteer to be 'Wombles' at lunchtime, clearing any litter from the school field.

Pupils appreciate that the adults at Corby Old Village check on their welfare. It makes them feel safe and valued. They know that any member of staff will help them if they need it.

Every class is named after a mythical creature. The school encourages pupils to take on the traits of these mythical beasts. In Year 3, for example, pupils learn to be brave, determined, motivated, sharp and bold like a griffin.

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

There is an ambitious curriculum in place at Corby Old Village. In many subjects, the school has clearly set out the most important knowledge that pupils need to remember. Staff regularly revisit the key content that has been covered in the past, helping pupils to retain this essential prior learning and to build on what they already know. In physical education (PE) lessons, for instance, staff know the main points that have been covered in previous years about running technique. They then go over this knowledge and rehearse these skills before taking the learning forward. As a result, pupils develop a rich and detailed body of knowledge in PE that they can recall securely. However, this approach does not happen in all areas of the curriculum. This means that pupils do not develop the same depth of understanding in some subjects.

Reading is prioritised at Corby Old Village. Phonics is taught well. Pupils use their 'robot arms' to help them say the separate letter sounds in words. They then squash them together with their blending hands to read whole words. Books are matched to the letter sounds that pupils know. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a rich diet of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The school has thought carefully about the texts pupils will read, and listen to, in each year group. Pupils talk fondly about the wonderful stories they encounter. They enjoy spending time in the school's well-stocked library. Older pupils understand that being a good reader helps them to learn in other subjects, but they also value reading for reading's sake. Year 6 pupils sum this up well by explaining, 'A book is a key – it opens a door to a new adventure in your head.'

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. The school ensures that small changes are made to lessons to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This means that pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils.

Staff have good subject knowledge. They model learning well and regularly check on pupils' understanding during lessons. They explain things clearly, making sure that pupils learn new technical terms. However, the focus on language development in the early years is not always sharp enough. Staff sometimes do not develop children's communication and language skills during free choice activities and imaginative play as well as they might.

Personal, social, health and economic education is of a high quality. The school ensures that pupils know what it means to feel safe. Pupils learn how to keep themselves away from harm. They learn what to do if they are faced with something that worries them. Pupils learn about charitable giving, helping others and setting goals. Pupils know what British values are and they understand why they are important. Respect and kindness sit at the heart of pupils' personal development. Pupils say, 'Everyone is different, and this difference should be welcomed and celebrated.' There are plenty of clubs to attend, as well as numerous opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles.

Staff work together as a team. They are given time and help to manage their workload.

Governors hold the school to account for the high-quality education in all subjects. They make frequent checks on the impact of the curriculum, offering challenge and support to help take the school forward.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not clearly identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to remember in some areas of the curriculum. This means that staff cannot routinely revisit the key content that pupils must retain in these subjects. As a result, some pupils do not gain the depth of understanding that they should. The school must ensure that the most important knowledge pupils need to remember is set out clearly in all areas of the curriculum.
- The school has not ensured that staff in the early years reliably develop children's communication during free choice activities and imaginative play. This means that children in the early years do not consolidate and build their language skills as quickly as they might. The school must ensure that all staff maximise their

interactions with children so they can consistently develop children's knowledge, skills and vocabulary through talk.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 121808 |
| Local authority | North Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 10268329 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 206 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Rachel Hume |
| Headteacher | Paula Thomas |
| Website | www.covp.org.uk/ |
| Dates of previous inspection | 10 and 11 September 2019 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography and PE. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculums for art and design, history and religious education. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff, including a teacher in the early stages of their teaching career. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour, and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, and documentation relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance, and governance.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Talbot

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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