

Cooper Perry Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124195
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328075
Inspection date	16 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	235
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	56
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Allsop
Headteacher	Emma Wynne
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Seighford Stafford ST18 9PQ
Telephone number	01785 282210
Fax number	01785 282916

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the progress pupils of average ability make in each key stage

the quality of teaching and the curriculum in meeting the needs of all pupils

the capacity of leadership to direct school improvement and increase the academic progress made by pupils.

Evidence was gathered from analysis of school data, the school's self-evaluation, the previous inspection report, pupils' work, parents' questionnaires, school policies, monitoring reports, and other documents. Lessons were observed and discussions were held with pupils, senior staff, governors and the local authority. 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

Cooper Perry caters for pupils from predominantly White British backgrounds. Very few pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) consists of the Nursery and a Reception class. An after-school club is run by an external agency. The headteacher was appointed the day before the inspection, having been the acting headteacher since September 2008. There is currently no deputy headteacher. The school's previous headteacher was on secondment for some of the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Cooper Perry is a satisfactory school. The school provides a very attractive and stimulating environment where pupils thrive and make the most of the opportunities provided. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their academic work and their personal development is good. When pupils join the school, their skills and experiences are broadly typical for their age, although they have weak literacy and communication skills. By the time they leave Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Although their achievement is satisfactory overall, the progress pupils make throughout the school presents a very mixed picture. They make good progress in the EYFS and Key Stage 1, which is where teaching is strongest and the faster gains in achievement are made. Between the ages of seven and eleven, pupils make slower progress although it remains satisfactory. However, some pupils of average ability in this age group underachieve, particularly in writing and mathematics, because lessons are not always sufficiently challenging. Nevertheless, teaching is satisfactory overall, with teachers providing work that is usually well adapted to the needs of the least and most able, and a good variety of activities to motivate pupils.

The school cares well for pupils, keeping them safe and working closely with other agencies to provide high quality support for their welfare. Thorough systems are in place to monitor progress, and pupils are closely involved in this process. This has led to the school recognising that a crucial area for development is in collecting more accurate information about pupils' attainment so that learning can build systematically as soon as pupils join a new year group. Currently, there are discrepancies in the levels pupils are judged to reach at the end of each year and where they are found to be in the next. This hinders teachers in planning lessons that fully meet pupils' needs, particularly early in the autumn term. This lack of accuracy about their attainment also slows the work of school improvement. It is, for example, difficult to gain a secure overview of where the progress of different groups is good and where it needs to improve.

An outstanding array of opportunities enable pupils to develop skills in the arts, link extensively with other countries, run enterprise activities and become involved as citizens. This has engendered a keen respect for the cultures and values of others, amongst other things. Music and art are of very high quality and pupils regularly win the county media and film awards for their productions. For this reason, pupils thoroughly enjoy school and make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. For example, pupils carried out a detailed survey on how well the school meets its aims, which they reported to a local school and to a conference of headteachers in London. School leaders are rightly aware that at certain times of the year the balance of the curriculum is not sufficiently focused on academic subjects because there are so many new initiatives and other activities underway, which slows the work of raising standards further. Parents are extremely appreciative about the school. As one typically commented, 'I am so happy with my child's progress academically, but also her pleasure in going to school.' Parents are particularly pleased with the good quality care and support pupils receive. They feel that they are kept very well informed and that their children communicate enthusiastically about their work and what they are aiming for. Pupils are equally positive about the school. They feel safe and act very safely, behave well and show mature attitudes to the many responsibilities they willingly undertake. Some of them would like to have 'harder work in some subjects' but love many things, including sports, clubs, computers, food and art. Pupils also have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, thoroughly enjoying for example the 'huff and puff' activities they run at lunchtime. With exceptionally strong team working and

organisational skills, good basic skills and well-developed social skills, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future lives.

The new headteacher has made considerable strides in accurately identifying the main issues for improvement, following a period of instability, where achievement slowed and the school became less effective overall. Shortcomings are already being addressed and all staff, alongside the governing body are involved well in this work. For example, there have been recent improvements to reading throughout the school. As a result, leadership and management, and the school's capacity to improve further are satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children join the Nursery, their attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age although their developing literacy and communication skills are weak. With good teaching and a strong curriculum, children are working securely within all areas of learning by the end of Reception. Children make particularly good progress in their personal skills in the Nursery, which in turn supports their developing literacy and numeracy skills in Reception.

Lessons throughout the EYFS make good use of varied short activities to maintain children's interest. In the Nursery, for example, autumn leaves were used to produce paint prints which intrigued and fascinated the children. In Reception, a fast paced and creative session on linking sounds and letters involved singing with actions, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. There is a good mix of teacher-led and child-led activities so that children learn to work independently, really thinking about the world around them. Children quickly learn to take on responsibilities in class and talk about their work to others. They are also good at helping each other with coats and bags at the beginning of the day.

Good, informed leadership has ensured improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the use of outdoor learning and in children's calculation skills. Children are well cared for so that they work cooperatively in a safe environment. As with the rest of the school, however, the assessment of children's levels of attainment is not entirely accurate. This slows teachers' ability to set work at the right level when children first move up a class. It also makes it more difficult to pinpoint clearly how well different groups of children are doing over time. Nevertheless, staff know individual children very well and are able to see where each one needs the most help, ensuring good achievement overall.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenge to pupils of average ability in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 to help them make faster progress.
- Gather more accurate assessment of pupils' attainment to inform lesson planning and support school leaders in driving school improvement.
- Improve the balance of the curriculum to give sufficient weight to academic subjects.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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?	3
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1
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?	3
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

17 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cooper Perry Primary School, Seighford, ST18 9PQ Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much, joining you for lunch, and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school has a friendly and caring atmosphere. It is a satisfactory school, with many good things going on, just like you told us. Satisfactory teaching helps you to make at least adequate progress in your lessons. You make good progress in your social and personal skills, especially the outstanding way you contribute to the school, help each other and get involved in the community. Your lessons are enjoyable and teachers help you make steady progress. Some of you, particularly in the younger classes, make good progress. You have a good curriculum and your teachers see to it that you have lots of exciting activities, trips and projects to keep you interested and to help you develop many different types of skills. At certain times, we think you should focus more on the main subjects such as English, mathematics and science and we have asked your teachers to ensure a better balance of activities during the year.

Staff do a sound job in running the school. They know how to help you improve and for this reason, you are doing better in reading, for example. However, we think that some of you could do much better in writing and mathematics and we have asked teachers to improve lessons to help you with this. Finally, we have asked the staff to be more accurate in deciding what levels you have reached so that they can see more clearly which groups are making good progress and where improvement is needed.

Adults in the school keep you safe and look after you well. We were impressed with your good behaviour and the way you take good care of each other. You work hard and we are pleased that you take plenty of exercise and many of you try to eat a healthy diet. You clearly enjoy coming to school. We would particularly like to see you carry on with the good work you all do through the school council and other projects to help the school develop further. We think that these things, alongside your good skills in working together, will help you well in preparing for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Pothecary Lead inspector