

Cofton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103315
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336059
Inspection dates	14–15 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Farrell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Shattock
Headteacher	Elizabeth Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seven lessons and several shorter sessions were observed, eight teachers were seen and meetings were held with pupils, staff, parents, governors, and partners of the school. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at data on pupils' progress, school development planning, curriculum plans and various policies and related documents and scrutinised pupil questionnaires and 69 parental questionnaires.

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

- boys' progress in English and the effectiveness of strategies to improve it
- attendance and the school's effectiveness in improving it
- the range and quality of risk assessments

Information about the school

Cofton Primary School is of average size. Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are a small number of pupils from other countries and minority ethnic groups. An average number of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A breakfast club and before and after school activities are provided by another organisation.

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

This is a satisfactory school. It has good provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding. Attractive, stimulating displays, especially in the humanities, considerably enhance the environment. Sound leadership and management leads to satisfactory teaching and steady pupils' progress. Governors offer effective support and challenge. Safeguarding is sound and risk assessments are satisfactory in range and quality. The school knows its population well and plans the promotion of community cohesion carefully. However, it does not sufficiently monitor and evaluate this area and consequently is not clear as to the impact of this planning. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and in Key Stages 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. Staff and pupils enjoy good relationships, and behaviour is well managed. Teaching assistants contribute well but teachers do not always deploy them fully, slowing progress in lessons where this occurs. Marking is rigorous but assessments are not always used to precisely inform subsequent lessons. In these instances, lessons are not as challenging as they could be.

The curriculum has been transformed since the previous inspection and is now good. It contributes strongly to pupils' enjoyment of school and the weekly enrichment activities are already beginning to improve attendance. Good care, guidance and support helps pupils feel well cared for and secure. Pupils are well supported in transitions such as moving to secondary school. Attendance is average and the school has effective strategies to encourage it, such as good reward systems and plans to extend these to ensure continued improvement.

Children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make satisfactory progress and achieve soundly in Key Stages 1 and 2. Boys' progress in English has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school a good deal. Social and moral development is strong. Cultural development is sound. Art, a strength of the school, provides rich opportunities to engage with other cultures, but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to engage with individuals, groups and schools with different cultural backgrounds. Self-evaluation procedures, based on regular monitoring, are satisfactory. The school has used the outcomes of self-evaluation satisfactorily to maintain good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and improve its curriculum and care, guidance and support. This demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teaching is good or better, so improving pupils' progress to good by

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September 2011, by making sure that:

- assessments always fully and precisely inform subsequent lessons
- all staff are deployed to the maximum.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion by:
 - ensuring it is rigorously monitored and evaluated.
- Improve pupils' cultural development by:
 - developing links with individuals, groups and schools representing different cultures.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment that is below average but make good progress because provision is good. As a result, they enter Year 1 with average attainment. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make steady progress and achieve and enjoy their learning satisfactorily because of sound teaching.

Different groups including boys and girls, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities all make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily. In a mathematics lesson on perimeters for older pupils, they made satisfactory progress and could explain how they worked out problems because they had the opportunity to talk about this to each other. The teacher ensured the task was relevant by relating it to everyday activities. Pupils worked hard and behaved well because behaviour was well managed. In an information and communications technology lesson for younger pupils in which they used internet resources to fit pictures and text into a box, they made steady progress and achieved soundly because teaching was adequate. Because the activity was engaging, pupils were eager to carry out a task on the computer. Pupils behaved well because relationships were good.

Pupils feel very safe because of sound procedures to keep them so, because they know there is always a member of staff to whom they can talk and because they develop growing understanding of issues such as the abuse of alcohol. Pupils are polite and courteous, keen to explain what they are doing, and care for one another well. They have a good awareness of healthy life styles especially concerning healthy eating and exercise. Pupils support the school council keenly and older pupils have secured improvements for facilities for children in the reception year. They actively raise funds for a wide range of national and international charities. Pupils are a presence in the local community and beyond, and in visits and residential trips they are good ambassadors for the school. Attendance is average and the school recognises further effort is required to secure continuing improvement. Pupils acquire sound economic skills because they have satisfactory opportunities to develop basic skills to learn about the world of work.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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 ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory with some that is good. Teachers provide frequent opportunities to encourage pupils to talk to each other about their ideas, and interesting activities drawn from the good curriculum. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution when teachers deploy them fully but this is not always done, especially in the introduction to lessons. Marking is up to date and thorough and the system of using green marking for positive comments and red for points to improve is understood well by pupils and helps them to develop their learning. Sometimes assessment is not as precisely used as it should be to plan subsequent lessons.

The innovative curriculum is broad and covers the necessary range of subjects well. Pupils have been closely consulted in its development and consequently find it motivating and relevant. Planning is clear and manageable. Links have been carefully developed across subjects, so pupils can experience similar aspects of learning in different contexts, such as learning about healthy food in science and art. However, the school has not yet developed sufficient links to promote the pupils' understanding and awareness of other cultures. The recently introduced weekly enrichment afternoon is

¹ 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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improving pupils' attendance.

Arrangements for care, guidance and support are well organised. They lead to the many good aspects of personal development and well being and support learning well. In lessons, good behaviour is clearly linked with the warm ethos and effective care and support. Good advice and guidance helps pupils make informed choices, including about their future. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. A range of strategies such as the school's reward system encourages attendance and the school is keen to develop further strategies to ensure attendance continues to improve.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff share the same ambition and drive for improvement. They have identified the right priorities in the school development plan to drive up standards, based on appropriate monitoring of teaching and learning. Tracking pupils' progress has improved, so the school can now intervene where necessary. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and hold it to account effectively. They have a wide range of skills and experience and their effectiveness is improving. The great majority of parents are very appreciative of the school and parent workshops are popular. A very small minority consider the school does not take enough account of their views and the school is keen to clarify any concerns and do all it can to deal with these. The school forms effective partnerships and liaises closely with an organisation providing a breakfast club and before and after school activities. The school promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily. No evidence of discrimination was seen and the school has policies to deal with any should it arise. The school takes care to ensure all pupils are able to participate in trips and visits. Boy's writing has improved but pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 do not do as well as children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Community cohesion is soundly promoted. Safeguarding policies and procedures are sound and parents and pupils are confident about children's safety. Satisfactorily deployed resources lead to sound pupils' achievement, so that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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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 met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	3
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 enter this phase with attainment below average. They make good progress and achieve well so they move to the next phase with average attainment. Children quickly develop skills and confidence in speaking and listening. They make good progress because the rich and varied range of activities are well planned, the environment and equipment is fully used to enhance learning, and relationships are very warm and supportive. Assessment procedures are well developed and resources very well used to stimulate imagination and learning. Children's behaviour is excellent because expectations are very high and behaviour is perceptively managed. In the atmosphere of trust, play and learning are equally constructive. Children enjoyed and learned from making clock 'plates' which introduced them to telling the time. Others greatly enjoyed and engaged well in problem solving and working together as they made what they called a 'huge' trailer out of building blocks. Children feel safe and are very caring of each other because staff provide good role models for them. Strong leadership and management forges effective team work among staff. The outside play area is stimulating and well used, but there is no covered area outside for inclement weather. The school proposes to rectify this.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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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

A relatively low proportion of parents responded to the questionnaires. There was strong agreement that the school informs parents about the child's progress, promotes healthy life styles and that teaching is good. Inspectors agree with most of these views and judge teaching as satisfactory rather than good, although there are examples of good teaching. A very small minority disagreed that the school was led and managed effectively but inspectors judge this area to be satisfactory. Again a very small minority disagreed the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors note the school is keen to explore such issues with parents to try to improve the parents' views of this aspect. Parents who met inspectors were very appreciative of all the school provides.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cofton 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	46	36	52	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	57	29	42	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	51	34	49	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	52	30	43	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	46	37	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	35	43	62	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	30	48	70	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)	24	35	38	55	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	42	34	49	2	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	22	46	67	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	22	42	61	11	16	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	33	33	48	7	10	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	39	39	57	2	3	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 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cofton Primary School, West Heath, B31 4ST

It was delightful to meet you when my colleagues and I inspected your school recently. Thank you for telling us about the things you enjoyed such as physical activities and the special activities on Wednesday afternoons.

Cofton is a satisfactory school. Provision for very young children is good. You are well cared for. The activities the school provides for you are good. The school is soundly managed, teaching is satisfactory and you make steady progress in your work. You behave well and sometimes excellently, so well done for that.

There are some things the school can do better so I have asked staff and governors to: make sure you learn as well as you can in class; improve the way the school develops how you build stronger communities; and develop more links with others from different cultures.

I am sure you will help with these improvements for example learning from how other people live.

Yours sincerely

Michael Farrell

Lead inspector

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