

Copthorne CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126013
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340895
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2010
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathy McCarron
Headteacher	Peter Newbold
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eighteen lessons and 10 different teachers were observed. Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, teaching, support and administrative staff, governors, parents and pupils. The school's documentation was scrutinised carefully and included school improvement plans, the tracking of pupils' progress, staff and governor meeting records and safeguarding documentation. In addition, 110 questionnaires from parents and carers, 16 staff questionnaires and 96 pupil questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the attainment and level of achievement of the current pupils, especially in writing and mathematics
- the school's assessment and tracking procedures and what they say about pupils' progress in all classes
- the impact of the school's provision for guidance and support on pupils' personal development
- the effectiveness of teaching in enhancing learning and raising achievement
- how effectively the leaders and managers at all levels are enabling the necessary improvements.

Information about the school

Copthorne Junior is a church school serving a widespread community. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around the national average. The majority of these pupils have specific learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils with statements of particular special educational needs is around the national average. The substantive headteacher has been away from the school for the majority of this term. The school is being supported by the local authority. The current structure of the senior management team is an acting headteacher, formerly the deputy headteacher, and a part-time inclusion coordinator. Since the end of the autumn term, the leadership team has been extended to include two senior staff members.

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

Copthorne Junior is a satisfactory, but improving school. Despite the current difficulties due to the headteacher's absence, there is an exciting atmosphere of high expectation throughout the school. The highly effective acting headteacher and inclusion coordinator, acting as deputy headteacher, know the school's strengths and what needs to improve. They have carefully identified the priorities to develop pupils' achievement and are systematically and speedily tackling these issues. The school's positive reputation with parents and carers, and in the local community, has been built up over many years. The present better pupil outcomes are due to the hard work of all staff who share the current leadership's values and ambitions for the school. Consequently, the school is better placed to build on its strengths and has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Pupils' attainment is rising because of an increased rigour in assessing and tracking their progress. Although pupils' results in Year 6 in the past have always been above average, the school has recognised that this has often represented underachievement, given the pupils' starting points. Throughout the school, pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress and in some classes and subjects, good progress. Pupils are making particularly good progress in Year 6, because teaching is consistently good. In the rest of the school, progress varies due to a legacy of underachievement and some inconsistencies in teaching. The recent, thorough attention paid to reading has ensured that pupils are now making good progress and achieving well in this discipline. However, the school realises that overall progress, although much improved, is still inconsistent, and more needs to be done to raise achievement in writing and mathematics. In some lessons, teachers provide appropriately challenging activities and move the lesson along at a good pace to keep pupils interested. As a result, progress made by pupils in these lessons is good. As yet this is not consistent throughout the school and work is not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils. All staff work hard to create attractive classrooms with imaginative displays, and therefore provide a positive learning environment. The school works hard to make the curriculum relevant and exciting. All subjects are covered well and pupils enjoy the opportunities they are given through the excellent range of additional activities, visits and visitors. As one parent, reflecting the views of many, observed, 'My child has settled down very well in this school and has been offered the opportunity to take part in very interesting learning events like the Living Museum and Roman and Celtic days.' Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are enthusiastic and well motivated. There is purposeful collaboration in lessons and pupils work well together. The provision for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, or for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good and leads to these pupils making good

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progress. The outstanding work of the inclusion coordinator, learning mentor and teaching assistants means that pupils benefit from tailored individual or small-group sessions that successfully help to plug the gaps in their reading and writing skills. Teachers know pupils and their families well and positive relationships contribute to pupils' wider personal development. The parent-teacher association does much for the school and links with the local community are good. However, pupils' awareness of, and preparation for, living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom are underdeveloped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the school's current monitoring systems to improve the percentage of good teaching by focusing on:
 - strengthening the use of day-to-day assessment to ensure the right challenge for all pupils in all lessons
 - consistently providing accurate, challenging and understandable targets for pupils and groups of pupils
 - ? extending opportunities for staff to observe the best practice in the school.
- Ensure that leaders and governors further accelerate the pace of change by:
 - embedding the recently established monitoring and strategic participation of all, so they take a full part in evaluating and continuing to improve the work of the school.
- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse United Kingdom and extend the provision for community cohesion by:
 - building on the findings of the recent analysis of community cohesion
 - developing links with schools in the United Kingdom.

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

Pupils generally join the school with standards that are above average and all are now making at least satisfactory progress. Although progress observed was not yet consistently good due to unevenness when work in lessons was not sufficiently challenging, the rate of progress of all groups of pupils has improved recently. Pupils' excellent behaviour and confidence lay a sound foundation for their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the good support from teaching assistants and the carefully tailored activities provided for them. In the lessons observed that were good or better, pupils were very attentive in class, worked together well and enjoyed activities. In a good lesson in Year 4, pupils really considered their responses carefully when bearing in mind the work that they and others had done in a previous lesson. The teacher carefully and tactfully chose different pupils to respond, and the others all appreciated why. Two separate, good mathematics lessons for older pupils illustrated their growing confidence in basic calculation. However, it was

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clear that their problem-solving and investigative abilities are not adequately developed. The vibrant school displays are testament to how well pupils achieve in art, and the Year 4 assembly, where every pupil played a brass instrument, shows pupils’ musical development is good. Improved academic grounding, combined with their growing confidence, prepares them satisfactorily for their next schools and beyond. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They respect others and socialise very well. Pupils enjoy school and love the large amount of space outside which ensures high levels of physical activity. Pupils say they feel very safe within the school as they know that adults are very mindful of any concerns. The school council is active in influencing provision of play equipment and fund-raising events.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	1
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	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons observed, pupils were well motivated by the ideas and resources presented and were very keen to please their teachers and other adults. In the last few weeks, due to the renewed focus on achievement, staff’s higher expectations of pupils’ progress have begun to be reflected in the more challenging targets being set for

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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individuals. However, this is not yet consistent across the school and in some year groups teachers do not yet take the chance to reinforce pupils’ targets, during lessons or when marking pupils’ work. Opportunities are also missed in lessons to guide pupils in what they need to do to improve their skills. In the most effective lessons, this does not occur and lessons are planned to be very challenging and fun. This was clear in an English lesson in Year 6 on the use of paragraphs and endings in stories. The pupils were enthusiastic and sensible as they reflected on what life would be like for early explorers in the Antarctic. The school curriculum is planned in detail to promote pupils’ enjoyment of learning. It has been revised to encourage creativity and practical learning experiences. These approaches are continuing to be developed to ensure that pupils’ precise needs in relation to their skills in English and mathematics are properly covered. Again, the most effective use of this planning was seen in the language development work in Year 6 on the life of Ernest Shackleton and the subsequent science experiments about insulation and how whales are protected from the cold by blubber. Throughout the school, very positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute to the supportive ethos for study. Good use of praise encourages pupils’ attentiveness and hard work. The care, patience and understanding shown by staff to vulnerable pupils results in them attending and coping well and is an inspiration to all others in the school. The impact of the school’s good support, guidance and care is evident in the pupils’ excellent standards of behaviour and social skills.

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?

There is a common sense of purpose, clear drive and ambition to improve among leaders, staff and governors. The partnership that has developed recently between the acting headteacher and the inclusion coordinator, through the very effective support of the local authority, has begun to move the school forward at a much improved pace. There is a clearer understanding of strengths of the school and areas that need more development. The school’s self-evaluation, although not well documented, is effective due to its rigour. This has resulted in a fully shared improvement plan with challenging targets and clear guidance for raising standards. Good teamwork is playing a valuable part in moving the school forward. The school administrators are considerable assets to the school and help to ensure the smooth running of the school from day to day. As the very supportive governors recognise, they have not held the school sufficiently or

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effectively to account in the past. They have begun to challenge decisions and request explanations about the outcomes for pupils. Staff and governors ensure that discrimination in any form is not tolerated, and the school takes its duty to promote equal opportunities seriously. For example, at the moment pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve better than others and the school is working to make sure that all pupils make consistently good progress. Procedures to safeguard pupils’ well-being, safety and health are rigorous because all members of staff are well trained and they show good care for pupils and work closely with a range of organisations to support pupils. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is satisfactory and pupils are beginning to have a wider understanding of different faiths and cultures. A recent audit has identified the need to expand awareness about national perspectives.

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

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents or carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team were happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and that it has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere. The majority feel their children make adequate progress. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils are now making improved progress and that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Parents and carers are particularly impressed with the pastoral support their children receive. Inspectors fully endorse these views. The small number of constructive parental criticisms, particularly

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with regard to the current leadership position, pupils' progress and unacceptable behaviour from pupils, were shared and discussed with the acting headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Copthorne C of E Junior 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	65	34	31	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	74	67	34	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	54	49	53	48	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	41	60	55	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	51	52	47	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	42	62	56	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	39	62	56	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)	49	45	56	51	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	41	63	57	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	52	48	44	5	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	40	60	55	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	54	49	54	49	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	57	45	41	2	2	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.



25 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Copthorne C of E Junior School, Copthorne, RH10 3RD

I am writing to thank you for your help when we inspected your school and to let you know what we found out. We spent time in some of your lessons and talked to some of you. We also looked at the work of the school and talked to many of the staff and some of the school governors. We were interested in what your parents think of your school, and we particularly enjoyed listening to what you had to say.

The work of your school is satisfactory; these are some of the things it does particularly well.

- The way your school works with parents is good.
- The way you behave is excellent and you work and play well together.
- You feel safe at school and you know how to be healthy.
- You help your school to be a happy and better place to play and learn.
- You have a very good understanding of right and wrong and look after each other well.

We have agreed with the staff that there are a number of things that can be improved.

- We have asked them to make sure that you are all given the best opportunities to learn no matter which class you are in. We want them to use the information they have to make sure you are all given targets to improve your work that you understand. We know your teachers are all working hard to be the best they can be and we want them to learn from each other as well. We have asked them to make sure that you are all given the best opportunities to learn no matter which class you are in. We want them to use the information they have to make sure you are all given targets to improve your work that you understand. We know your teachers are all working hard to be the best they can be and we want them to learn from each other as well.
- We have asked the leaders of your school to speed up the changes they are planning to give you even more opportunities to learn.
- We have also asked your headteacher and staff to make sure you are given the chance to look at and understand how children and adults live in places that are different from where you live.

You must continue to listen carefully and take note of what they say so that you can be helped to make good progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead inspector

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