

# Copthorne Community Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112687
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325662
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jackie Cousins

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	51
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	8
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Wragg
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Rodgers Lane Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 7FF

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	325662

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized infant school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and a small proportion are from minority ethnic groups. The level of knowledge that many pupils start school with is below expectations for four year olds. An above average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have additional learning difficulties/and or disabilities, or social and emotional needs, is above average. There are eight pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school has the Healthy School Award, Bronze Eco Award and Active Mark. The headteacher is away from school at present on maternity leave and so the deputy has taken over as the acting headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Copthorne Community Infants is a good school which gives pupils a successful start to their education. It has some outstanding features. The school's leadership places a very high emphasis on promoting the pupils' self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning. All staff offer pupils devoted and outstanding care and support. As a result, pupils' personal development is excellent. A real strength of the school is behaviour, which is outstanding, because staff guide pupils very respectfully. Pupils concentrate very well and have really positive attitudes to their learning. This is partly because highly skilled teaching assistants give pupils extra support through 'Nurture Groups.' Several pupils said they like, 'everything about school.' Attendance and punctuality are above average and the school monitors these aspects carefully. The school does not always share pupils' individual targets effectively in all classes and so they do not have a deep understanding of how to attain higher levels of skill. Good leadership and management mean the school has made effective improvements since the last inspection. For example, pupils' standards of writing in Year 2 have improved significantly. The leadership of the headteacher and acting headteacher is very thoughtful and drives changes successfully. The school is in a good position to continue improving in the future.

Pupils' enjoyment in many school activities is obvious when you watch them at work. This is mostly because of the wide variety of interesting projects planned by the school. The curriculum is well organised and is enriched by the teaching of music, sport and information and communication technology (ICT). In 2008, standards were average by Year 2 in reading, mathematics and science and above average in writing. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. The effective use of practical teaching methods ensures that pupils develop their key skills well. Lessons do not always set specific objectives for different groups of pupils and so pupils are not totally sure about how to evaluate their successes. Standards are average by the end of Reception in most areas of learning but they are a little below average in knowledge and understanding of the world. This is partly because staff do not monitor children's involvement in outside activities fully and do not consistently record the next steps that children will take.

Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities settle very quickly into school life whether they start at the school in the Reception or other year groups. This is because an excellent partnership is in place between the staff, parents and other agencies. One parent summed it up when they said, 'This is a lovely friendly school which always puts its pupils' needs first. Its open door policy is a real winner. The staff always put 100% into everything they do.' Parents are invited into school every morning for 15 minutes to share learning activities with their child. Half-termly planning is displayed effectively in classrooms so that parents can see the focus for learning. All parents who responded to the questionnaire were really pleased that their child is safe, well cared for and making good progress. The school's leadership works outstandingly successfully to unite the community. For example, every year pupils create costumes and take part in the local carnival. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are incorporated successfully into school life because of the senior management team's commitment to including them.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class and standards are average by the start of Year 1. Children develop their basic skills well because staff have high expectations of them

and deepen their understanding effectively. Standards of reading by the end of the Reception year are a little above average. Children learn to read and write using letter sounds successfully as a result of the structured way they are taught. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is a little below average. Staff need to ensure that they check and keep a record consistently of the activities that take place and ensure that this informs what the children's next steps for learning are. The leadership of this stage of education is good. This means that children have rich opportunities to learn in the inside areas and use ICT in a wide variety of ways. They enjoy learning to use ICT because activities are planned thoughtfully which really interest them. Children learn to speak and listen carefully as a result of the good use of questioning by staff. Children's personal development is outstanding because staff care for their welfare excellently and guide them extremely effectively. Children in the Reception happily share equipment due to the thoughtful way that staff manage them.

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

- Develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world in the Reception class ensuring staff record what they are doing in outside activities in more detail.
- Ensure that specific objectives for lessons are shared with pupils so that they can evaluate their successes more fully.
- Make sure pupils understand in more detail how to meet individual learning targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well from Reception to Year 2. Throughout the school those with additional learning or social and emotional needs make good progress because they have effective support from staff and the special needs coordinator. From a starting point that is below expectation, pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. By Year 2, standards in reading, mathematics, science and speaking and listening are average and writing is above average. The proportion of pupils who attain higher levels is average. Standards in Year 2 have been at least average for the last four years. Boys and girls attain similar standards. This is because the school's leadership monitors pupils' progress and attainment very thoroughly every term. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils show excellent commitment to healthy lifestyles by choosing to eat more fruit and taking part in at least two hours of physical activities per week. Their effective spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is reflected in their excellent behaviour and in the positive relationships they form with others. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of how to keep safe. They work and play harmoniously together. Pupils of all ages contribute really effectively to school life. The very active school council gives pupils an opportunity to be involved in important decisions. For example, pupils helped to choose which types of after-school activities they would like. Pupils develop an effective understanding of other cultures and faiths through various areas of the curriculum and enrichment activities. Through collecting presents to send to others, pupils gain a good understanding of the challenges people face in some parts of the world. Pupils feel very well cared for by staff and free from bullying. With the sound academic standards they attain and the physical, technological and social skills they gain, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is effective and assists pupils to achieve well. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to make lessons interesting. Good teaching methods develop pupils' basic skills well. For example, Year 1 pupils learn to write tricky words quickly because practical activities are used very successfully. Teachers use questioning thoughtfully and so pupils learn to think deeply for themselves. Assessment activities are utilised effectively and, especially, to identify those pupils who are underachieving. The use of skilled teaching assistants and teachers with smaller groups means pupils receive valuable extra attention. Not all pupils are extended fully in lessons because teachers do not consistently tell them how they can check how successful they have been in their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The provision for literacy and numeracy across the school is good. Projects are successfully planned for each half term and links are made effectively between areas of learning. Curriculum planning is beginning to emphasise the importance of teaching key skills. Different groups of pupils are catered for well. Provision, and individual education plans, for pupils with additional needs support them well and usually contain specific and measurable targets. Pupils have a good choice of extra activities including sports, ICT, cookery and art. ICT is used well to develop basic skills and enhance pupils' learning. For instance, Year 2 pupils learn to edit their writing successfully. Afternoon sessions are used effectively for pupils to explore and extend their learning independently. Pupils' personal, social and emotional needs are provided for very well because staff support pupils through discussion times. The extensive grounds provide pupils with opportunities to develop many skills including their imagination and creativity.

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

#### **Grade: 1**

The school takes its responsibilities for the pastoral care of its pupils extremely seriously. Its emphasis on providing a secure environment enables pupils to settle down very successfully in the school. Staff provide excellent direction which gently but firmly guides pupils and this ensures very strong working relationships. Parents are regularly invited into school and one week a term pupils are invited to bring their parents to school. Procedures to safeguard pupils meet requirements and the acting headteacher has recently received child protection training. All pupils, and especially those who have faced significant challenges in their lives, are supported extremely well through the use of a specially trained teaching assistant in a 'Positive Play Room'. A very good system is in place to monitor pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics, science, speaking and listening skills. This means that school's leadership is very clear about how well pupils are progressing.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher and acting headteacher form a very strong senior leadership team that provides clear direction to the work of the school. The school's leadership is committed to the professional development of all leaders and staff. Extensive training gives subject leaders the knowledge and skills to lead their subject areas well. The management of the support for pupils with additional learning needs is good. This builds on extremely effective liaison with outside agencies. Challenging targets for standards were met this year. The school is always looking for ways to improve and so it plans to develop pupils' understanding of their individual learning targets more fully. A detailed improvement plan is in place which is devised with all members of staff and is a shared process. Each teaching member of staff contributes to this process and this means that staff are clear about the school improvements. However the key priorities are not expressed clearly enough and may not be understood by the school's other stakeholders. The governing body is well informed and actively involved in continuous school improvement. Parents are very happy with the school One parent summed up their views in writing, 'We looked at three possibilities for our child and Copthorne was a clear winner. Choosing Copthorne was definitely the right decision. Our child loves school. The effort put into all activities by all school staff is amazing.'



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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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

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<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	2
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	2
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>	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?	1

## 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 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	2
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	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

13 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Copthorne Community Infant School, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 7FF

Thank you for helping me to find out about your school. I enjoyed watching lessons and talking to some of you. You attend such a happy and friendly school. Good things about your school include the fact that:

- you make good progress in your work
- you concentrate and behave very well in lessons
- you really enjoy all the things you do at school
- your headteacher and acting headteacher have good ideas about ways to improve the school
- teaching is good and the staff work hard to make lessons interesting
- a very good partnership is in place between the school and your parents
- staff care for you really well and listen to you thoughtfully.

I have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things are to:

- develop your knowledge and understanding of the world in the Reception class making sure staff record what you are doing in outside activities in more detail
- help you use clearer objectives in lessons to check on how well you are doing
- make sure that you understand in more detail how to meet your individual learning targets.

Keep enjoying all the things you are learning at Copthorne Community Infant School.

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector