

Cobblers Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134278
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	341451
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Tams
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Tullett
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed the 11 teachers working in school during the inspection. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, school policies, safeguarding documents and records of the progress made by pupils. The responses to 124 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with responses to questionnaires returned by pupils and staff, were also scrutinised.

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

- the progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 and the impact of teaching on raising their attainment
- the accuracy of the assessment of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage given their slower progress in Key Stage 1
- the impact of reported poor behaviour, high absence and lack of punctuality on the school community and on pupils' progress
- the effectiveness of the governing body and the leadership team in identifying and successfully addressing priorities for improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. It draws most of its pupils from its immediate community. Almost all are of White British heritage. Very few are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little below the national average but an above average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award.

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.

The leadership and management of the school, including governance, are inadequate. There are weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements so pupils and staff do not feel safe. Behaviour is poor and is badly managed; this compromises safety and prevents teachers from teaching and pupils from learning in many lessons. The result is that pupils underachieve.

The leaders and managers in the school want pupils to succeed and to enjoy their learning, but the leadership team does not have a clear vision of what it wants to achieve and how to work as a team to identify and work towards priorities for improvement. There is no coherent whole-school plan to guide development. Consequently, there has been a marked and steady deterioration in attainment, behaviour and safety since the previous inspection. All these areas as well as provision and outcomes are inadequate. Attendance is low and declining. As a result of these failings, the school is unable to demonstrate appropriate capacity to improve.

The progress of pupils is variable. Overall, they make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 as most teaching in these key stages is at least satisfactory and pupils behave well in most classes. In Key Stage 2 behaviour management and teaching are inadequate in too many classes. Pupils do not enjoy their learning in these circumstances and frequently misbehave or do not attend school. Their progress in Key Stage 2 and overall, from their starting points in Nursery to the end of Year 6, is inadequate. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is low in English and science and below average in mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make better progress than their peers in school. This is largely due to secure assessment systems that identify their needs early, and teaching assistants and support programmes that are effective in assuring their progress is satisfactory. All pupils benefit from a satisfactory curriculum that supports learning well when teaching is effective. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and particularly enjoy the many opportunities for sport that the school provides. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Most staff are thoughtful and caring in their relationships with pupils but, despite these positive features, the inadequacies around safeguarding policies and procedures means

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that care, guidance and support overall are judged inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of urgency, ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.
- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their progress and achievement in all subjects, but particularly in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better throughout the school
 - ensuring that pupils are fully aware of what they have to learn, are sufficiently challenged in their work and know what they need to do to improve it further
 - improving pupils' enjoyment of lessons and their skills of independent learning.
- Improve behaviour so that all pupils and staff are safe in school by enabling teachers consistently to manage pupils' behaviour successfully.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - ensuring that all staff work together to achieve a shared vision for the school's success
 - implementing and monitoring the progress of a coherent development plan that is focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that the governing body holds the leadership team fully to account for its work and meets all its statutory responsibilities.
- Improve attendance by reversing the current decline and ensuring that all pupils attend regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Although there are pupils who do achieve well and enjoy their learning, overall pupils' achievement is inadequate because learning and progress are inconsistent across the school. Ineffective management of pupils' behaviour, especially in Key Stage 2, means that, in too many lessons, pupils make inadequate progress. Many pupils talk about how poor behaviour in lessons stops them from learning although they try to ignore the disruption. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in lessons as their needs are identified quickly and support in smaller groups ensures that they are able to concentrate on learning.

In Key Stage 1 attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics and progress is satisfactory. Attainment in mathematics has been declining but has shown some recent improvement following the introduction of more challenging work for more able pupils. In Key Stage 2 classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own tracking data show that insufficient progress is made in English and science, but there are improvements in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, attainment is low in

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English and science and below average in mathematics.

The school does not form a cohesive community as the behaviour of a small but significant minority disrupts learning and the orderly life of the school. Many pupils do not feel safe and the school council has been unable to meet this year because of poor behaviour. This prevents pupils from having a say in what goes on in their school and from learning how to work together to bring about improvements. Pupils are not developing the skills they require for their future well-being. Attainment is low, attendance is declining and punctuality is poor. Although pupils make some contribution to the broader community in relation to fundraising for charity and sporting links, weaknesses within the school community diminish the impact of these efforts. However, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Most pupils do know right from wrong and are concerned about the impact of the poor behaviour they see on all members of the school community. Good links with the church help them to reflect on spiritual matters and the curriculum provides them with some valued social and cultural experiences to which they respond well.

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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	4
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	4
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?

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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The quality of teaching and learning is too variable and overall it is inadequate. While some good and satisfactory lessons were seen, too many inadequate lessons were observed. In some lessons teachers are not confident in managing unsatisfactory behaviour. Weaknesses in teaching occur where lessons are not logically sequenced and pupils are not told at the start of the lesson what they need to learn. Although some teachers make satisfactory use of assessment to plan work for pupils, others do not. Consequently, pupils' understanding of their performance is limited and they are not aware of how to improve their work. In these weaker lessons pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher and not enough time developing the skills of independent work and enquiry. They are not challenged and lack concentration and motivation. The better lessons are characterised by a well-planned structure that provides clear explanations and includes the effective use of resources. In these lessons pupils are involved in their learning and marking informs them how to improve their progress.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and organised to meet the needs of pupils. However, as planning takes place in key stages instead of across the whole school, there are some areas of repetition. Basic skills are taught in separate lessons and then developed in topics which many pupils enjoy. There are many enrichment activities that extend the topics including a full range of visits and visitors. Most pupils of all ages benefit from residential experiences at a centre on the Yorkshire coast. A good range of clubs also engage pupils; in particular, sport coaches encourage fitness and provide contact with clubs in other schools to foster social and competitive skills. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met through an effective support programme including the teaching of sounds and letters to develop reading and writing. Staff, including learning mentors and teaching assistants, work hard to care for pupils' physical and learning needs. The satisfactory progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a testimony to the work of these staff. However, the welfare of pupils is at risk as effective safeguarding arrangements are not in place. In addition, work to improve attendance and punctuality has not been effective and attendance has declined. Overall, transition arrangements are satisfactory but as pupils with challenging behaviour are poorly managed, they are ill prepared for transition to the next phase of their education.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

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There are significant weaknesses in leadership and management. The new governing body does not have enough experience or appropriate knowledge to challenge the leadership team, ensure that all requirements are met, or to propose change. The absence of a vision for success that is shared with the whole community has made it difficult to plan for improvement. This is compounded by an absence of teamwork within the leadership team. Key stage and Early Years Foundation Stage leaders separately evaluate provision and plan for improvement. Too much has been left to these leaders and the teachers they work with for them to make a difference. Although the headteacher's self-assessment of the school is broadly accurate, the school development plan is inadequate. The introduction of improved recording and analysis of progress data and its use in identifying pupils' learning needs has enabled pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make better progress and is beginning to make a difference to the learning of all pupils in mathematics. However, the absence of clear, well-focused strategies for improvement shared by all staff mean that the impact of such work is very limited. Satisfactory partnerships with external partners promote learning and make a strong contribution to pupils developing healthy lifestyles.

Safeguarding is inadequate as policies have not been updated and procedures have not been rigorously implemented or monitored. Although the school has started to address community cohesion, little has been successfully achieved in relation to establishing a cohesive community. Poor behaviour from some pupils has caused many pupils to be excluded from opportunities to achieve as well as they could. Relationships with parents and carers have not been effective in helping to ensure good behaviour and attendance. The school provides inadequate value for money.

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	4
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	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Although most children start Nursery below age-related expectations, a small but significant minority enter with skills that are well below those expected. They make satisfactory progress and by the end of the Reception class are close to expected levels in personal development although their performance in language and communication skills and number is not as strong. Children in Nursery are happy and join in their learning and play. By Reception some children are beginning to develop independence and imagination in, for example, experimenting to find things out. Others still need additional help to support their learning. The weaknesses in safeguarding found in the main school are not present in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are safe and well cared for. Parents and carers are positive about the care their children receive but they are not involved well enough in supporting their children's learning in school.

The quality of teaching is variable but overall it is satisfactory. Children are assessed regularly to identify their learning needs but assessment is not always accurate or used well to inform planning. However, planning ensures that pupils have a variety of activities that they can choose for themselves as well as engaging in some guided learning in small groups. A new emphasis on teaching sounds and letters helps to prepare children for reading and writing. Resources are used well to engage pupils in activities. However, there is too little outdoor learning and the quality of the existing outdoor provision is poor. It does not encourage the development of skills or imagination.

Staffing changes left this provision with no leader until very recently. The new leader is beginning to assess what needs to be done to improve outcomes for pupils. It is to her credit that a largely calm, happy ethos has been maintained and children have sustained the progress they have been making.

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 minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Those who did respond were largely positive about the school and said that their children enjoy school, teaching is good and, in particular, children are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. However, almost half the respondents expressed concerns about poor behaviour and its

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management. All the written comments received were negative and most related to concerns about behaviour in school and the difficulty the school is experiencing in managing this. This comment was typical of others: '...continuous disruptions to learning have had a huge effect on children's progress and well-being. This is due to the poor behaviour that children witness in school. This is only a minority of pupils but it is beginning to feel like the majority.' Inspectors share the concern of parents and carers and have identified improving behaviour an area for the school to address.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cobblers Lane 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 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 345 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	38	66	53	9	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	41	33	70	56	10	8	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	27	78	63	11	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	27	71	57	17	14	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	40	32	76	61	5	4	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	25	81	65	9	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	22	90	73	5	4	1	1
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)	22	18	81	65	10	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	23	74	60	15	12	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	18	43	35	38	31	19	15
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	12	85	69	16	13	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	27	22	65	52	15	12	9	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	31	61	49	14	11	7	6

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

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

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

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

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cobblers Lane Primary School, Pontefract, WF8 2HN

I would like to thank you for making my colleagues and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. A special thank you goes to the pupils who gave up some of their time to talk to us about their work. We enjoyed looking at your art work and were particularly impressed by displays on Africa and Aboriginal paintings. We were pleased that you know how to stay healthy.

In your questionnaires and discussions with us, many of you told us that you do not feel safe in school as there are pupils who do not behave well. You also explained that these pupils stop you from learning and making progress. We agree with you.

Some of you do not behave well and this disrupts your own learning and that of other pupils. Inspectors found that most of you could make better progress and reach higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Therefore, we have placed the school in special measures. This means that it will get some extra help to improve. We have asked school leaders, managers and governors to:

- make sure that all the policies and procedures to keep you safe are in place and checked regularly
- make sure that the older pupils do much better in English, mathematics and science
- make sure that teaching in all classes is good
- improve behaviour in lessons
- check more carefully how well the school is working and make better plans for improvement
- help pupils who are often absent from school to attend more regularly.

You can help your school to improve by behaving well, arriving at school on time every day and working hard to meet your targets.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Carmen Markham

Lead inspector

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