

Copthorne CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126013
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	282042
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Sheila Browning

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alastair Cutting
Headteacher	Alistair Hawtin
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2000
School address	Church Road Copthorne Crawley RH10 3RD
Telephone number	01342 712372
Fax number	01342 718513

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school takes pupils from the village of Copthorne and the surrounding area, including Crawley. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds and their attainment on entry is broadly average. Most children are from White British families, with a few from minority ethnic groups. In recognition of its work the school has gained 'Healthy School' status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Copthorne is a good school. Pupils come to school eagerly and take part enthusiastically in the numerous opportunities and activities provided. As one parent commented, 'There is something different and exciting going on every week.' Pupils enjoyment and love of school is apparent everywhere and reflected in their high attendance. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are good. Consequently pupils achieve well, though in the past, all pupils have not always reached their full potential. After analysing the 2006 test results the school put in place measures to tackle the relative shortcomings identified in pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. Resulting organisational changes and a better focus on pupils' learning needs have led to improvement. Current standards are above average and are better than the previous year's test results would indicate. Nonetheless, there is some unevenness in the progress pupils make within the same year groups. Good leadership and management create a climate in which pupils achieve outstanding personal development, behaviour and relationships. The headteacher leads well. The dedicated staff and governors share his determination to involve pupils in exciting and interesting learning experiences.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory, providing an adequate knowledge of strengths and weaknesses. There is scope to tighten up a few procedures. The school tracks pupils' progress, and uses the information to tackle potential underachievement. However, leaders and managers are not yet using the tracking information and data effectively to judge and compare whether or not all pupils are achieving well enough. This means that managers are not always aware of how well all pupils are doing. Monitoring of lessons occasionally misses opportunities to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching. This therefore weakens the impact of the monitoring.

Pupils make a strong contribution to school life and the local community and are well prepared for their future. Pupils say the school listens to and acts upon their views. As one said, 'Teachers treat us as equals – they don't look down on you.' Pupils show an outstanding awareness of how to lead safe, active lifestyles. Care, guidance and support are good. Strong links with parents and external agencies benefit pupils' personal development significantly. Taking the recent improvements in pupils' achievement and teaching and learning alongside the specific weaknesses in self-evaluation, the school demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use data information more effectively to check that all pupils are making good progress.
- Ensure that the monitoring of lessons identifies teaching weaknesses and helps to bring about improvements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards overall are above average. Over time, the school results have generally improved, significantly so in 2006. Challenging targets were exceeded in 2006 in English, but just fell short in mathematics. The school's analysis of the results confirmed that more-able boys and middle-attaining girls did not reach their full potential in mathematics or writing. To tackle this, the school tightened up its procedures for tracking pupils' progress and provided additional and earlier support for those identified as being at risk of underachieving. Consequently, the gap between boys' and girls' achievement has narrowed and more-able pupils are achieving their full potential. Pupils' achievement in lessons and in work seen is good and shows

improvement over time. School data confirms that pupils are well on track to achieve or exceed this year's targets. However, the data also indicates some unevenness in the progress pupils make within the same year groups. The school recognises the need to use assessment data and information more effectively to secure and sustain pupils' recent good progress across the school. Organisational changes, better targeting of pupils and resources are beginning to do this. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of effective teaching, resources and good support from teaching assistants. Pupils demonstrate well-developed personal, creative, and sporting skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have developed exceptional inter-personal skills to prepare them very well for their future lives. They enjoy excellent relationships and behave outstandingly. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, as seen in their very thoughtful reflections in assembly. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and they say there is virtually no bullying. The school places a priority on raising pupils' awareness of healthy and safe lifestyles, which is enthusiastically embraced. Pupils are very active at break-times, with virtually all involved in running, climbing or playing with hoops and skipping ropes. In addition, around three quarters participate in out-of-school sports. They show a good commitment to healthy eating, as reflected in the contents of many lunchboxes and in playtime fruit snacks. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school by making full use of the very many opportunities that the school provides. They contribute as special helpers, serve on the school council and use comment boxes and special lessons to suggest improvements. The headteacher regularly consults them on important issues such as writing a behaviour policy and the curriculum. They are very actively involved in recycling, charity fund raising and community activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In the recent past, pupils have not always made enough progress, for example, boys in writing. Following a school focus on improving written work and other areas of relative weakness, all pupils have begun to achieve well. Lessons are creative and lively. Resources, including interactive whiteboards, are used well. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on division, pupils enthusiastically used their knowledge to play a game of bingo. As a result, pupils show great interest in lessons. They concentrate well and their behaviour is outstanding. Teachers draw upon their excellent relationships to provide good questioning of pupils and to involve them very well in their learning, such as in self-assessment. Improvements in teaching have led to more effective matching of tasks to pupils, providing all groups with good levels of challenge. However, this is not yet at a consistently high level across all classes and abilities. Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities well, ensuring they achieve as well, and often better than their peers. Teachers' marking is regular and encouraging, but the school recognises the need to improve marking so that pupils are given clearer guidance on how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has many strengths. Meaningful, practical and stimulating learning experiences excite and involve children in their learning. The curriculum promotes basic skills and has a significant focus on the arts and sport. Strong partnerships with schools and the community further enhance the pupils' learning experience which, for instance, includes learning Italian. Participation in many extra-curricular clubs, visits, and visitors ensures that pupils have very good enrichment. The effective personal, social and health education programme, together with the high profile of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda, contributes significantly to pupils' outstanding personal development. The school environment and the locality are used effectively to reinforce eco-awareness, from recycling to rearing chickens. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. Information and communication technology is used well in some subjects but its use is not fully embedded in all subjects; this is a development priority.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well, with inclusion being paramount. They are valued and respected and consequently are confident, happy, well-rounded individuals. Procedures to safeguard children are good. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies, and this is beneficial to pupils' personal development. Working with the behaviour support team has proved particularly advantageous in supporting the increasing numbers of pupils with challenging behaviour. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because well-targeted support meets their needs effectively. Pupils know what their targets are but marking is not always used as effectively as it might to help pupils improve their work, and plans are in hand to rectify this. The strong links with local schools ensure that pupils' transition between schools is smooth.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and other school leaders set a clear direction for the school, which emphasises a strong ethos of care, respect and valuing individuals. In the past, school leaders have been less successful in raising pupils' achievement and progress. Recently they have sharpened up on improvement planning. They have identified key weaknesses, such as boys' achievement in writing, and planned effective remedies. For example, a range of additional strategies was introduced and teachers became better focused on meeting the learning needs of the full range of pupils. As a result, pupil progress has improved and is now good. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, reach challenging targets because the school promotes equality of opportunity well. Monitoring of the school's performance is providing an adequate knowledge of strengths and weaknesses, but there is scope for improvement. For example, leaders and managers are not yet interpreting data well enough to gain a very clear picture of pupils' achievement across the school and they do not use assessment information to judge and compare the progress made by different groups of pupils. This results in the school not having a clear understanding of achievement throughout the school. Additionally, the monitoring of lessons often misses opportunities to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in ensuring that work is always well matched to pupils of differing abilities. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

The work of governors is satisfactory. They have an adequate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, with the confidence to challenge the school. They meet their statutory responsibilities. The school values its partnership with parents highly and this is reflected in the numerous positive comments received. Through regular reports, consultation meetings and home-school books, parents are well involved in their children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work. Your school is good with good teaching.

These are some important things we found out about your school:

- You told us how much you loved school and that you really appreciated and enjoyed all the opportunities you have at Copthorne.
- Your personal development and behaviour are excellent and you get on so well with each other and with all the adults in your school.
- You are making good progress and the standards you reach are above average.
- Those of you who find learning hard are well supported and you achieve well.
- Everyone at your school works really hard to make your learning interesting and fun.
- You are very involved in the school and in the local community.
- You know very well how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles and are looked after well.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors are determined to help you achieve your very best.

This is what we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- To use the information they have about how well you are all getting on more effectively to ensure you all make as much progress as you should.
- Ensure that all of you are set work which is at just the right level for you.