

The Cranbourne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	117307
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	379392
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	476
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob McCarthy
Headteacher	Rachel Semark
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	2–3 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Additional inspector

Gillian Scobie

Additional inspector

Graham Stephens

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed nineteen lessons taught by sixteen teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the responses from the 277 questionnaires from parents and carers, and 95 from pupils. Inspectors looked at school documentation, including its improvement plan, tracking of pupils' progress and local authority and other external evaluation of the school's provision. They also looked at teachers' planning, safeguarding policies, samples of pupils' work as well as talking to pupils about their learning experiences.

Information about the school

This school is much larger than the average primary school. A very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds, the largest being Italian. Most of these speak English as a first language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average, although the school has seen an increase in the percentage requiring additional support in some year groups. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a two Reception and Nursery classes. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including recognition of its work to promote healthy lifestyles.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This good school has built effectively on the many strengths found at the last inspection. Behaviour and safety are outstanding and pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their above-average attendance and high level of satisfaction expressed in the responses they made in the pupil questionnaire. Other strengths of the school are the outstanding curriculum, which coupled with excellent support, provides a wide range of opportunities that pupils use very well. All this contributes very successfully to the outstanding promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is respected in the local community and parents, carers and staff are all extremely positive about every aspect of its work. There were a particularly high number of returns from parents and carers, with over a fifth adding positive comments about their children's experiences at this good school. The inspection findings fully support parents' views.
- Pupils achieve well and they all make good progress across the school from their lower than average starting points. Attainment is broadly average and rising, particularly in reading and writing. Progress in mathematics has accelerated at a slower rate than English and achievement is less consistent. This is because pupils do not always have enough opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- There is more good and outstanding teaching than at the last inspection. Inspectors observed many lessons with a very productive learning environment which pupils so obviously enjoyed and valued. Some imaginative links between subjects allow pupils to consolidate and extend their English skills. The development and application of mathematical skills is not as secure.
- Leadership is good throughout the school. A relentless drive for improvement means that standards have risen and the rate of progress has increased since the previous inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics to match that in English by:
 - providing more opportunities for children to apply mathematical skills across the curriculum in other subjects.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Senior leaders have ensured that rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems are securely in place, which makes for effective learning in lessons. This helps pupils of all abilities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with disabilities meet the demanding targets set for them, and make at least the same progress as their peers. They receive sensitive support that enables them to integrate successfully with other pupils and participate fully in lessons. In lessons throughout the school, pupils show great enjoyment of their learning and they speak very positively about the wider range of activities that they all enjoy. Although progress in mathematics is good, the progress pupils make is slower than in English. The school has a range of measures to improve this. Such as the focus on the development of mental mathematics skills and the development of a more practical approach to problem solving. These are clearly making a difference although there is still some way to go. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children are making good progress.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do well from below average starting points. In particular, their social, emotional and communication skills are much less well developed than those typical for their age. Children learn well in adult-led groups and through purposeful play, with appropriate emphasis on the development of early reading and writing skills, where their progress is most marked. The good teaching, they receive enables them to reach standards in all areas of learning that are only slightly below average by the end of reception. Carefully planned induction processes ensure that children settle quickly into the Nursery and the Reception Year. They have many opportunities to explore their world and to carry out independent work both indoors and outdoors in an exciting and imaginative environment.

Pupils continue to make good progress in developing their literacy and information and communication skills across the school. In addition to the daily guided reading sessions provided, there are many opportunities throughout the day for children to develop their love of reading. Inspectors saw children taking full advantage of the exciting book corners provided in each classroom. It was obvious how much pupils enjoyed using the welcoming library or the well resourced reading foyer complete

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with children's newspapers. Parents and carers regularly come into school to listen to children read.

Pupils read widely, talk about their ideas, and use their skills to good effect in group projects across the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of the connections between letter patterns and the sounds they represent. Attainment in reading is above average both at the end of Year 2 and by the time pupils leave.

Pupils' outstanding behaviour and highly positive attitudes make a significant and effective contribution to their learning. Pupils pay good attention to their teachers, showing enthusiasm and a desire to join in and give answers to questions. They apply themselves well to tasks, showing pride in their work and concentrating hard. Pupils enjoy opportunities to identify what they would like to learn more about when they start a new topic. These pre-assessment and pre-planning activities mean that they experience a rich curriculum, which is adapted to closely meet their individual needs and interests.

Quality of teaching

Inspection findings endorse the view of parents and carers that teaching is good. Inspectors found some learning to be outstanding with lessons proceeding at a rapid pace, providing a range of interesting activities that thoroughly engaged pupils. Teachers establish very good relationships with pupils and clearly express their high expectations. Pupils respond very well and show their highly positive attitudes and enjoyment of learning through hard work and perseverance.

Good provision for gifted and talented pupils ensures they are fully challenged. Maximum opportunities are provided for pupils to collaborate in small groups to deepen their understanding, discover things for themselves and share, extend and challenge each other's emerging ideas. In a carefully planned lesson in Year 5, a science experiment involved all pupils in much discussion and detailed thinking on whether they could prove that sponges contained air. Pupils worked independently in small teams, finding out about the effect of water on different types of sponges, enriching their vocabulary with specialist terms. In a Year 2 lesson, children were excited to use their skills together as detectives to solve a 'tricky' mathematical problem. They knew that they had to have enough evidence to 'make the case before the judge'. In this and other lessons seen by inspectors, children were given many opportunities to voice their opinions and share ideas, enabling them to gain confidence.

Many aspects of teaching, including the daily assembly, promote the school's ethos of thinking and caring about others. This has contributed strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being outstanding. The exciting curriculum exploits links between subjects so that pupils have good opportunities to practise and extend their core skills, particularly in English. Effective teaching strategies and

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appropriately targeted support and intervention, match most pupils' individual needs. Regular and helpful marking with written feedback, and self and peer assessment are well established throughout the school and children have a clear understanding of how to improve their learning. The teaching of reading is strength of the school and the vast majority of pupils are fluent readers.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils love coming to school; they are very well aware of how important it is to be exceptionally polite and courteous. Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe in school and that adults are always there for them. They have an excellent understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside school. They work extremely well together and share resources very sensibly as staff successfully nurture collaboration from the Nursery and Reception classes onwards.

Children take on a wide range of responsibilities in and around the school including supporting guided reading with younger pupils, organising fruit for snacks and setting out nursery equipment as well as supporting younger children with play. Pupils listen carefully to each other and understand the importance of respecting the views of others. The school council has made many decisions that have enhanced the learning environment. An example of this is their involvement in the development of the school playgrounds, which now provide several highly stimulating and exciting play spaces. The governing body has made the school council responsible for their own budget and they take their accountability to their fellow pupils and the wider community very seriously.

Inspectors saw how much pupils relished the chance to be involved in their learning. They are keen to achieve the 'Golden Goals' teachers set in lessons and make very good use of the 'Handy Hints' provided to help them meet their targets. This, together with an inspiring and motivating curriculum, means that the quality of behaviour around the school and in lessons is excellent. Pupils know, understand and respect fully the systems for rewards and sanctions. They support each other very well and are thoughtful and reflective. Over time inappropriate conduct, including bullying, has been extremely rare. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors that they know that it can take many forms and that they know what to do should it occur. There are no recorded racist instances and there have been no exclusions in recent years.

Attendance has been consistently high for a number of years and children are very punctual to school. Parents, carers and pupils have very complimentary views of pupils' behaviour and their safety in school. Inspectors observed pupils' exemplary behaviour and attitudes and can confirm this highly positive picture.

Leadership and management

The skilled and committed headteacher provides clear direction and ambition for the school. There is strong evidence of very strong teamwork and a commitment to drive

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and move the school forward. Monitoring processes, including the tracking of pupils' progress, are rigorous so that the school has an accurate understanding of its performance. Self evaluation is accurate and development planning is successful. Both involve all staff, governors and pupils and this has resulted in a good track record of improvement over time. Key leaders and managers throughout the school model good practice and often refresh their expertise through links with teachers in other schools.

The governing body is both challenging and supportive and includes a good range of expertise and experience. Members are actively involved in school and keep a close eye on provision through good links with classes and the school council. Safeguarding procedures are robust and meet all statutory requirements. The outstanding curriculum is tailor made for the needs and interests of individual pupils who help to shape their own learning. The curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, specialist teachers as well as carefully chosen trips and visits. Consequently, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding with time for reflection built into many activities.

All who work in the school are highly committed to ensuring that no groups of pupils are discriminated against or disadvantaged so that all have an equal opportunity to succeed. The shared commitment and vision of all who work in the school has enabled good improvement since the previous inspection, including addressing the issues identified at that time; this indicates that the capacity of the school to improve is good.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of The Cranbourne Primary School, Hoddesdon, EN11 9PP

Thank you for the way you welcomed the inspectors to your school recently. I would like to send special thanks to those of you who gave up time to talk to us about your work. You were sure that your school is good and getting even better at helping you to learn, and we agree. You work hard, behave extremely well and get on very well together. Your attendance is high and you are right to be proud of what you achieve.

Cranbourne is a good school with some outstanding areas. You are all working so hard to make it successful. All the adults in school are extremely good at caring for you. The headteacher, governing body and senior teachers provide good leadership. Good teaching gives you lots of interesting things to do. We saw how you really enjoy your lessons and how you are very keen to learn. As a result, you are making good progress, although most of you have been doing a bit better in English than you have in mathematics.

One reason for our visit is to see if we can help your school to improve further. We have asked your teachers to find more ways to increase your progress in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to apply your mathematical skills to solve problems in all your subjects.

I hope that you will help by continuing to do your very best in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce
Lead inspector

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