

# Court Farm Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	103267
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336045
Inspection dates	14-15 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Ian Jones

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

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Buck
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Nolan
Date of previous school inspection	23-24 January 2007
School address	Tedbury Crescent Birmingham
Telephone number	B23 5NS 0121 464 1038
Fax number	0121 464 1039
Email address	enquiry@courtfrm.bham.sch.uk

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Age group	4 -11Error! Reference source not found.
Inspection date(s)	Error! Reference source not found.
Inspection number	336045

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at policies and documentation on teaching and learning, the curriculum, procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress, the school development plan and information about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They analysed a total of 29 parents' questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of higher attaining pupils and whether teaching is sufficiently challenging
- the effectiveness of provision in supporting learning for vulnerable pupils
- how well pupils engage with those from different ethnic and religious backgrounds
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers monitoring to support improvement.

## Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. The percentage of pupils who qualify for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average; these are mainly behavioural, emotional and social, or language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during their primary education is above average. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. The school has achieved Healthy School status and the Activemark in sport. A playgroup club operates from the site. This provision is not managed by the governing body and will be subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

## Main findings

The school has made satisfactory progress since its previous inspection. It provides a satisfactory education for the pupils and some elements of its work are good.

Attainment on entry is well below national expectations, although there is some fluctuation due to the small numbers involved. This year attainment on entry to Reception is higher than previous years, although it remains below average overall. From their starting points children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1, reaching standards that remain below average on entry into Key Stage 2. Pupils continue to make appropriate progress through Key Stage 2. Standards of attainment are a little below average overall by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6. They are highest in English, particularly reading, although standards are lower in writing. Standards dipped in the 2009 national tests in mathematics and science and few pupils reached the higher levels. Opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge in practical investigations and problem solving activities are limited. Whilst the rate of progress for groups of pupils has been satisfactory in the last three years, more able pupils do not always make progress at the same rate as their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory and sometimes better progress, and receive appropriate support.

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They behave well and relate well to each other, irrespective of their ethnic or religious backgrounds. Pupils make safe and healthy lifestyle choices. They contribute well to the work of the school by taking on roles that benefit others, reflected in the work of the school council and play leaders. Attendance, whilst broadly average overall, dipped last year to below average overall.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some good teaching was observed on which the school can build, and progress was good for pupils in these lessons. In the satisfactory lessons seen learning does not challenge all pupils well enough, because work is not closely matched to their needs and expectations for what they can achieve are not as high as they could be. An appropriate system is in place to check how well pupils are doing in reading, writing and mathematics. Marking is appropriate overall and is particularly well developed in writing, where pupils receive good guidance as to how to improve their work. Teachers support learning by regularly monitoring pupils' work during lessons.

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All staff know the pupils well and take good care of them. They make sure that pupils feel welcome and are included in all activities.

With the good support of the deputy, the headteacher and staff work effectively to improve the school. Senior leaders have recognised the need to concentrate on raising the achievement of specific groups such as more able pupils, and have achieved some success in this area although there is further work to be done. Some subject leaders manage satisfactorily although some are not as involved in the monitoring of learning as they could be. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Whilst the leadership team has tackled some of the issues from the last inspection, evaluations of pupils' performance and the quality of teaching are not sharp enough to provide clear priorities for improvement. Self-evaluation is satisfactory overall and recent changes, together with increasing commitment and energy amongst senior leaders to raise standards, are having a positive impact on developments. Individual governors are supportive of the school, but their role as critical friends is not sufficiently developed since they do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of the school's work.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate the rate of pupil progress by:
  - providing work that is well matched to the needs of more able pupils, particularly in mathematics and science
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to learn through problem solving and investigative tasks.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - analysing information from assessments clearly and using this to tackle any underachievement
  - ensuring teaching has high levels of expectation across all subjects.
  
- Strengthen school leadership by:
  - ensuring greater involvement of subject leaders in monitoring of lessons, identifying the best features in teaching and spreading good practice
  - increasing the effectiveness of school governors as critical friends in overseeing provision and holding the school to account.
  
- Increase attendance to at least 95% for the 2009/10 school year by:
  - improving the effectiveness of liaison with parents with regard to emphasising the importance of regular attendance

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve satisfactorily across the school. Progress seen in most lessons was satisfactory, but where teachers planned more stimulating and challenging lessons pupils made better progress. School leaders recognise that some more able pupils have not achieved well enough in recent years. Inspectors observed that effective measures are being taken to begin to improve the provision and to eradicate any underachievement. For example, attainment for more able pupils in English has improved especially at Key Stage 1. Teachers are currently adapting their lessons to make them more stimulating and consequently progress is beginning to quicken. The school recognises the need to use assessment information more effectively to tackle underachievement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, particularly those needing higher levels of individual support. Despite there being some catching up to do, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard has increased at Key Stage 2 to a satisfactory level. Whilst achievement in mathematics and science is satisfactory overall, not enough lessons allow pupils to participate in investigative and practical work.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, and pupils are well-mannered and polite. They work and play well together and are keen to take part in the range of school activities offered. However, levels of attendance dropped to below average last year. The school is well aware of this concern, and plans are in place to make the improvement needed. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles by taking part in a range of physical activities in lessons and after-school clubs, including swimming and the popular 'Wake and Shake' sessions.

Pupils contribute well to the school community by taking on responsibilities in the classroom and around the school such as school councillors and play leaders. They participate well in a range of local community events and raise funds for many good causes whilst learning about teamwork.

Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future well-being because their skills are suitably developed in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a good moral understanding of right and wrong and have good social skills. They form good relationships and respect each other's opinions, although their knowledge of other faiths and cultures is not as well developed.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

## How effective is the provision?

The best lessons feature knowledgeable and confident teaching which interests pupils and contributes effectively to their enjoyment of school. In other lessons activities are not sufficiently challenging, resulting in a slowing of progress for some. The skilled use of questioning is a good feature of teaching in some lessons. Most lesson plans have clear objectives and are detailed, but teachers do not consistently refer to the stated learning objectives other than at the start of the lesson. Assessment information is used regularly to inform planning, although systems are better developed in English and mathematics than elsewhere. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to provide satisfactory support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum is adequately matched to the interests and needs of learners. Aspects of health and citizenship are dealt with well, contributing to pupils' good personal development. A good range of visits and visitors stimulate learning well and the wide range of after-school clubs are enjoyed by many. Pupils enjoy gardening and take part in a wide range of sporting and other activities.

Pupils are cared for well and the school provides a good learning environment for them. Vulnerable pupils are supported and guided sensitively to help them integrate with others. They appreciate the support provided by their teachers and enjoy positive relationships with them.

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

### How effective are leadership and management?

Overall, leaders and managers demonstrate a satisfactory effectiveness in embedding ambition and driving improvement. The senior leadership team has identified areas for improvement accurately and is addressing them appropriately. The school is developing a more strategic direction to ensure that issues are tackled and that the rate of progress for pupils is quickened. Leaders recognise that there is still much work to do, particularly in raising achievement in mathematics and science for more able pupils. Improved strategies to improve standards in English are beginning to have a positive impact, but procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and sharing good practice amongst subject leaders lack rigour.

Safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet legal requirements. The school leadership enjoys the trust and confidence of parents and keeps them well informed. The school keeps appropriate information about its pupils and their performance and satisfactorily promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination. The curriculum regularly features issues regarding safety with the result that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school itself is a cohesive community, and is developing links with schools and communities in differing areas.

Although individual governors are committed and supportive of the school the governing body has not acted swiftly enough in the past to deal with underachievement because its role as critical friend to the school is not well developed. The deployment of staff and appropriate use of resources result in satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities	3



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met	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and enjoy school. Clear expectations support learning well resulting in good progress. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and activities chosen by the children. There is an appropriately strong emphasis on supporting language and communication skills, an area of weakness for a significant number of children. The indoor learning environment is stimulating and there are well developed plans to improve the satisfactory outdoor provision. Children are encouraged to use their writing skills in their play, for example producing delightful birthday cards for a party. Good questioning strategies encourage children to think carefully about their learning. Children are encouraged to speak confidently. Welfare is a top priority and staff respond sensitively to the needs of each child. Personal development is good. Children happily share equipment and are confident both in the way they approach adults.

### *These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The questionnaires indicated a high level of support and confidence in the school. A number of parents made additional comments and there was much consistency in terms of what was said. Parents spoke particularly positively about how their children enjoyed school, and of the care and commitment of the staff in developing pupils' confidence in themselves and their abilities.

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## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Court Farm Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	66	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	66	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	12	41	16	55	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	38	16	55	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	52	12	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	13	45	13	45	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	59	10	34	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	45	14	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	11	38	16	55	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	34	16	55	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	34	18	62	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	48	13	45	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	15	52	13	45	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Court Farm Primary School, Birmingham B23 5NS

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I certainly enjoyed talking with you, and I was impressed by your politeness and the way you get on with your teachers and each other. I think yours is a satisfactory school and I know from talking to you and reading your questionnaires that you enjoy school and being with your friends.

Mrs Nolan and the staff make sure that you get along well with each other around school and that you make satisfactory progress. They are ensuring that those of you who sometimes find learning difficult receive the help you need. I was pleased to see how well you take pride in your school and look after it. I was also pleased to see how you take responsibility and are willing to do jobs and help around the school.

I have asked Mrs Nolan, the staff and governors to try to make your school even better by doing the following things:

- Make sure that there is more good teaching in the school so that you make better progress, especially in mathematics and science.
- Improve the way your teachers check how well you are doing and give quick help to those of you falling behind.
- I also want school leaders and governors to be more involved in checking how well the school is doing.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best. I wish you every success in the future.

Ian Jones

Lead inspector.

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