



Coates Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110631
LEA CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278473
Inspection dates 27 February 2006 to 28 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Geof Timms LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Fold
School category	Community		PE7 2BP
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01733 840 527
Number on roll	182	Fax number	01733 840 322
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Garry Crackle
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Wendy Martin

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 27 February 2006 - 28 February 2006	Inspection number 278473
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Coates Primary School serves the village of Coates and the surrounding area. It is of below average size for a school of this type and most children come from broadly typical social and economic backgrounds. The numbers eligible for free school meals are below average. Most children are White British and there is a small proportion of children from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Two children are at an early stage of acquiring English. The proportion of children with learning or physical difficulties is below average. Two children have statements of special educational need entitling them to extra support. The attainment on entry of most children is broadly typical for their age.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Coates Primary School is an effective school which is providing its children with a good education and good preparation for their secondary education. This view of the school's effectiveness is shared by the school and the inspectors. Children have well-developed basic literacy and numeracy skills, and the school is focused on improving these still further. The test results show that pupils make good progress. The headteacher and staff have worked hard and successfully to address the issues raised at the last inspection. This, together with the current rising standards and good provision, shows that the school has a good capacity to improve, and it provides good value for money. The Foundation Stage provision has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The links with the pre-school setting have been strengthened. Resources have improved and the quality of teaching is good. Almost all the children achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the Reception year, with some exceeding them. Relationships among children, and between children and adults, are very strong. Behaviour is good and children enjoy learning. Although the management of the teaching assistants has been disrupted through illness and other absences, those working in classrooms are doing an effective job, particularly in supporting the less able children, or those groups who are underachieving. However, the level of support and challenge for the more able, and the gifted and talented children, is less effective and some find the tasks provided for them too easy. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and her senior leadership team. Subject leadership is effective. Although the current governors are doing a good job in supporting and challenging the school, their work is made more difficult by a lack of parents willing to take on the available vacancies.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for the most able children to extend and develop their learning and interests. - Investigate ways of encouraging more parents to become school governors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well and standards are good. Most make good progress in the school. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average but there are a number of children who have less well developed early cultural, social and communication skills. They make good progress in the Reception class and most reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the year. In the 2005 national tests, the Year 2 results showed a good improvement over the previous two years' results. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for children's attainment and these are achieved. The standards were significantly above average overall, and the proportion of children reaching the expected level in writing was exceptionally high. In Year 6, the results showed that the progress they made in Years 3 to 6 was significantly above average. In particular,

the English results were much improved over previous years. This was due largely to very good results in reading. However, the recent emphasis on improving writing also had a positive impact on standards. Although standards are good, reading and writing remain the school's main priorities for further improvement. Where the school recognises underachievement this is very well addressed. Groups of targeted children are provided with extra support in literacy and numeracy. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved since the last inspection, due to better resources and more use of computers in different subjects, and are now broadly in line with those expected.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, continues to be good. Their cultural awareness is outstanding. Close links with schools in other countries, such as Japan, Switzerland, Spain and France help children become familiar with the culture, languages and customs of the wider world. Children are polite and get on well with their teachers. Their willingness to consider and understand the needs of others reflects their strong spiritual, moral and social awareness. Most of the children enjoy coming to school and they are keen to work hard and make good progress. Attendance is above average and there are few unauthorised absences. Children behave well and make an exceptional contribution to the school and the wider community. For example, children help to entertain local senior citizens, take part in a local music festival and raise money for charities. Children feel the school is interested in their views and the school council is an important part of school life. Children have, for example, helped to select and purchase the play equipment they want to use during lunch times. Children clearly understand the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. Drinking water is freely available during lessons and extra-curricular sports are very popular. Children have a good awareness of safety and look after each other during lunch and playtime. Children's good social skills, together with their strong basic skills in literacy and numeracy equip them well for their future life within the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and this is reflected in the good provision for children and the above average standards they achieve. Teachers work hard to make their classrooms tidy and bright learning environments. They build good relationships with children and this encourages effective learning. Because of this, children are willing to answer questions without fear of failure. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour. They use a variety of teaching methods. Strengths include good open-ended questioning which requires children to think before answering and helps build problem-solving skills. Children say that teachers help them learn well

and work hard to make the lessons enjoyable. The day-to-day assessment of children's work is good and is used effectively in planning, particularly for the less able. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, although staff changes have made this currently difficult to manage. They often plan sessions together and the assistants offer feedback on how successful their work has been, enabling teachers to keep track of children's progress. When the teaching is less successful, the pace of lessons is slower and the planning does not make very effective links between parts of a lesson. Although teachers often provide different activities and extra support for the less able children, this is not done as regularly or effectively for the more able and higher attaining children. Teachers are using the interactive whiteboards well to enliven their teaching and add variety and interest to children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and continues to address children's needs well. Children in Years 3 to 6 learn to swim and this helps to keep them safe, fit and healthy. French is also taught to children of all ages and teachers motivate children by encouraging them to use it informally during the school day. Provision for the most able children is more limited, however, and there are few opportunities to extend the learning of those with particular gifts and talents. The curriculum in the Reception class is good and the teacher has established an appropriate balance between children being able to choose activities for themselves and being guided by adults. Older children can take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Children can develop their sporting and musical skills and these opportunities help them to develop their self-confidence. A comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education provides clear information about staying healthy and keeping safe. It also helps children to build life skills that help them to become responsible citizens. This strong emphasis on health awareness results in children having a good understanding of the benefits brought by regular exercise and a healthy diet.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school continues to look after its children well. Children speak highly of adults and say that they are very approachable. Teachers know their children well and close links with external agencies ensure that they receive specialist help and support as and when the need arises. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are comprehensive. This high level of support and care ensures that most of the children feel very positive about coming to school and arrive in a good frame of mind for learning. Teachers monitor children's personal and academic development closely. Children undertake a wide range of tests and assessments and close monitoring of the information obtained allows teachers to set targets and identify areas for improvement. Children at risk of underachievement are quickly identified and additional help is provided if necessary, although this is less evident for the more able children. Children in Years 5 and 6 have individual targets for improvement in English and mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership that is appropriately focused on raising standards. The senior leadership team have complementary strengths and play an important part in school improvement. The improvements made since the last inspection, along with other changes and the current rising standards throughout the school, are clear indicators of the school's good capacity to improve further in the future. The school's self-evaluation is good. It is accurate, based on a good range of evidence and involves all members of the school community. Following on from this, school improvement planning is very detailed and focused on appropriate priorities. The subject leaders monitor their subjects in some detail. However, their records of this are too often descriptive and do not always underline strengths and weaknesses. The school council provides the school with an effective pupil voice. Staff work together well as a team and this aids some effective staff development and the sharing of good ideas and sound practice. The governance of the school is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, helped by the focused and detailed headteacher's reports. However, the governing body is hampered by the lack of parent governors, for which the school has five vacancies. Although largely supportive of the school, parents are missing this very good opportunity to help influence and be involved in their school. The school needs to continue seeking ways to encourage parents to take up this important role.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited. We particularly enjoyed talking with you, especially those of you who are on the school council, and you told us a lot about the things you like doing at school and what you would like to see improved. This letter is to tell you about some of the important things we saw. Your parents are happy with your school, and most of you told us you are very happy there as well. You told us that you like the way the teachers try to make lessons interesting, and you are especially enthusiastic about going on trips and visits. A good number of you are involved in out of school activities such as sport or music. You are lucky at your school because Mrs Martin, the teachers and other adults all look after and care for you very well. They encourage you to be healthy and to stay safe, and are working very hard to ensure that you learn new things and to make the school even better in the future. You behave very well in lessons and in the playground, and this helps the teachers teach you. You get good test results and this helps prepare you well for secondary school. Your teachers are keen to make the school even better for you and we think they are good at knowing how they can do this. We think they need to make sure all of you are provided with work that is at the right level, especially for those of you who find some of the work quite easy. We also think the school needs to try to persuade more of your parents to become governors and play a more active part in school life. You are very lucky to be at such a good, friendly school. Keep working hard and enjoy your time at Coates!