

Coley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109779
Local Authority	Reading
Inspection number	337372
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Barbara Atcheson

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	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Ewing
Headteacher	Verelda Powell
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with governors, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at pupil progress tracking data, the quality of monitoring, improvement planning and other key documents. The outcomes from 105 parent questionnaires were also evaluated.

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

- Attainment, learning and progress, particularly in mathematics for all groups of pupils.
- The quality of teaching and learning and the extent to which lessons meet the needs of all pupils and how well the school uses assessment information to make sure lessons are challenging and fast paced.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision.
- The systems and processes that leaders use to monitor, develop and improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise the attainment and achievement of the pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Almost two thirds of the children are from a wide variety of minority ethnic groups. More than a third of the children are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children with special education needs is just below the national average. Their needs mainly relate to speech, language and communication difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or autism. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into a Nursery and a Reception class. After a period of uncertainty in the leadership of the school, a new headteacher was appointed in January 2009. An acting deputy headteacher was appointed in October 2009 for one term, to cover for the deputy headteacher/special educational needs co-ordinator, who is on long-term sick leave.

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

Coley Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It is rapidly improving. These are the key factors which have enabled the school to do this.

- Under the inspired leadership of the headteacher, a skilled and determined staff have changed their practice and made a significant change in how they plan for pupils' learning. As a result the school is improving quickly and securely across a range of its work.
- Achievement is satisfactory and improving steadily. Attainment is average at the end of Year 6, with the majority of pupils securely on course to reach their expected levels at the end of the year. However attainment in mathematics is not as strong because there are learning gaps in mental mathematics and calculation. Reading is also a weaker area because pupils do not have sufficient strategies to overcome their lack of language skills.
- Teaching is satisfactory. The use of assessment to plan lessons means that learning is now tailored to meet the needs of the pupils. However, its use is not always consistently accurate and progress slows as a result.
- The school has exceeded its targets for attendance which has moved from inadequate to above average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage has been transformed to provide appropriate learning experiences across all six areas of learning both in and out of doors. As a result children are now making expected progress and a large majority are securely on course to reach the accepted levels by the time they reach Year 1.
- Pupils behave well; they have good relationships with adults and other pupils and respect each other's achievements.
- Pupils are adamant that they feel safe in school and are confident that they have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.
- Significant changes in the governing body and the way in which it operates have increased its capacity to meet the school's needs and hold it to account for tackling important weaknesses.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory and plans to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress are increasingly effective. Some subject leadership monitoring roles are not as well developed as they should be and this limits their overview of standards and progress in their area of responsibility. At the whole-school level it has a secure view of its own strengths and weaknesses based on sound self-evaluation. Staff and governors share the headteacher's high level of commitment to raise achievement further. The school has secure procedures for safeguarding and successfully promotes equal opportunity. Although senior leaders

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recognise that it is early days and that there is much work to do, the school has been successful in securing rapid improvement in pupils' attainment, achievement and enjoyment.

The significant gains seen in achievement as a result of changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage, the way that teachers plan for learning and an impressive rise in the rate of attendance shows that although learning and progress are satisfactory the school is improving quickly and securely. This, together with the drive and commitment of the new headteacher and a strengthened, proactive governing body, demonstrates that the school now has a satisfactory capacity for continuous improvement.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment and accelerate progress by;
 - ensuring that there is a common strategy for calculation and mental mathematics to enable pupils to build successfully on previous learning
 - increasing the focus on phonics and strategies that will help pupils increase their vocabulary and improve their reading.
 - Improve teaching by ensuring that assessment is consistently accurate and addresses any gaps in learning.
- Develop the role of middle leaders by increasing the opportunities to monitor and evaluate the implementation of initiatives.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are eager to learn. They enjoy the success they achieve in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 relished the achievement of being able to convert kilometres into miles, which they had found difficult at the beginning of the week. Pupils behave well and value the help that teachers give. All pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability, make satisfactory progress and there are clear indications that progress is accelerating as a result of effective strategies to address any gaps in pupils' learning. When the work is challenging and well matched to their differing abilities, pupils work with sustained concentration and make good progress. Where lessons are not tailored precisely to the pupils' learning needs, progress dips and is satisfactory.

Attainment in 2008 was broadly average with the exception of mathematics where it was below. Most pupils are now on course to reach average standards in all subjects by the end of Year 6. However, mathematics is still the weakest subject. Errors and misunderstandings often occur because continuity and progression in mental mathematics or calculation is weak and pupils find it difficult to build on previous learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, with strengths in moral and social development. Pupils have good knowledge about how to

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stay safe on the internet, in school and at home. They say they feel safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy physical activities and welcome healthy options in the school canteen. The school council is proud of the part it has played in purchasing new playground equipment. Good communication with parents combined with two enforced penalties has ensured that attendance has risen and is currently above average.

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	3
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The improving trend in the rate of progress and standards during the last year is due to the school's commitment to raising expectations. Under the headteacher's expert guidance, teachers have moved from covering the curriculum to assessing pupils' learning more consistently and using the information to plan lessons that will appropriately challenge all pupils and close the gaps in their learning. The school has a focus on improving the accuracy of some assessments. This is ongoing work and consequently there is still some variability between teachers. This means that the pace of progress dips for some pupils. Pupils are confident because relationships are good

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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and they feel supported in the classroom. Teachers use questioning skills well and pupils are enthusiastic and eager to contribute to lessons.

Although the curriculum is currently under review, it has already been strengthened considerably and is now more relevant to pupils' experience of life. However, it is too soon to judge the full impact of this on pupils' achievement. A wide range of educational visits, sporting activities and clubs provides stimulating experiences for all pupils. The school has good arrangements for admitting pupils and for transfer to the next stage of their education. Reading is a weaker curriculum area because pupils whose first language is English and those for whom English is an additional language do not always have sufficient strategies such as the use of word banks and a strong phonic awareness to help them increase their limited vocabulary.

Links with agencies to support vulnerable pupils are secure. Strategic planning is limited in the absence of a full-time coordinator. However the headteacher has ensured that there are suitable and improving procedures to identify and cater for the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they achieve as well as their classmates. Whilst pupils have good individual education plans, not all targets are as focused as they could be. Multilingual members of staff help pupils to make satisfactory progress and ensure that parents understand how they can support their children.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been the driving force behind the significant improvement in the work of the school. She has raised staff morale and built a strong team who have responded quickly, and willingly accepted guidance when required. As a result there is secure evidence that standards and achievement are improving throughout the school. She has ensured that the acting deputy headteacher and senior leaders have the skills to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and this is bringing about improvements in the use of assessment to plan for learning. There is more to be done to ensure consistency in the use of assessment.

Subject coordinators are keen to assume their roles and responsibilities but have not had sufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate the implementation of initiatives and this slows the pace of progress to identified areas for improvement. The transformation of the governing body in the last two years is one of the school's most

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notable and successful changes. They work hard, are well informed and understand the school's strengths and areas for development.

A clear plan for improvement sets out challenging targets for all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability, thereby ensuring equality of opportunity. It provides a clear focus on raising standards. However, the school recognises that there is still much more to do.

Safeguarding procedures are securely in place. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough and child protection arrangements are secure and updated regularly. All staff have a comprehensive knowledge of processes and procedures and receive regular training. Consequently, all pupils know that they are safe.

Overall, the school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Pupils learn what life is really like in different communities both here and abroad because the school celebrates the rich diversity of its population. However, the school recognises that more provision is needed if pupils' understanding of other communities within Britain and across the world is to be maximised.

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 met	3
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	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

Significant changes in the structure of the Early Years Foundation Stage have ensured that teachers have a good understanding of the learning and development needs of the children. Activities are planned and are well based on assessments of what children already know, understand and can do. This is all very new and has not yet had time to

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become established practice. However, children are now making satisfactory progress from below expected levels on entry and a large majority are securely on course to reach the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1.

Children in Nursery and Reception enjoy the welcoming, secure environment and settle quickly, immersing themselves happily in the exciting well-planned activities both in and out of doors. Boys in particular enjoy the writing activities outside and take time to practise their mark-making and attempt to write their name. Despite limited language skills, children talk confidently about the fruit and vegetables they have been investigating. Nursery nurses provide focused support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although the team is delighted with their success so far, they are not complacent and realise that their work needs to be evaluated to assess the full impact. Partnerships with parents are good, children are well cared for, and all safeguarding procedures are securely in place.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A small minority of parents expressed concerns about progress, support for learning and development. In the team's view although progress could be better, it is improving. Behaviour during inspection was found to be good. The majority of parents have positive views of the school. They are particularly pleased with the caring, friendly and welcoming ethos. Evidence from the inspection supports parents' views that children enjoy school and that care for children's health and safety is good. Many parents acknowledged that there has been a distinct and noticeable improvement in the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Coley 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 Inspection team received 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	54	46	44	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	49	49	47	1	1	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	37	54	51	10	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	30	62	59	8	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	39	55	52	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	42	50	48	9	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	43	54	51	4	4	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)	31	30	50	48	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	33	56	53	7	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	24	57	54	9	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	27	58	55	10	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	41	47	45	8	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	43	52	50	5	5	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.



17 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coley Primary School, Reading RG1 6AZ

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you. You really helped us. We think your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education and there are quite a lot of good things about your school.

These are the main things that helped us come to this conclusion:

- Children in the Nursery and Reception class get off to a good start.
- You enjoy school, behave well and are coming to school more regularly. Well done!
- Teaching is satisfactory. It is improving because teachers are using what they know about how well you are doing to plan future work.
- You achieve the levels expected for your age.
- The school provides interesting lessons and a wide range of extra activities.
- You have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe.
- The school works well with your parents so that they can help you.
- The teachers look after you well.
- Your headteacher and her staff work hard to make learning better for you.

We have asked the school to do three things:

- Help you to do better by making sure that:
 - in mathematics you all use the same methods to do your mental maths and calculation
 - in reading you get more help with letter sounds and increasing your language skills.
- Make sure that all teachers keep accurate checks on how well you are learning and use them to help you to do your best.
- Make sure that leaders make things better by checking to see that improvements have been carried out.

We hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and to try your hardest so that you are successful in the future.

Thank you again. We wish you continuing success.

Yours faithfully

Barbara Atcheson

Lead inspector

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