



Cofton Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 103315
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 294495
Inspection dates 30 November –1 December 2006
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wootton Road
School category	Community		West Heath
Age range of pupils	4–11		Birmingham B31 4ST
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4753374
Number on roll (school)	263	Fax number	0121 4779082
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Lee Winfield
		Headteacher	E Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2005		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 30 November –1 December 2006	Inspection number 294495
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to factual inaccuracy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Cofton is a large primary school. Whilst most of its pupils are of White British heritage, there is a small number of pupils from other countries and ethnic groups. A small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language. There is also a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children enter the school with a range of attainment levels but most have the skills and experiences expected for their age. The school was given a Notice to Improve at its last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Cofton is an improving school that now gives its pupils a satisfactory quality of education. This is because the school has worked hard under the good leadership of the headteacher to tackle the concerns identified at the last inspection. With the support of senior staff and advisers from the local authority, teachers have improved pupils' achievement and the school's effectiveness is satisfactory.

Standards have risen through the school and are now broadly in line with those found nationally. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the Reception class, children achieve well because staff understand their needs and activities promotes their good learning. Progress through the rest of the school is satisfactory because teaching is not yet addressing the inadequate progress of the past. However, good teaching is now clearly evident in many classes and this is enabling pupils to make good progress in most lessons. The headteacher's clear evaluation of what was needed for the school to improve has ensured that teachers' expectations have risen and strategies to support pupils' effective learning have been developed satisfactorily. By the time pupils leave the school they have a satisfactory range of skills and knowledge to support them in their next stage of learning. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has significantly improved and these pupils now make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and they receive good teaching.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory. Attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory overall but whilst the school is encouraging good attendance too many parents are taking their children on holiday in term time. Pupils develop an effective understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by a variety of additional activities that stimulate pupils' enjoyment of lessons. Relationships through the school are good. The provision for care, support and guidance is satisfactory. Teachers have introduced effective procedures for encouraging pupils to evaluate their own work and an understanding of how to improve. However, these procedures are not sufficiently embedded and used effectively by all teachers. The school has introduced a good range of strategies to assess pupils' work and to check their progress. The paper based system in place has weaknesses and it is difficult for senior managers to have a clear overview of achievement through the school. The need for a more efficient and rigorous system has been recognised by the headteacher but it is not yet in place.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The development of the role of subject coordinators has been satisfactory. In literacy, numeracy and special needs, coordinators have a significant impact upon school improvement. Governors now are better informed and provide satisfactory support for the school. Based on the good track record of many successful improvements this year, the school has the good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Introduce a more effective system for collecting information about pupils' attainment and their progress towards challenging targets so that teachers and senior managers can monitor pupils' achievement and ensure that the best progress is made by pupils of all abilities from year to year.
- Reduce the number of absences taken by children going on holiday in term time by challenging parents and explaining the importance of good attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Progress in the Reception class is good, especially in children's personal development. Standards in all areas of learning are usually in line with, or better than, those expected when they transfer into Year 1. Progress through the rest of the school is satisfactory. Effective teaching is now evident in many classes but it is not consistent, so progress over the last year has been satisfactory rather than good. Standards through the school are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages. However, because of inadequate progress in the past, standards in Year 6 last year were still below average. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and strategies for their support and improvement are now well established. There are no significant differences in the achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Those who are in the early stages of learning English are well supported. They make similar progress to their peers by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory as is spiritual, social and cultural development. Moral development is good and pupils have a strong awareness of right and wrong. Behaviour is good and pupils report that there is little bullying. When it does occur, teachers deal it with promptly and effectively. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and they say they enjoy lessons especially when using the computers. Pupils know how to keep safe and are well informed about healthy eating and exercise. They do not always use this knowledge to make healthy choices about what they eat. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community and raise money for local, national and international charities. The bags of shoes are testimony to their response to Blue Peter's latest appeal and a good number of Christmas boxes have been collected to help children less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' attitudes to work, their basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and the ability to work together prepare pupils satisfactorily for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching in Reception is good and a wide range of activities ensures that children have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge across all areas of learning. In the rest of school, there is now evidence of good teaching in many classes that is improving pupils' learning. Teachers are using new systems for assessing pupils' work and although not fully consistent are providing a much clearer idea about the progress their pupils are expected to make. Consequently, activities are more challenging for pupils of all abilities. A good system of pupil targets has been adopted and these help teachers to challenge pupils to achieve more. Teachers have good expectations for behaviour and most encourage their pupils to participate actively in lessons. Teachers use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, effectively to support pupils' learning and to motivate their interest and understanding. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide good support, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. A number of new strategies are used by teachers to help pupils understand how to be successful in their work, but these are not sufficiently consistent to be fully effective. Pupils say that marking is useful and helps them to recognise how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum for pupils in Reception is good and responds well to the needs of young children. In the rest of the school, the curriculum is satisfactory. A strength has been in the introduction of interactive whiteboards and the new computer suite that has stimulated pupils' interest, motivation and skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used more effectively to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. It provides more opportunities for independent research and for pupils to make choices about how they present their work. There is a satisfactory programme for pupils' personal development, including sex and drugs education, which clearly demonstrates how pupils can stay healthy and safe. The annual residential visits provide good opportunities to develop pupils' self confidence, team building and independence. Clubs and extra-curricular activities have been limited this year because staff have been focusing on improving planning for teaching and learning. The displays throughout the lower school building provide a stimulating learning environment. However this is not the case in the upper school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good and pupils say there is an adult they can confide in if they have concerns. The school monitors pupils' personal development well. The support provided for pupils with personal, emotional and learning difficulties is good. There are

satisfactory procedures in place to deal with child protection and health and safety. The school is developing effective systems to enable pupils to evaluate their work. Teachers set targets for future learning so pupils understand how to improve. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are monitored well. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies in order to provide the best support it can. Levels of pupils' attendance were of concern at the previous inspection. The school is encouraging good attendance but is not sufficiently engaging parents in the discussion and too many holidays are taken in term time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has demonstrated good leadership in tackling the main priorities for improvement. A number of good strategies, including changes to roles and responsibilities, have been employed which have improved the quality of teaching and learning and boosted achievement. The needs of the pupils have remained a priority in management decisions, for example teaching assistants are now deployed to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities rather than simply allocated to classes. Monitoring of teaching has been rigorous and points for development followed up. The role of coordinators has been improved especially in literacy, numeracy and special educational needs where is now good. Everyone, including the governors, knows that there is still much to be done and that many initiatives are still at an early stage of development. Establishing an efficient system for tracking pupil performance is a priority. However, a new climate has been established in which the drive to improve pupil achievement is increasingly seen as a shared responsibility between all members of staff. Parents are consulted regularly about how well the school is moving forward but some would appreciate more information.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for answering our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about your school.

What I liked about the school

- It is an improving school where you are happy and enjoy your lessons.
- You get on well with each other and with the adults in the school.
- You behave sensibly and are kind to each other.
- You try hard to do well in your work and are becoming more successful.
- The curriculum is satisfactory but you really enjoy using computers and going on trips and this is helping you gain knowledge and experience.
- You understand the importance of keeping healthy and safe.
- Teaching is good and your teachers are setting you challenging activities to help you meet your targets.
- All the adults in school look after you well and help you feel safe.
- The headteacher leads the school well. She has a good understanding of what is needed to make the school better and the staff are helping her.

- What I have asked the school to do now
- Keep a record of how well you are doing from year to year so that teachers can identify how much progress you are making and whether you need support to improve.
- Reduce the number of absences taken by children going on holiday in term time by challenging parents and explaining the importance of good attendance.

Thank you again for being polite and helpful.