

# Corngreaves Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103939
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	323928
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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.

<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>	
School (total)	180
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	32
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Antill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Ruddle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 March 2007
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	9 June 2008
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Plant Street Cradley Heath B64 6EZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 569333

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	323928

**Fax number**

01384 568259

**Age group** 4–11

**Inspection dates** 8–9 June 2009

**Inspection number** 323928

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This smaller-than-average primary school serves an urban area in the industrial heartland of the Black Country. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. The school's 'Nurture' facility provides extra provision for a small number of pupils with social and emotional difficulties, although no pupils at the school have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is above average, and represents a wide range of backgrounds. The school has opened its own government-funded, pre-school facility, called Roots and Shoots, since it was last inspected.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Corngreaves provides an outstanding education for its pupils. Parents are rightly thrilled with the excellent progress their children make in all years. Current standards are average in Year 6, which represents outstanding achievement given these pupils' exceptionally low standards when they left Year 2. Standards are rising across the school as a result of inspirational teaching, and academic guidance that is perfectly matched to the individual pupils' needs. Lessons are full of fun, lively discussion and challenging activities that make pupils think, and work, very hard. The introduction of Roots and Shoots means that children now get off to a much earlier start and benefit from outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Many aspects of the curriculum, such as the way it is frequently changed to meet the needs of groups of pupils, are of the highest possible standard. As a whole, however, the curriculum is good rather than outstanding because pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to practice their information and communication technology (ICT) skills outside of ICT lessons, despite the school having the computers available. This limits their progress in ICT to satisfactory. The care provided by the school is of the very highest quality. The excellent methods used in the 'Nurture' facility are employed across the school, which results in pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes. Personal development is outstanding. Pupils love coming to school, and parents talk of their children complaining when they are kept away from school for any reason.

The story of Corngreaves is inspirational. Placed in special measures in 2005, it is now one of the top-performing schools in the country. Standards have improved from exceptionally low to average, and continue to rise as the quality of provision improves each year. Such improvement is the result of outstanding leadership and management at all levels, including governors, and provides evidence for the outstanding capacity to take the school even further. Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses in great detail. Pupils, parents and staff have a real say in how the school is developed. The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is truly inspirational. They have given all other staff the confidence to take the lead on major aspects of the school's development. All now seek to improve any aspect of their work that would provide a better education for the pupils.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Children thrive in the exceptionally safe and stimulating environment. Children join the school with skills and knowledge levels that are very low for their age. They make outstanding progress in all areas of learning, so that they are ready to start Year 1 with standards that are above average. Such rapid progress is a result of the excellent, individualised approach taken to the children's learning. Staff are constantly assessing each child so they have a very clear picture of the areas most in need of development. The following day's lessons are then planned to meet precisely the needs that have been identified, either for the whole class, a group or individuals. Roots and Shoots starts just before lunch, where staff successfully help children develop healthy eating habits. The afternoon is carefully planned to promote personal development, and all children quickly become accustomed to playing happily with others. Although the main focus is on personal development, staff do not miss an opportunity to develop other skills for the pre-school children. Parents are fully involved, and the 'Smile Please' club is exceptional at showing parents how they can help their children learn even more quickly.

Leadership and management are highly focused on improvement. Frequent checks are made on what is provided, and even the smallest weakness is immediately seized on to ensure the best possible rate of improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make better use of the available computers to provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their ICT skills in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards are improving rapidly across the school. Although standards on entry to Year 1 are now above average, the children currently in Year 2 started Year 1 with standards that were well below average, especially in reading and writing. Their standards are now average in reading and writing, and well above average in mathematics, reflecting outstanding achievement in all three subjects. In 2008, girls did not do as well as boys in their writing. A thorough investigation, including videoing lessons, showed that boys were more proactive and girls were losing confidence. Immediate actions were taken and girls now achieve as well as boys. The pupils currently in Year 6 lost a lot of ground while the school was in special measures and the standards attained were exceptionally low when they started Year 3. They have made outstanding progress to reach average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English. While pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education in most respects, standards in ICT remain below average overall, although progress in the communicating aspect is good.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils love coming to school, and are enthusiastic about their learning. They have an excellent understanding of how other communities differ from their own, and play an outstanding part in leading the school. Groups of pupils, including those from Reception, visit other schools. They find out how others live and also note down anything that they feel would be of benefit to their own school. When they return to Corngreaves they present their findings at a conference and meet with senior staff to advise them on how the school development plan can incorporate their ideas. In lessons, pupils focus completely on their work and their behaviour is exemplary. They have an exceptional understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, with many keen to empty out their lunchboxes to explain to inspectors the benefits of the contents. Attendance is broadly average, but is improving rapidly as actions to raise parents' understanding of the importance of regular attendance start to pay dividends. Pupils not only feel very safe, but they also know how to keep themselves safe. Even pupils in Year 2 can tell you what the hazard symbols mean on everyday items, and explain the meaning of terms such as 'irritant' or 'flammable', and why such items must be avoided. With standards rapidly rising in all subjects and the opportunities provided for pupils to show their initiative, their preparation for future life is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding teaching starts with a simple approach to planning lessons. Each begins with learning a new skill, applying it and then moving on to using the skill in a new situation. All this happens very quickly, because teachers allow no more than the minimum time required for each activity and because pupils are used to turning to their partner for help. For those who struggle with the pace, a teaching assistant is always on hand or the teacher quickly moves in to provide extra guidance. Another source of support is found in the learning objectives. These are displayed prominently and contain hints on how they can be achieved, such as 'think about using square numbers', when the most able pupils were reducing algebraic equations to the fewest terms. Such high expectations are common throughout the school, and pupils respond enthusiastically to the problems and challenges they are given.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The planned start of the day sets the tone and immediately focuses the pupils on learning. The first ten minutes are taken up by intensive activities that improve pupils' skills in English and mathematics. The curriculum frequently changes in response to results of assessment. Groups of pupils are identified across the years who need more teaching on a specific aspect of English or mathematics. Daily, half-hour lessons are then planned and implemented to address these relative weaknesses, and when progress has improved the lessons are changed to focus on a different aspect. The provision for ICT has improved this year, with much better planning of lessons. However, this is not supported by enough use of computers at other times that would allow pupils to practice and develop their skills. A very good range of subjects and extra activities are provided, especially in languages, where pupils learn the basics of six foreign languages, including Japanese, Greek and Russian. A wide range of additional activities as well as an excellent programme for pupils' personal development all contribute well to pupils' outstanding learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The high standard of care and zero tolerance approach to bullying and racism means that all pupils feel exceptionally safe and that all get on very well with one another. Child protection and safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements. Staff use the methods applied in the 'Nurture' facility, so they are adept at dealing with those with social and emotional difficulties. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is extremely effective. Staff have a deep understanding of such pupils' needs and plan to meet them in every lesson. The results are remarkable, with the proportion of such pupils falling to average, when it had been very high. Academic guidance is equally as good as the pastoral care. Pupils' targets are reviewed on a daily basis. They know exactly what they are, and what they need to do to meet them. The targets are simple, highly relevant to the individual and practical. Parents are highly appreciative of all the information they receive, especially their children's targets.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The school's remarkably rapid progress is down to an uncompromising focus on improvement on the part of senior managers and governors, which makes all staff accountable for their pupils' progress and well-being. Checks on lessons are clearly focused on any weaknesses identified in the performance of pupils, or on areas that teachers themselves feel that they could do better in. There is a palpable desire to do better among all staff. Teachers have to account for any pupil who has fallen below target each term and say how they are going to help them catch up. This is then checked to make sure that actions are proving successful, which they invariably are. Leadership is shared among staff, both teaching and non-teaching, so that responsibility for managing change is available to all, and all take part. The school's outstanding efforts to promote community cohesion and equality are not only evident in pupils' understanding of others, but also in the school's work to involve parents, especially those who are least confident in engaging with schools. Initiatives such as 'Triple P' classes are a tremendous help to parents in learning how to help their children, while visits to other schools provide them with ideas on how they can help draw up the school's priorities and make it an even better place in which to learn.

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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?	1
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	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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	1
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**

10 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Corngreaves Junior and Infant School, Cradley Heath, B54 6EZ

Thank you very much for all your help when we visited your school. We were very impressed by how well you behave, but most of all by how hard you work and concentrate in lessons. You told us that you love coming to school and we can see why. You go to a fantastic school, where all the grown-ups do as much as they can to help you enjoy your education and learn as much as possible. Your lessons are fun, and you clearly like the really difficult work you are given. This helps you make much more progress than we often see. You reach standards in mathematics and science that are the same as most schools, but you are even better at English, and these standards are getting better each year much more quickly than in most other schools. One area that you can still do better in is ICT. So we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to use the computers.

Your teachers are really good at finding out where you need extra help, and then doing something about it. The lesson after assembly is especially good at this, because they change it to make sure it is exactly what you need, or to give you lessons in different subjects such as Japanese. You help a lot too, by knowing and using your targets so well. The part you, and your parents and carers, play in helping the school get better, by visiting other schools for example, is brilliant. These visits help you learn a great deal about how others live their lives. All the grown-ups are very nice and friendly, but you know they will be very strict if you say or do something nasty to anyone else. This is good, because you all feel safe and very well looked after.

The reason your school is doing so well is because your headteacher and deputy headteacher will not accept anything but the very best, either from you or anybody else in the school. They, and the others who run the school, have made sure that everyone feels the same way and they all work hard to find things that could be better and then do something about them.

So, to answer the question you asked on Tuesday afternoon, yes, your school is outstanding.

Yours faithfully

David Driscoll

Lead inspector