

# Corbett VA CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124464
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340579
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tim Owen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Southall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Six Ashes Road Bobbington Stourbridge
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 221260
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 221013
<b>Email address</b>	office@corbett.staffs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
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Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Six teachers were observed, teaching eight lessons. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils, and informal discussions were held with parents and carers on the playground. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment data. The inspectors analysed 35 questionnaires from parents and carers, 40 from pupils and nine from staff.

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

- pupils' progress in writing
- how well more able pupils are challenged to do their best
- how well pupils use assessment opportunities to improve their learning and progress
- the impact of recent changes in provision in Reception on outcomes for children, especially in the development of their literacy skills.

## Information about the school

Corbett voluntary aided Church of England primary is a small school situated to the north-west of Stourbridge. Although it is located in a village, a large number of pupils live outside the immediate area. All pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, but this varies from year to year. Early Years provision was reorganised in November 2008 when the on-site Nursery, Little Acorns, was established. The Nursery is privately managed and subject to a separate inspection. A new outdoor area was constructed for Reception children in summer 2009. Most children join Reception from the Nursery. Reception children are taught in a combined class with Key Stage 1 pupils. There are two other mixed-age classes for the older pupils. The school holds a number of awards including Activemark and Silver Sing-Up, The school also has Intermediate International and Healthy Schools Status.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. Aspects of its pastoral care are outstanding. Parents made many positive comments such as 'the teachers are always approachable and brilliant with the children' and 'my child enjoys and thrives in the happy family environment' testify to the excellent relationships which underpin pupils' highly positive views of school. Pupils' impeccable behaviour and keen sense of community strongly influence their good progress. Many aspects of their personal development are outstanding.

Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school because they are taught well and really enjoy their learning. This enables them to reach average standards overall in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6. Teachers make good use of ICT and assessment opportunities to enliven lessons. While teaching overall is good, a few inconsistencies remain, which on occasion restrict pupils' progress in lessons. Specialist teaching promotes pupils' excellent achievement in science and music and their above-average standards in physical education.

The school's overall effectiveness has improved since its last inspection. Key to this improvement has been the leaders' openness to new ideas and the systematic implementation of expert advice provided by representatives from the local authority. This has sharpened the staff's focus on pupils' achievement. While expectations for pupils' learning and progress have risen, targets for pupils' performance are only moderately challenging, and these could be more sharply focused to extend the opportunities for the more able. Procedures for recording and promoting pupils' attendance are in place, but they are not robust enough to raise the rate of attendance from its current broadly average level.

Pupils begin school with skills which vary but which are usually below national expectations, especially in literacy and in some aspects of numeracy. While pupils' progress is now starting to pick up in Reception it remains slower than in the rest of the school mainly because curriculum development has lagged behind due to restructuring, re-building and staffing issues. Lesson planning is not sharply adapted to meet individual needs, limited targeted questioning is used to extend basic skills and opportunities are missed in the new outdoor area to encourage children to acquire confidence and practice in writing.

The school has a clear picture of its strengths and areas for development and this, combined with its recent very positive track record, indicates its good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Improve children's progress in Reception by:
  - adapting planning more sharply to meet individual needs
  - making more use of targeted questioning to reinforce and extend children's basic skills
  - providing better opportunities for children to improve their writing.
- Raise standards in English and mathematics and increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels by:
  - ensuring teaching is more consistently good or better, for example by raising pace and ensuring work is always sharply targeted to pupils' needs
  - setting more challenging targets for pupils.
- Raise attendance to meet the local authority target of 96% by July 2011 by:
  - monitoring attendance more robustly
  - promoting more intensively its importance for pupils' life chances amongst pupils and their parents and carers.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good and pupils enjoy their learning greatly. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils concentrate fully, listen carefully and respond well. Work in lessons and in pupils' books reflected a picture of standards in English and mathematics which are usually at least in line with national averages in Year 6. However, these can vary from year to year as class numbers are relatively small. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well. They make good use of assessment opportunities to converse with each other and to explore ideas. For example, pupils in the Year 3/4 class posed a number of searching questions to the 'explorer' in the hot-seat who had discovered Tutankhamun's tomb. Pupils also make good progress overall in their writing and are able to write accurate accounts. Pupils in a Year 5/6 lesson demonstrated a developing capacity to construct more complex sentences, prompted by a science fiction story, but only a few pupils used expressive vocabulary to good effect. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress, because they too develop the confidence to take a full part in lessons.

Pupils say they love their school and cannot imagine how it could be better. They mix exceptionally well with each other. Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school and can readily point out unsafe situations. As some of the school's awards illustrate, they have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and put this into practice through eating healthy meals and active play. They make an important and substantial contribution to school life and the wider community, for example, as prefects, school councillors and as musical performers, because everyone willingly takes part. Pupils' well developed musical talents also enable them to grow into well-rounded, confident young people. However, a small but significant proportion of pupils do not attend regularly enough and

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miss out on these exciting experiences. This explains why overall the extent to which all pupils develop workplace skills is no better than satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to plan interesting lessons. Pupils make good use of assessment opportunities to share ideas, clarify their thinking and take part in lessons. Teachers maintain a constant dialogue with pupils and provide regular helpful feedback to boost pupils' confidence. They make good use of ICT to set little challenges which pupils enjoy or to stimulate their curiosity. They mark pupils work regularly and make good use of pupils' personal targets in timed tasks such as 'star writing' to help pupils improve their work. On a few occasions, lessons are less precisely focused on the needs of all groups of learners or the pace is not quick enough to ensure good progress.

Rearrangements to pupil groupings have enabled staff to match the curriculum better to pupils' needs. Personal support is offered to pupils who require extra help through individual tuition and there are good opportunities for more able pupils to learn at a

<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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faster pace. These changes have accelerated the progress of all groups of pupils this year although on a few occasions in lessons, activities are not matched as sharply as they might be to the needs of the highest attaining pupils. Pupils are making good use of a growing number of opportunities to develop their writing skills through research in historical subjects such as the Aztecs. Well organised theme days, for example, on the marine life of the Galapagos islands make a strong contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school and their scientific and cultural knowledge.

The strong climate of mutual respect ensures pupils are extremely confident in approaching staff on any matter that is troubling them. Procedures for ensuring and promoting pupils' welfare are well organised and make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. Good use is made of external agencies to help pupils, whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, feel entirely at home in school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The school is led very effectively by the dedicated and well-respected headteacher. Several aspects of pastoral leadership are outstanding and are reflected in the cohesive school community and the excellent outcomes for pupils' personal development. The headteacher and her staff have worked successfully to tackle the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection. The sustained focus on developing assessment practice has enhanced subject leaders' accountability for pupils' progress. Some other arrangements for monitoring standards are informal, but are well managed in this small school because staff share information well. The governing body is effective. Together with the headteacher, governors have used expert advice well to plan a strategic approach to school development. They are rigorous in ensuring pupils are safe, and systems for child protection are based on good practice. The school promotes equalities well, through its work with and care for individuals and through its monitoring of pupils' achievements. This is reflected in the way all groups of pupils make good progress. Community cohesion is very strong internally and with the local community. The school's growing links with Kimingichi school in Kenya are well displayed in pupils' art and ICT work. It has plans to pursue more national links as the next area for development.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly in Reception, behave well and show an interest in learning. They concentrate well, for example, in making 'cameras' to photograph each other or the animals on a visit to the safari park. The staff relate well to the children and keep clear information about what they have achieved. However, this information is not always used effectively to make sure the work planned in the mixed-age class is exactly what they need to learn next. Dialogue with the children sometimes concentrates too much on commentary rather than on the questioning needed to challenge them in their thinking. Staff have correctly identified writing as a priority area and are providing more opportunities for children to practise this. These are not yet of sufficient quality to make a real step-change in children's attainment in this skill. Adults are very attentive to ensuring that children are safe and all welfare requirements are met. Satisfactory leadership and management are ensuring that the opportunities offered by the new outdoor area are steadily being incorporated into the curriculum and there are clear signs of recent improvement in the rate of children's progress.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Proportions have to be treated with caution in a statistical table for a small school. In this case each response represents 3% of the total. The questionnaire responses indicate a very strong level of satisfaction with the school's work. Almost all the written comments were very positive and a flavour of these is provided at the beginning of the report. These were echoed in the informal discussions one of the inspectors held with parents and carers. The statistical table indicates three concerns with regard to the management of pupils' behaviour and pupils' progress. The inspectors found no evidence during the inspection to endorse these less positive views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Corbett VA CofE 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	74	8	23	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	86	5	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	57	12	34	2	6	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	60	11	31	3	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	66	11	31	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	80	7	20	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)	20	57	13	37	0	0	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	63	10	29	2	6	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	63	12	34	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	74	8	23	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	77	8	23	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 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](http://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"><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 pupil's 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.**



21 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Corbett VA CofE Primary School, Stourbridge, DY7 5DU

I would like to thank you for your help to the team when we inspected your school. I especially enjoyed listening to your annual musical concert. What a talented group of performers you are! Now I would like to share with you what the inspection team found out about your school. Yours is a good school. Some of the best things about it are:

- you really enjoy your learning and your behaviour is first-class
- you get on very well with each other and the staff, and every pupil plays an important part in school life
- you feel very safe in school and have a super understanding of how to be healthy
- you make good progress and reach average standards in English and mathematics by Year 6. Your standards in science and music are above-average.

To make the school even better I have asked the staff to:

- improve their lesson planning and questioning styles to help Reception children make faster progress
- give Reception children better chances to improve their writing
- make sure that even more teaching is good or better
- provide you with more challenging targets to stretch you further
- check up really carefully on your attendance and work hard with you and your parents and carers to cut down on the numbers of pupils who are absent too often.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard with your teachers to improve further in English and mathematics. Those of you who are away from school quite a lot can help by attending more often.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken

Lead inspector

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