

Cranbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131625
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	381377
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Barbara Firth

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	818
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yolanda Guns
Headteacher	Jas Leverton
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 October 2008
School address	The Drive Ilford IG1 3PS
Telephone number	020 8518 2562
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	Error! Reference source not found. Error! Reference source not found. 8–9 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Barbara Firth	Additional Inspector
Jeanie Jovanova	Additional Inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional Inspector
David Wolfson	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 30 lessons, taught by a total of 26 teachers, for a total of approximately 13 hours. In addition, short observations were made of smaller teaching groups, with a particular focus on the teaching of letter sounds and combinations (phonics). Inspectors listened to the reading by, and held separate discussions with, two groups of pupils. Discussions were held with two members of the governing body, the headteacher, the senior leadership team, middle leaders, teachers and a representative from the local authority. 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 pupils' books, monitoring records and school data and scrutinised the 217 parents' and carers', 78 staff and 82 pupil questionnaires.

Information about the school

Cranbrook is a much larger than average primary school. Since the last inspection, the school has experienced significant changes in leadership and in September 2010, after a period of staff turbulence, the present headteacher started leading the school initially as interim and part time basis. Children attend the Nursery part time in two classes and there are four classes in each year group from Reception to Year 4. In November 2009, responding to a local need, the school expanded by forming classes in Years 5 and 6 to accommodate pupils who did not have a school place, many of whom had recently arrived in the country. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic heritages, those who are learning to speak English as a second language and those who leave or join the school at other than the usual times are higher than those found nationally. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, who are disabled or who may have special educational needs, are below the national average, as is the number with a statement of special educational needs. The school meets the current government floor standards in English and mathematics. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award, Active mark and Sustainable 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Following a period of instability, the determined and focused leadership of the headteacher, staff and the governing body has quickly made significant and rapid improvements.
- Pupils make good progress from low starting points, and results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average and improving at the end of Key Stage 1. A small minority of the more able pupils, however, do not make the progress they should, as their learning is not always consistently challenged.
- Pupils make accelerated progress with their reading in the year groups where a systematic approach to teaching phonics is used; however, this is not as yet consistently applied sufficiently across all subjects and classes.
- Teaching is typically good, characterised by consistently good relationships between adults and pupils. In these lessons, learning gets off to a quick start, with pupils taking responsibility for their own progress. However, when teachers give extended instructions, the pace of learning slows, particularly for higher attaining pupils, and pupils are not given enough opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- The school provides well-structured and effective individual support in lessons for disabled pupils and those who may have special educational needs.
- Behaviour is typically good over time and pupils say they feel safe and that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with promptly. Pupils get on well together, whatever their backgrounds and show respect for each other’s achievements.
- Leadership and management are good and have been successful in improving pupils’ academic performance, levels of attendance, their behaviour and teaching since the last inspection. Self-evaluation is accurate and all staff know the school’s strengths and areas for development.
- Pupils, parents, carers and staff are extremely positive and acknowledge the improvements in leadership and teaching in recent years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by building upon the school’s existing thought-

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provoking practice to challenge all pupils and accelerate their progress, by December 2012, through ensuring that teachers consistently:

- get lessons off to a rapid start, with pupils spending less time listening and more time actively involved in learning activities
- give many opportunities for pupils to work independently and find things out for themselves
- always provide higher ability pupils with work that enables to achieve challenging targets
- provide all pupils with opportunities across the curriculum to practise phonics in order to improve their reading and writing skills.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most children begin school with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. They make a strong start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, as a result of good provision, outcomes are improving year on year. Secure routines and high quality care ensure children settle quickly and make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's interest and enthusiasm for learning are evident in the way they take turns and play cooperatively together. In well-taught lessons, the teacher uses skilful questioning techniques to encourage children to explore their learning and make good progress. For example, in a Reception class, the teacher encouraged good use of thought-provoking and subject-specific mathematical language by playing a game where she revealed only part of a shape and asked the children which shape it could or could not be and to explain why they chose that particular shape.

There has been a gradual rise in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in the last three years. Attainment in reading, mathematics and writing is now broadly in line with the national average. Pupils work diligently in lessons and display good attitudes to learning. This was evident in a Year 1 writing lesson, where pupils successfully, wrote sentences independently, using interesting words and phrases. Although standards in reading are improving over time, they remain below the national average. Pupils who read to inspectors in Year 3, however, were able to demonstrate the accelerated progress they had made since the end of Year 2 with their reading, using effective strategies to sound unfamiliar words. However, this is not a consistent picture across the school and other pupils are less confident in their reading abilities.

Despite having only joined the school during Year 5 or Year 6, a large majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 made securely good progress in 2011, with standards that were broadly in line with the national average. This was as a result of improved teaching and appropriately targeted support for their needs. The improvements in teaching are relatively recent and so have not yet impacted on achieving above average attainment at the end of Year 6. However, the school's current checks on progress show an improving picture. The good progress most

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pupils make is ensuring that the attainment gap for groups identified as potentially vulnerable by the school is closing. This is particularly the case for pupils from minority ethnic groups. Disabled pupils and those who may have special educational needs are well provided for and they too make good progress in their learning relative to their starting points.

Many parents and carers commented about the good progress their children make, and inspection evidence supports these views. They are pleased that their children enjoy school. One parent said, 'Remarkable progress and fantastic improvements made by the school and my child over the past two years.'

Quality of teaching

Pupils are making greater progress since the last inspection, because the quality of teaching has improved and is now good. This is also the view expressed in the majority of parental comments received by the inspection team. Classrooms are well resourced and inspire pupils' curiosity about the world around them. Respect for the environment and for each other pervades all of the school's work and has a marked impact on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school's investment in staff training is reflected in teachers' improved subject knowledge, their close collaboration in planning lessons and providing a curriculum that more closely matches the needs and interests of most groups of pupils. Although not consistently practised, in the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to work independently. For example, in a literacy lesson, the enormous excitement created by an enthusiastic teacher allowed all children, whatever their level, to contribute to exploring the contents of a mystery rucksack of objects on 'Polar Expedition' and to share their creative ideas with their team. At the same time, some children chose independently to use a wide range of resources, including computers and flip cameras, to record their own and others' work.

Teachers understand that they are accountable for the progress pupils make. The best lessons are when teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn about and check learning and progress throughout the lesson. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the pupils used individual whiteboards to record and display their answers to the teacher, ensuring that she could check upon learning and progress and pick up on any misconceptions. Although assessment is used well when planning lessons to group pupils in order to better provide for their learning needs, occasionally the pace of learning slows when all pupils receive the same explanation or task to do and opportunities for higher ability pupils to extend their learning and make more rapid progress are missed. A systematic phonics scheme is taught and is beginning to have impact on the standard of pupils' reading across the school. In the best lessons, teachers referred to phonics knowledge when learning to spell words in subjects other than literacy; however, this is not consistently the case across all classes.

Discussions with pupils confirmed that they know their targets, and scrutiny of pupils'

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books shows that increasingly, teachers' comments provide pupils with guidance on how to improve their work and, in the best examples seen, encourage a learning dialogue between pupil and teacher.

Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and play a vital role in supporting different groups of pupils. This ensures that most pupils make the same good progress over time, particularly pupils with disabilities, those with special educational need and those with a first language other than English.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The majority of pupils say that they feel safe and cared for in school and that adults are approachable if they have any concerns. There is well-developed home-school liaison between staff and families and most parents agree that the school keeps their children safe and responds well to their concerns. One parent commented, 'I believe the school tries its best to work with parents so that the children can achieve their best and become well-rounded individuals.' There is a strong inclusive culture within the school as evidenced through its commitment to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. This positive approach, together with the school's effective systems to monitor pupils' progress, is why pupils who join the school at various times throughout the year settle quickly to their learning.

The great majority of parents and carers reported very positively that standards of behaviour are typically good in the school. Pupils' positive attitudes and average attendance make a significant contribution not only to their good learning and progress but also to the calm and orderly atmosphere evident in the school. A few instances of bullying were reported to the inspectors, but after discussions with pupils and scrutiny of school records, inspectors were secure in their view that these instances are rare and dealt with appropriately, and agree with the vast majority of pupils and parents that adults take any reported incidents very seriously. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, such as having a good awareness of internet safety.

Leadership and management

High expectations and strong determination and drive from the headteacher, supported by the governing body, have been major reasons for the school's significant and impressive improvements, particularly over the last 18 months. The quality of teaching has improved through well-targeted training, particularly coaching and mentoring. Senior leaders effectively promote drive and ambition, focusing successfully on raising pupils' attendance and achievements. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. All of these developments demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to continue to make any necessary future improvements.

The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. It has been instrumental in engaging and involving more parents and carers; for example, whilst providing a useful service to them, the breakfast and

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after-school clubs provide a positive experience for their children. The governing body ensures effective safeguarding procedures are in place, are regularly reviewed and meet statutory requirements. Equality of opportunity lies at the heart of the school. Race relations are good and discrimination is not tolerated in any form. The school has made a concerted effort to narrow any gaps in achievement between any groups of pupils and these are closing quickly.

Effective leadership has ensured that overall the curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to meet the needs of most pupils, although there are some weaknesses in the way reading and writing are promoted in some classes. However, class activities aid the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well.

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.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cranbrook Primary School, Ilford IG1 3PS

I would like to thank you for welcoming us when we inspected your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the confident and polite way that you speak to each other and with the adults in the school. We liked the way you all get on so well with together, with your obvious respect for each other and your school.

We found that Cranbrook is a good school. The adults in charge have made rapid improvements in how and what you learn. You know how to behave and keep yourselves safe. Your attendance is improving and you enjoy coming to school and arrive on time. You work hard and most of you make good progress because your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and exciting.

All of your teachers want to help you to succeed and give you the best education possible. I have asked them to:

- help those of you who find learning easier than most to make more progress by providing more challenging work
- give all of you more opportunity to find out more things for yourselves as often and quickly as possible
- make sure that you all have more opportunities to practise reading and writing as often as possible.

You too can play your part in improving the school by continuing to try your best at everything you do, by attending regularly, behaving well and achieving your targets. Once again, it was very good to meet you all and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Firth
Lead inspector

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