

Coteford Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102375
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	323632
Inspection date	8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	219
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	70
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Weller
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Fore Street Eastcote Pinner HA5 2HX
Telephone number	01895 671 952
Fax number	01895 624 559

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

They evaluated the effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well the school promotes good attendance, pupils' achievements in writing and how well the school meets the needs of the more able pupils. Evidence was gathered from discussions with pupils, staff and governors, from parent questionnaires and analysis of school documentation and pupils' work. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This school of average size serves pupils from a wide area. Most pupils are from White British families and many different ethnicities are represented in smaller numbers. A small but significant proportion are from Asian backgrounds. There are more pupils who speak English as an additional language than found in most schools of this size. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than average, as is the proportion who have statements of special educational needs. This is because the school is designated to cater for pupils with physical disabilities who are fully integrated into mainstream classes. There is a high turnover of pupils, with many starting or leaving the school mid-way through the year. The school roll has decreased in recent years but is set to rise in the autumn when a third Reception class opens.

Children start in the Nursery at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. Currently they transfer to Reception classes, twice a year, in September and January but as from September 2009, they will transfer only once in September.

The school has won a number of awards in recent years, including the Basic Skills and Inclusion Quality Marks, and the Healthy Hillingdon Award.

4 Street Nursery, a privately run organisation, operates from the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that it provides a good education for its pupils. The school is successful in including all pupils and enabling them to participate fully in school life, whatever their learning difficulty or disability. The strong leadership of the headteacher ensures that performance is carefully monitored and analysed and that key areas for improvement are correctly identified. Good support from governors and staff contribute to this clear focus on school development. The school shows a good capacity to continue these improvements into the future.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been broadly average for the last few years, though fewer pupils than in most schools reach Level 3 in the national assessments, especially in writing. Taking account of their often below average attainment on entry to the school, pupils' achievement is good. School records demonstrate pupils' good progress in all year groups. Growing numbers of pupils who start mid-way through the year present challenges for staff, but analysis of these pupils' progress shows that they quickly settle in and start learning. They reach similar standards to those of their classmates. Excellent care and high levels of individual attention for pupils who have physical disabilities contribute to their good academic achievement.

Pupils' personal development is good; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. They are kind to one another and quick to offer help if someone has a problem. They readily take on responsibilities around the school as playground monitors and classroom helpers. They present concerts for parents, friends and the junior school, and plant trees to support the local environment.

Pupils are well behaved in lessons and in the playground. They say they feel safe in school and are happy to share any concerns with an adult. The high number of support staff in the school means that pupils are well supervised and cared for at all times. They have a secure understanding of how to play safely together and keep safe on the roads. The work done by the school to achieve the Healthy Hillingdon award has contributed well to pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles. New pupils are welcomed warmly into the community; adults pay special attention to help them settle into school. Pupils develop high levels of confidence and independence and very good attitudes to learning. These qualities, along with their broadly average basic skills, stand them in good stead for the future.

Attendance rates have improved significantly over the past year as a result of some successful new systems and policies. Attendance is now average and punctuality good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. The classrooms, corridors and entrance areas are bright and provide a welcoming atmosphere for parents and visitors. Governors have budgeted carefully over the last few years to implement a planned programme of classroom refurbishment and improve the entrance and administrative area.

Teaching is good and contributes well to pupils' good progress. Teachers know the pupils well and assess their strengths and weaknesses carefully. They direct teaching assistants well to support pupils who have learning needs and those who have physical disabilities. Consequently, these pupils play a full part in school life. Lessons are often stimulating, as in Year 2, when pupils wrote instructions about how to use a toothbrush correctly. Good use of the interactive whiteboard focused pupils' attention on the lesson objective and the teacher questioned pupils well, encouraging them to think carefully about connectives and verbs. Occasionally, lessons

are not as well planned and pupils find it difficult to concentrate and achieve the objective. Activities sometimes do not challenge the more able pupils enough, especially in writing.

The curriculum is good and provides pupils with an exciting range of experiences in all subjects. Focus weeks over the year, for example the Arts Week, attract a wide range of parent and community volunteers who come to work with the pupils; earlier this year, local artists helped the pupils paint vibrant pictures of different animals and taught them about sculpture and jewellery. Art students from the neighbouring secondary school set up their easels in the hall and entrance areas and pupils were able to watch them work and learn new techniques. Teachers, parents, volunteers and support staff provide an extensive range of clubs and activities outside the school day and pupils thoroughly enjoy these, often arriving early each morning to participate in tennis and other sports.

The school tracks pupils' progress in all subjects and is quick to adapt the curriculum to children's needs and interests. Curriculum teams take a good lead in this, monitoring pupils' enjoyment and performance, and reporting regularly to the headteacher and governing body. Information and communication technology, for example, has been extended recently to ensure that pupils are challenged and continue to develop their existing good skills. Pupils practise their developing writing skills in different subjects, for example in science when they label diagrams and write about their investigations. However, too many worksheets are used and this hinders their creativity and independent learning.

Pupils receive good levels of academic guidance. They work hard to achieve their individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics. These targets are reviewed regularly and new targets set if necessary. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn at the beginning of lessons and review the objective at the end so that pupils have opportunities to assess their own learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly but only occasionally do teachers provide helpful comments to tell pupils how to improve their work.

The headteacher has a good knowledge of every pupil. She monitors their progress closely and quickly identifies if they need extra support. Pastoral care is good and all safeguarding elements meet current government requirements. Excellent links with external agencies, for example physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, health visitors, local nurseries and other schools have a significant impact on pupils' learning and well-being. The school has strengthened procedures over the last year to ensure that bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively and has recently created a log to record incidents and how they have been addressed.

Governors provide good levels of support and challenge to the school's work. They bring a useful range of skills to help, for instance with budgeting and finance. They have a good knowledge of standards and maintain a clear overview of the school's work through an effective system of visits and reports from school staff. The school promotes community cohesion well within the school and local context. Links with overseas communities are in the early stages of development and there are not yet any links with different UK communities to help pupils understand what life is like for people in other places.

Overall, the school is well led and managed. Parents appreciate all the work that the school does for their children. One, representing the views of many, wrote, 'Staff are supportive and friendly, also very approachable. I feel at ease knowing that my child is well cared for and safe'.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage varies considerably but overall is lower than that expected for their age. Effective induction procedures mean that parents have confidence in school staff and that children settle quickly into school life. Workshops are held to familiarise parents with some of the activities their children will experience and to provide advice about how they can support them at home. A new transition programme is helping children to transfer from Nursery to Reception and then smoothly into Year 1.

Children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the teaching is good and the curriculum is lively. The majority of children meet the goals expected of them by the end of the year. Children enjoy a great many interesting and meaningful experiences that help them develop good social skills. They work well independently and cooperatively, as when Reception children prepared 'soup' using a variety of fresh vegetables. Careful interventions by adults ensured that they understood the importance of eating a healthy diet.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. There is a very good ratio of adults to children and these adults are well deployed to support individuals and groups of children. Activities led by adults are well planned and focus on key skills in different areas of learning. However, activities that the children choose for themselves are not always as well organised or stimulating and this affects their enjoyment and progress. Children's progress is tracked carefully over the year to identify any individuals who need extra practice or support in specific skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of the more able pupils in writing by extending the levels of challenge in lessons and improving teachers' marking.
- Develop links with communities within the UK and overseas to promote community cohesion more effectively.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coteford Infant School, Pinner, HA5 2HX

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome when we visited your school recently. It was good to watch you in lessons and to talk to you in the playground and around the school.

You go to a good school. All the adults look after you really well. It was great to hear your views about the school and about how much you enjoy learning. The quality of the work in your books and your contributions in lessons show that you are making good progress. You take care with your work and try your best to meet the targets that your teachers set. Your hard work, along with good teaching, helps you to achieve well. Your behaviour is good. You are always ready to help each other. You are learning to be confident and responsible young people, who take good care of each other and the environment. The dress rehearsal for your concert was very good and the visiting pupils from the junior school obviously enjoyed it.

The people in charge are doing a good job. They are always looking for ways to make the school even better for you, the pupils. We have asked them to focus on writing next year and to make sure that the work planned for you provides the right degree of challenge so that you make even more progress. We have also asked teachers to develop links with different communities in the UK and abroad so you can learn what life is like for children in different places.

You can play your part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard, behave well and by sharing your views with the headteacher and other adults at the school.

Thank you once again for your help.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Mary Summers

Lead Inspector