

# Corngreaves Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103939
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	299950
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	166
<b>School</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Diane Rawlings
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Ruddle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 October 2005
<b>School address</b>	Plant Street Cradley Heath B64 6EZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 569333
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 569333

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Corngreaves School is smaller than average but numbers are rising. Its pupils come from diverse social and economic backgrounds and there is a significant degree of deprivation. Attainment when children start school is exceptionally low compared to that found nationally. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds but there are some pupils from minority ethnic groups. Some 21% of the pupils have learning difficulties. This is broadly in line with the national picture. Just over a quarter of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above average. When the school was inspected in October 2005, it was judged to require special measures. Most of the current teaching staff have been appointed since then. A permanent headteacher was appointed in September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Corngreaves is a diverse, but very harmonious, community where the contributions and talents of all its members are respected. The school provides an effective and rapidly improving education for its pupils, underpinned by good leadership and teaching. The teachers provide relevant experiences which not only capture the children's imagination but also clearly motivate them to strive harder for success. Teachers have a clear understanding and high expectations of the standards that children should reach. They use a good range of systems for measuring and tracking children's progress and attainment and identifying quickly any underachievement. Achievement is now good because of the improvements in teaching. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in personal, social, and emotional development and speaking and listening. These skills are promoted well by members of staff, who are well led. Standards in the Reception year are generally at the level expected for the pupils' age. Thereafter, most children in Years 3 to 6 continue to achieve well but standards at the end of Year 6 do not yet fully reflect this improvement. The standard of presentation of some pupils' work lets them down.

Pupils enjoy school, work diligently, and are enthusiastic learners. Attitudes and behaviour are good and relationships within the school are a significant strength. The pupils report that they feel safe and free from bullying because they know whom to turn to for advice if a problem should occur. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong which they demonstrate through their good behaviour in and outside of lessons. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, cultural education, are good.

Pupils' personal and academic performance is underpinned by rigorous procedures for care, guidance, and support and a satisfactory curriculum. The school has done much to improve the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, which now provides a good balance between teacher directed and child chosen activities. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 has a good emphasis on literacy and standards in writing are rising as a result. Improvements in the teaching of some subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not as well developed. The school is currently reviewing provision in these subjects with a view to securing a curriculum which is finely tuned to the skills that the pupils will need in later life.

Leadership and management are good, with the headteacher setting high expectations for others. Strong in its resolve, the leadership team demands that the pupils deserve the best. Effective monitoring has enabled the school to evaluate its work and to identify areas where significant improvement is required. At present, the leadership of subjects other than literacy and numeracy is not as well developed. Weaknesses from the last inspection have been tackled successfully and the school demonstrates good capacity to make further improvement. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of subject coordination beyond literacy and numeracy by giving all staff greater responsibility for curriculum leadership.
- Raise standards further by improving the presentation of pupils' work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

When they start in Reception, children's knowledge and skills are weak. Their oral language and speaking skills are particularly poor. Effective support provided through the Foundation Stage means that children achieve well. The 2006 national tests for 7-Year-olds were well below average; the current Year 2 pupils are working at standards similar to those found nationally. Progress has improved in Key Stage 1 because of the constant focus on developing the pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The pupils are now able to spell correctly a number of common words and use their understanding of sounds and letter patterns to make logical assumptions about the spelling of unknown words. Pupils usually remember to use basic punctuation.

In the national tests at Key Stage 2, English results were weaker than mathematics and science last year but standards are improving. The more able pupils currently in Year 6 use vocabulary well and structure their ideas effectively in a range of writing styles. Pupils construct sentences using a range of devices designed to influence and persuade the reader to read on. The more complex forms of punctuation are used to good effect. This is a direct result of improved approaches to the teaching of reading and writing, such as a highly structured reading programme and weekly extended writing sessions. Although handwriting is generally joined, letters are not well formed and most writing is in pencil. Assessment information is frequently analysed to judge how well children are learning. Effective intervention and appropriate support are swiftly provided to tackle any underachievement and, as a result, pupils with learning difficulties are catered for well in lessons and make satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils play together confidently and openly and are sensitive to the needs of others. The recently introduced house system has proved to be very motivating for pupils. Attendance levels are broadly average, reflecting the school's successful efforts to promote a positive view of school with parents. The proportion of pupils with unbroken attendance over a lengthy period has increased considerably.

Pupils are very aware of the need to keep fit and healthy and recognise the key ingredients of a healthy diet. They know how to stay safe, avoiding the dangers of smoking and drugs. They contribute well to the school community through the many posts of responsibility in class and service on the school council. Pupils contribute well to the wider community through charitable efforts and the good links with local schools and a diversity of faith groups. Plans are in place to ensure that pupils are better prepared for life in the diverse society they will experience in later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good overall with some elements which are outstanding. Lessons are well structured and have a brisk pace. In the very best lessons, pupils have many opportunities to apply and consolidate learning and they have a good understanding of their targets. Pupils are fully involved in assessing their own learning resulting in all pupils striving even harder for success.

The introduction of specialist teaching programmes for reading and writing have supported the raising of attainment across all year groups, especially in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Marking is generally good and exceptionally good in writing. Pupils appreciate the helpful comments made by their teachers and are aware of what they need to do to improve, particularly in English, but less so in other subjects.

Music teaching is particularly strong across the school because of the good knowledge teachers have of this subject and the use of specialist teachers from the local support music service.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum has emerging strengths. The Foundation Stage curriculum is now good, providing a well judged framework for children's learning effectively focused on the development of their knowledge, understanding, and skills. The promotion of basic skills underpins the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and a significant amount of time has been allocated to these key areas of learning. The improved achievement in basic skills endorses this decision. Able pupils are benefiting from an increased awareness of their needs, with more challenging tasks provided. Older pupils identified as gifted and talented have access to enrichment programmes, which include mathematics and modern foreign languages, at a local secondary school. This is contributing to significantly improved achievement for all groups. Provision for information and communication technology is much improved and is now good. The school makes good use of a wide range of day and residential visits to support classroom teaching.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support for pupils are consistently good. The arrangements for supporting pupils' academic progress are good. Safeguarding, child protection, and health and safety procedures are robust and clear. A range of individual targets exists to support personal and academic development. This is the result of extensive recent analysis of pupils' existing strengths and needs, in particular those with learning difficulties. This knowledge has helped the school to allocate pupils to appropriate intervention programmes. Most pupils, particularly those who are older, have a good knowledge of how well they are doing and what is needed to move their learning forward. Effective systems now exist to track pupils' progress across the whole school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership of the school is effective with all leaders having a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Their expertise has enabled them to eliminate weaknesses quickly resulting in pupils across the school now making good progress. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and has a very clear vision shared by the senior leaders within the school, focused on raising standards and achievement even further. Methods by which the school checks the quality of its work are robust and clear, with the governors now more involved in holding the school to account for its performance. The system used to track pupils' progress is good, enabling the teachers to identify quickly any underachievement and take effective steps to bring pupils back on course to meet their challenging targets. Well planned and effectively delivered support has successfully eliminated weak teaching and directly

led to the increase in the proportions of good or better teaching. Parents speak very highly of the school. As one parent reported, 'The school is helping my son realise that education is fun and rewarding. He always has so many positive things to say about his day; he is more organised, happy and eager to go to school.'





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for being so welcoming during our recent visit to your school.

As you may know, I have been visiting your school each term to check on how well it is doing. The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection and it is now a good school. Your headteacher, the deputy and assistant headteachers and governors are making sure that you are now taught well. As a result, your progress in lessons is good.

You behave well and you are kind and considerate to each other. You listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and try hard to do your best. It was good to see that some of you are involved in school life, for example by taking on extra responsibilities such as the school council. We were interested to hear about your plans for the future.

We have made some suggestions to help your school become even better. The improvements you have made in your work in English, mathematics and science need to extend to all of the other subjects you study. We have asked all of your teachers to take on some new work that will make sure that your school continues to improve.

Your teachers, governors and other staff have worked extremely hard to improve things for you. You have also helped by making sure you know your targets. I would like you to continue to help the school improve by improving your handwriting and making sure your work is the very best it can be. I am confident that your school will continue to do well.