

Coopers Edge School

Typhoon Way, Brockworth, Gloucestershire, GL3 4DY

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Coopers Edge is a school where parents can send their children with great confidence. It is a harmonious, caring and well-respected community.
- Strong and determined leadership by the headteacher is moving the school forward rapidly. Staff morale is high and everyone is focused on raising standards.
- From their very wide range of starting points, all groups of pupils are making good progress and achieve well. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average, and rising.
- Teaching is good, and in many lessons is outstanding. Imaginative activities capture pupils' interest and inspire confidence and enjoyment.
- Excellent teamwork among teachers and teaching assistants makes sure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils are proud of their school and value the warm and trusting relationships that underpin their positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Pupils are respectful of adults and of each other and say they feel completely safe in school.
- The school's leaders manage the performance of staff well. As a result, the quality of teaching is steadily improving.
- All members of the successful leadership team are clear about what they need to do to improve the school. They have taken decisive and effective action to manage the very high proportion of pupils who enrol throughout the year and to improve pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Governors are fully supportive of the school and know in detail what improvements are necessary.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress made by some pupils in lessons is too slow and too few reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are not always prompted to think deeply about a topic in response to teachers' questions.
- Sometimes, because the work is too easy for them, a few pupils waste time waiting for others to catch up.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in eight lessons across all classes in the school. All were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and visited classrooms with senior staff to look at how well disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are learning. He also visited lessons with senior staff to look at pupils' progress in mathematics, English and a range of other subjects.
- Discussions were held with senior and subject leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, a representative of the local authority and various groups of pupils.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at its checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Planning documents, safeguarding procedures, external evaluations of the school's work and examples of pupils' work from all classes were also examined.
- The inspector held a discussion with a group of parents, and took account of the 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as four other responses that were submitted separately. Parents' and pupils' responses to the school's own recent surveys and written comments made by parents were also considered, as were the responses to inspection questionnaires returned by 34 staff.

Inspection team

Michael Merchant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Coopers Edge is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school, located on a large and developing housing estate on the fringes of Gloucester, is managed by the Coopers Edge Trust and opened in September 2011.
- Pupils join the school at irregular times during the year as new homes reach completion and very few have been at the school for more than a year.
- Pupils are taught in the Nursery, two Reception classes, a Year 1 and a Year 2 class, a mixed-age Years 3/4 class and a mixed-age Years 5/6 class.
- Just over a half of all pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups, the largest of these being Mixed White and Black Caribbean.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and those from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently rapid progress in all classes and their attainment rises further, by making sure that:
 - no time is wasted in lessons and that all groups of pupils are set tasks which stretch them to persevere and do their very best
 - teachers consistently use questions in lessons which challenge all pupils to think deeply and give extended answers
 - pupils read widely and write at length across a wide range of topics
 - pupils' number and higher level problem-solving skills are more fully developed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the Nursery and Reception classes with levels of skill and ability that are low compared to those expected for their age, particularly in communication skills. A very high proportion of pupils join the school late in Key Stages 1 and 2, often with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are well below those expected of pupils nationally.
- The school's performance data show that in 2013 a significant number of pupils did not make the progress they should have in Key Stage 2. However, this reflects these pupils' performance in their previous schools and masks their achievement at Coopers Edge. None of the pupils who left at the end of Year 6 in 2013 had been at the school for more than two years and over half had been at the school for only a year.
- Taking into account their individual starting points when joining the school, pupils make at least the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language and the most-able pupils, make good progress overall and achieve well. In Reception and the Years 5/6 class, all groups of pupils are making outstanding progress.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is below average, but is rising strongly. The school is closing the gap between the standards reached by its seven-year-olds and those reached nationally.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment, overall, is broadly average and is getting better. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, is good. This reflects the school's determination that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Many pupils are still not confident enough at writing long pieces of work across various subjects or at reading at length when investigating or researching a topic. Some pupils still have difficulty in solving number problems expressed in words and in applying their mathematical skills to real-life situations.
- Phonics (blending sounds and letters into words) is taught well and pupils make strong gains in their reading and writing skills, given their low starting points. Highly effective reading support starts in Year 1 for any pupils who need it and pupils read and speak with increasing confidence as they move up the school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress developing their speaking, reading and writing skills, because all teachers regard themselves as teachers of English as an additional language. Well-targeted support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs enables them to overcome many of their difficulties and make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Pupils who are potentially vulnerable are looked after exceptionally well and make great gains in their learning. Key to this is the highly effective nurture group, which provides carefully targeted and very well delivered support to these pupils.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding benefit from well-judged extra support. The school has provided individual help and guidance, additional tuition and financial support to enable them to participate in out-of-school activities and courses. This support has effectively eliminated the attainment gap between these pupils and others, so that pupils entitled to free school meals make very similar gains and reach similar standards in English and mathematics as others in the school.
- Children develop excellent social skills because they are making choices and fostering self-confidence through working with others.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is very rarely less than good and some is outstanding. There is, however, not yet enough outstanding teaching to ensure exceptionally good progress across all year groups and subjects.
- Teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained and activities are carefully designed to challenge the pupils to learn at a good pace. Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils, both in their work rate and in the amount of thought and effort they put in to their learning.
- In an outstanding Years 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils were gripped by the sheer speed and demand of the mental arithmetic tasks set by the teacher. They worked flat out, relished the intellectual demand of the activity and took great pride in accomplishing the task.
- Praise is used extensively to motivate pupils; teachers' use of questions in lessons to encourage pupils to think is often masterly. This is not always the case, however, and where teaching falls short of outstanding, questions are not used as well as they could be to probe pupils and to get them to explain how they came to their answers.
- Pupils relish sharing information and helping each other to learn. It was a delight to see Years 5/6 pupils working in the Reception class when they 'buddied up' and helped the younger children to read.
- Where teaching is less effective, the progress of the most-able pupils is slowed and lesson time wasted while they wait for others in the class to catch up with them. Occasionally, they are given extra work, but this does little to extend their thinking or skills.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide very constructive feedback so pupils know how to improve their work. Pupils say that these written comments, together with the conversations they have with their teacher, are a great help in guiding them to do better and to reach their targets.
- Teaching assistants guide and question pupils effectively, especially disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They help these pupils to make good progress alongside developing their self-confidence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes follow instructions carefully and greatly enjoy working and playing together. Children's attitudes are characterised by their determination to persevere and succeed and to share equipment and ideas. Older pupils' behaviour in lessons is also good.
- Pupils also behave extremely well in the playground, in the dining hall and around the school. They are polite to each other and to adults and visitors, look after each other exceedingly well and, in lessons, they listen attentively to each other and take turns. Pupils' excellent conduct in the nurture unit has a very positive effect on their progress.
- Most pupils are keen to learn. They work hard in lessons, listen attentively and show great eagerness when working in any situation. They are particularly adept at searching out information and solving problems for themselves.
- There are some minor incidents of poor behaviour, although these are dealt with effectively and are declining rapidly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The atmosphere in the school is warm and welcoming and encourages vulnerable pupils to feel completely secure. Individual pupils spoke with great feeling about how the school has helped them to overcome barriers and improve.
- Leaders and other staff diligently address any concerns expressed by parents or pupils and make sure that all pupils can live and work in the school without fear of discrimination or unkindness from others. Pupils said that teachers are kind and helpful and that Coopers Edge is 'a great place to be'.

- Pupils said that there is no bullying in the school, but felt confident that, if there was, teachers and other adults would 'stamp it out'. Staff make sure pupils know about the different forms of bullying, such as name calling and bullying based on someone's gender or social or ethnic background. Pupils are acutely aware of the dangers posed by some internet sites.
- The school has a range of effective strategies in place to make sure that pupils attend regularly and are on time. As a result, attendance is improving and is now broadly average.
- In the very well attended breakfast club, pupils enjoy a healthy meal and relish the activities on offer. This has a positive effect on attendance and helps those who attend make a good start to the day.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress is accelerating.
- There is a determination from staff at all levels to sustain and build upon the many gains of recent years. The school promotes complete equality for all pupils through its sophisticated monitoring and exemplary support.
- Leaders are strongly self-evaluative. A sharp focus on making everyone accountable for their performance has brought about significant improvements to the quality of teaching and to ensuring that all pupils make at least good progress from the moment they start at Coopers Edge. Nevertheless, some weaknesses remain, with too few of the most-able pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests.
- Learning, progress and the quality of teaching are checked regularly and are closely linked to teachers' performance and pay increases. Leaders' observations of lessons identify good practice which can be shared and also trigger support when teaching requires improvement.
- The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage leads her team well. She has a very secure understanding of the early years curriculum and constantly reviews her practice to ensure that all children receive high quality care and support.
- Members of the senior leadership team and subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities well. Those responsible for subjects and other areas of the school's work make good use of information on pupils' progress to check if any pupils are falling behind.
- The school has used the new primary sports funding effectively to improve the quality and breadth of physical education and sports provision. The range of after-school sports clubs has been extended and specialist staff employed to improve pupils' expertise in different sporting activities. Pupils' participation in sport has increased.
- This new and developing school has benefited from pertinent and well-targeted support from local authority staff over recent years. The local authority considers Coopers Edge to be an effective school, but has pledged to continue its support, in particular to assist the school in helping the many new arrivals to the school settle quickly and make rapid progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are far sighted and ambitious for the school. The Coopers Edge Trust had the strategic vision to create the school and guide its move into new buildings. The trust is now helping to shape the school's ethos while providing strong support for its leaders and other staff. Governors are very well informed about how well the school is doing and have a secure understanding of different types of school information; they have made sure that they have received up-to-date training so that they can interpret the information for themselves. They know where the best teaching is in the school and have given their full support to the initiatives of school leaders to improve classroom performance. Governors have contributed fully to the discussions on how the pupil premium funding should be spent and have checked the impact on eligible pupils' progress. Governors control the systems for managing staff performance and the way that pay rises are decided. They meet all their responsibilities very well, including national requirements for safeguarding pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136074
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	441103

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Vickers
Headteacher	Keely Folker
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2012
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