

Courthouse Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103640
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	336121
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Ian Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Robson
Headteacher	Mrs S Malam
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2007
School address	Bell Green Road Coventry West Midlands
Telephone number	02476 688022
Fax number	02476 668542
Email address	admin@courthousegreen.coventry.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at policies and documentation on teaching and learning, the curriculum, procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the school improvement plan. They analysed a total of 40 parents' questionnaires.

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

- How well pupils achieve in relation to their starting points.
- How well assessment procedures help to meet the needs of pupils.
- Behaviour, to determine whether the staff's expectations are consistent across the school.
- The impact of leadership on both driving school improvement and the quality of teaching.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school situated in the north-eastern part of Coventry. A new headteacher took up post in September 2009. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average, with a small minority at an early stage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These are mainly moderate learning, language and communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a morning and afternoon Nursery and two reception classes. The school has 'wraparound' provision in the form of breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs. The school has gained a number of nationally accredited awards such as the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark in sport.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Many pupils do not make enough progress as they move through the school. The school's 2009 test results show a further deterioration in attainment with, for example, only half of the pupils reaching the expected level in English. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science was much smaller than average. The school fell well short of its own targets. Furthermore, data held by the local authority confirm a further decline in the overall rate of progress.

The quality of teaching varies too much. A small percentage of the teaching is good but a significant proportion is ineffective. As a result, teaching fails to promote learning and progress well enough. In addition, assessment procedures are not used adequately to inform future planning. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, work has been undertaken to create the right conditions for learning. Marking has improved, and pupils are becoming more engaged in learning because marking is beginning to give them clearer guidance on what to do next. Teachers' expectations for appropriate behaviour are consistent and despite the concerns of some pupils and parents, behaviour in lessons and around school is satisfactory. Inspectors were impressed with the way pupils regularly showed them courtesy.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Although attainment on entry is well below that usually found, children make good progress from their starting points because the staff support learning well and maintain regular and accurate assessments of their progress. They plan the next steps of learning according to the children's needs. Good progress is secured by effective and timely interventions. The additional childcare offered by the before- and after-school clubs and lunchtime care for nursery children is of good quality.

The new headteacher has swiftly evaluated the quality of teaching and learning and knows what needs to be done to improve. She has gained the trust and support of staff and governors and enlisted their commitment to making the required improvements. However, the school's capacity to improve is inadequate because leaders and managers at all levels have been ineffective in tackling weaknesses and overcoming barriers to improvement. Self-evaluation processes have lacked rigour and have not given a clear

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and analytical view of the school's shortcomings or helped to drive the school forward.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Quicken the rate of progress in English and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - creating an immediate sense of urgency to raise attainment through well-judged, time-limited goals
 - raising the level of expectation for learning so that all pupils are challenged in their work
 - setting challenging targets in all classes for this and future school years, based on accurate teacher assessment, for both individuals and groups of pupils
 - giving pupils ambitious individual targets; ensuring that they understand what they need to do to move forward in their learning so that they meet national expectations and are prepared for the next stage in their lives.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching by:
 - increasing the amount of good teaching and eliminating all that is inadequate
 - achieving a whole-school approach to teaching and learning through well targeted professional development and the sharing of good practice
 - using regular assessments of progress to plan work that ensures all pupils make good progress
 - consistently implementing the new marking policy and clarifying how well pupils have done and what they need to do next.
- Develop the expertise of leaders across the school and ensure all contribute to school improvement by:
 - making explicit to all staff, their roles and responsibilities
 - holding staff to account for learning and progress in their classes and areas of responsibility
 - establishing a professional development plan for all staff
 - improving the governors' role in challenging and holding the school to account

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Many pupils underachieve and attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is significantly lower than seen nationally. This underachievement needs to be arrested and speedily improved. There is some variation between groups of pupils; for example, White British pupils, especially boys, make particularly slow progress. Work in pupils' books shows uneven progress, and many pupils make little or no progress. It also reveals that the amount of work completed by pupils is often small and of poor quality. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make enough progress. The proportion of pupils on track to reach the expected standards in writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school is well below what it should be.

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The inspectors saw some good teaching which engaged the pupils in purposeful and relevant learning. In these lessons, progress was evident, pupils clearly enjoyed their learning and achieved well.

Other features of outcomes for pupils are:

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Despite some good teaching, too much is barely satisfactory or inadequate at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and too often tasks are poorly matched to their needs. Assessment information is not used well enough to plan future learning. Some lessons have stated learning objectives but their impact is limited because they are rarely referred to as the lesson progresses. Techniques such as 'talking partners' are occasionally used to good effect, but teachers' questions do not challenge the thinking of many pupils, especially the more able. The pace of lessons is often slow, and pupils spend too long listening to teachers rather than being actively involved in learning.

The classroom environments are appropriate and in some classes additional guidance to

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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support learning is displayed, although the quality of this varies. The curriculum has some positive elements, such as work to develop creative links between subjects in Years 5 and 6, and in the range of additional enrichment activities offered. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. However, it is failing to support the development of basic skills. The curriculum is not planned closely enough to the needs and potential of learners thereby resulting in expectations and progress which are both too low.

Pastoral care is generally effective in meeting the needs of pupils who say they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset. Support for vulnerable pupils helps them to develop and maintain relationships with others. Pupils enjoy good harmonious relationships with the adults in school and additional support is provided through the learning mentor.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

This school is embarking on a long journey of improvement. The headteacher has quickly and accurately set about the task of identifying the school's weaknesses. She has been successful in communicating her ambition to the staff and governors. Senior leaders have a growing understanding of the issues facing the school and the need for greater urgency in order to tackle them successfully. Plans to address inadequacies in teaching and learning have been developed and some success has already been achieved, for example in improvements to marking. However, leaders and managers at all levels have failed to address many of the school's shortcomings. Processes to track pupils' progress have not provided relevant information about the performance of different groups of pupils and the school has not acted swiftly enough to support them. Consequently, the school is inadequately promoting equality of opportunity. Insufficient progress has been made since the previous inspection; the school was charged with raising standards and achievement, however, in the last three years standards have been well below average across the school and have deteriorated further in Year 6.

Governors are committed to the school and keen for it to improve. However, they have been unable to effectively hold the school to account for its work, and have had too little impact on the direction and work of the school. Because outcomes are inadequate overall, the school gives inadequate value for money.

Safeguarding arrangements are in line with current government guidance. Community

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cohesion is promoted well at the local and school level, as is shown by the family atmosphere in the school. There are plans to promote community cohesion further by developing the school's work to improve national and global links.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
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	4
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get a good start to school in the Nursery. They learn well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in all areas from their low starting points. Good teaching and a thorough assessment of children's attainment on entry mean that the curriculum for each child is well matched to the necessary next steps in learning. This is maintained by regular and accurate observations. Planning is thorough and the indoor and outdoor areas promote good, exciting learning. Children reach standards that are a little below expectations by the time they enter Year 1. There is an appropriately strong emphasis on supporting language and communication skills, an area of weakness for a significant number of children. The welfare offered to children is of good quality and ensures that children feel safe. Children work and play well together. They happily share equipment and grow in confidence in the way they approach adults. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and activities chosen by the children. Good leadership and management, together with clear expectations, support learning well and result in good progress. Personal development is good.

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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

Although only a small number of questionnaires were returned, the very large majority collated in the table below were positive and parents believe that this is a caring and supportive school. A number commented favourably on the good start made by the new headteacher, and the inspectors agree with this view. Some concerns were raised about the behaviour of some pupils; other concerns related to little progress and a lack of challenge. All parents and carers responded positively to children's enjoyment of school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Courthouse Green 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 446 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	60	16	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	48	19	48	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	35	20	50	3	8	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	35	19	48	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	40	18	45	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	35	20	50	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	28	25	63	3	8	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)	8	20	21	53	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	28	23	58	3	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	18	24	60	3	8	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	13	26	65	1	3	3	8
The school is led and managed effectively	9	23	21	53	1	3	2	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	48	18	45	2	6	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 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

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 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>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.



15 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Courthouse Green Primary School, Coventry CV6 7GX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We were impressed by your politeness. You behave appropriately in the classrooms and around the school. Thank you to those of you who took time to talk to us.

You enjoy school. The school works hard to make sure you are safe and healthy. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, but inspectors would like teachers to make sure you all learn and progress as well as you can. Your headteacher has lots of ideas about how to improve your school and help you to do better in English and mathematics. You can help by listening carefully, asking lots of questions and by being ready to work hard towards your targets for improvement.

We have asked the school to:

- improve teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2
- make sure that you all know what you need to learn next, particularly in English and mathematics
- make sure that school leaders and managers play their part to ensure that Courthouse Green makes the improvements needed.

Thank you for being so helpful and making our visit enjoyable.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Jones

Lead inspector

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