

# Crowton Christ Church CE Primary School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111336
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	378280
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Angela Westington HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	74
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ruth Downes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Harris
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Crowton Northwich CW8 2RW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01928 788230
<b>Fax number</b>	01928 788230
<b>Email address</b>	head@crowton.cheshire.sch.uk

---



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



---

## Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Westington

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 11 lessons and saw six teachers and one Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) teaching. Most of the lessons seen were jointly observed with the headteacher. The inspector met with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and the headteacher of a local primary school in her capacity as a local leader of education. The inspector scrutinised the school's self-evaluation; its systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and its records and data on the progress made by pupils. She examined pupils' books, heard several pupils read and scrutinised in depth the school's management and teaching of reading. She examined the school's records for the safe recruitment and vetting of staff and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, 30 returned parental and carers' questionnaires and those completed by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is close to the national average. This represents more than a four-fold increase in three years; the composition of the school's population is changing. The number of pupils entering the school part way through their primary education is much higher than average and most pupils arrive in Key Stage 2. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average; this is also an increase on the proportion noted at the time of the last inspection. The school has achieved the FMSIS financial management award, Healthy Eating award, Active School award, Green Flag status and the Get Set award for the Olympics, 2011. Until this academic year, the headteacher had a substantial teaching commitment. This has been reduced recently in order to enable her to focus more on the leadership and management of the whole school.

The school meets the current floor standard; that is, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics, meets the government's current threshold.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The overall effectiveness cannot be graded as good because pupils do not achieve as well as they should do in reading and writing. Crowton Christ Church is a highly inclusive, welcoming and caring school. All those associated with it are proud of its family ethos and its strong links to the community.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress over time. They enter the Reception year with skill levels broadly in line with those expected for their age group. They leave the school having attained broadly average standards in English and mathematics. Some pupils who spend their entire school period at Crowton make better than average progress and achieve well. Pupils who arrive at the school part way through their primary education, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make broadly satisfactory progress overall. Some of these pupils achieve well but others do not achieve as well as they could do.
- Pupils' behaviour and their understanding of how to keep themselves safe is good. This aspect is a strength of the school. The school is particularly effective in meeting the needs of pupils who display challenging behaviour or who have been unhappy or unable to settle at other schools. Members of the governing body and staff are committed to ensuring that the school remains a welcoming, inclusive school, in line with its Christian ethos.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but it is uneven. Teaching at upper Key Stage 2 is consistently good. The teaching of mathematics is stronger than the teaching of English and reflects the work that the school has done to raise standards in mathematics and improve the teaching of the subject. The school's procedures for teaching reading and writing are not as robust as they could be.
- The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Members of the governing body are highly committed to the school, but they have an overgenerous view of the impact of the school's work. Some lesson observations have been overgenerous in the assessment of the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, recent performance management of teachers is being undertaken with more rigour.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in reading by:
  - implementing a scheme to support pupils' reading from Reception to Year 6 ensuring that at the earliest stages of learning to read, pupils have books which allow them to practise their developing letter sound (phonics) knowledge
  - widening the range of books and reading materials available to pupils, ensuring that they are reading across the full spectrum of fiction and non-fiction texts and that the reading materials include texts to meet the needs of various groups of pupils
  - improving the use of the data that the school holds on pupils' reading skills and progress and acting swiftly to counter signs of regression or lack of progress in reading
  - ensuring that class teachers take prime responsibility for the progress made by pupils in reading.
  
- Raise standards in writing by:
  - increasing the time pupils spend writing and ensuring that they write at length, more frequently
  - improving teachers' marking and assessment of pupils' writing and ensuring that teachers correct punctuation, spelling, grammar and handwriting as well as checking that the specific objective of the lesson has been met
  - making sure that all teachers follow the school's agreed method for laying out and presenting work
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing and providing high quality professional development for teachers on how to improve pupils' writing.
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - being more rigorous when monitoring the quality of teaching
  - increasing the level of challenge provided by the governing body and improving its capacity to act as a critical friend.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils make satisfactory progress over time and, by the age of 11, reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in reading at the age of 11 are average.

Forty percent of pupils currently in the school have joined part-way through their primary education. For some, this is their third or fourth school. Despite this, these pupils settle in very well and generally make satisfactory progress. A number of such pupils are placed on the school's special educational needs register and are given considerable support and attention. Most of the pupils on the register are considered to have literacy problems. The member of staff responsible for overseeing this area of work assesses the literacy skills of

the pupils and works with other agencies to ensure that they receive as much support as possible. However, in general, progress for some of these pupils is limited because teachers do not consistently use the data on pupils identified as having weak literacy skills to match work to pupils' needs or to fill in gaps in their knowledge. In addition, the whole-school teaching of reading is not as strong as it should be and all pupils could make more progress in reading. There is no clear policy for pupils who are considered to be good readers or 'free readers' and consequently, some are not reading widely enough across the full range of fiction and non-fiction texts or being challenged sufficiently in their reading.

In recent years, standards in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 have fallen from above average to broadly average. The school had already recognised the need to improve the provision for reading and has recently introduced a systematic approach to teaching letter sounds and purchased new resources to support this work. The changes are still being embedded and the school has not yet found the right mix to ensure that pupils make good rather than satisfactory progress overall. Nevertheless, pupils are making good progress in acquiring and using letter sounds although they do not have enough books to support this practice. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress overall; they are making good progress in developing early reading skills.

Pupils do not write often enough at length and the work in their books is presented poorly. In too many books, the expectation of what pupils can write is severely limited by the over use of worksheets, so that, for example, even young pupils who can write in sentences with capital letters and full stops are only required to write short, one- or two-word answers in a box on a worksheet.

In contrast, the school's development work in mathematics is clearly paying dividends and standards are improving. In 2011, standards in the mathematics assessments for seven-year-olds were above the national average and in Years 5 and 6, more pupils are on track to reach the higher level. In a Year 5/6 lesson on area, pupils working at the higher level could explain why we use square centimetres to measure area; could correctly calculate the area of compound shapes and could explain the difference between perimeter and area. Pupils' mathematics books show that a good range and volume of work are being covered.

Parents and carers unanimously feel that their children are achieving well. This view is accurate for some pupils, but not all.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but it is uneven. Teaching at upper Key Stage 2 is consistently good. The teaching of mathematics is generally good. Features of the more effective teaching include: good levels of teacher subject knowledge and clear explanations; teachers assessing pupils' understanding throughout the lesson so that errors and misunderstandings are corrected immediately; high expectations of what the pupils can achieve over time and within each lesson and; pupils being challenged and required to work hard and sustain effort. Many of these features were evident in a highly effective Year 2 letters and sounds session (phonics) taken by the Higher Level Teaching Assistant. Within a brief 20 minute period, the pupils revised the sounds they had learnt recently, were taught and practised using a new sound and quickly wrote sentences correctly punctuated and spelt. The session moved along at a slick pace and the pupils worked hard. Just as importantly, they had tremendous fun and enjoyed the session immensely. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson on the two-dimensional properties of three-dimensional shapes, clear

explanations, careful questioning of pupils' understanding and well-thought-through activities, contributed to most pupils learning something new. The inspector observed one girl realising that if she sliced through a cone in a specific way she would have a series of circles.

Relationships in lessons are very good, both between pupils and pupils and between pupils and adults, and contribute strongly to pupils' developing confidence. The inspector observed some off-task behaviour occasionally when teaching was less effective and pupils were becoming bored. Pupils knew their targets although they were not always sure how to make their work better. The religious ethos of the school contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is broad and engages pupils. Pupils could explain in some detail the various topics they have covered in history and geography such as 'Pompeii' and 'how volcanoes are formed'. They are knowledgeable about their own and others' religion. They enjoy art and the various sports they undertake and the many clubs on offer.

All parents and carers who returned questionnaires believe that their children are taught well. This view is accurate in respect of some aspects of the provision, but not all of it.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour and safety of pupils are strengths of the school. Despite the high mobility of pupils into the school, relationships are highly positive. The inspector spoke to a group of pupils who had moved into the school from elsewhere. All were clear that they were happier at this school than at their previous schools and that they had been warmly welcomed and had made good friends. Parents and carers expressed the same view and identified the school's small, 'family feel' as a major source of security for many children. Parents and carers are unanimously happy with the behaviour of pupils in the school. Not one parental questionnaire raised behaviour as an issue. The school's behaviour incident log for the past three years shows a small number of incidents and this number has fallen each year. Incidents occurred mainly at the beginning of each academic year as pupils settle back into school routines. Names reappear and then are no longer recorded, showing that the school's strategies to manage behaviour have worked. There are no recorded exclusions or racist incidents. Attendance, which was above average at the time of the previous inspection, has continued to rise, and for the period September 2011 to February 2012 is 97.2 %, significantly above the national average. Pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a major contributory factor to their good behaviour. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. This is the result of a rigorous programme of assemblies, e-safety team visits to school, local high school ambassadors' drama sessions on bullying, school council assemblies and personal, social and emotional lessons on these topics. Pupils explained about keeping safe on the internet, about e-safety and how the school deals with bullying if it ever occurs: 'It's stopped immediately!' exclaimed one boy vehemently. The school's records show that the school works with parents and carers and other agencies to tackle quickly any inappropriate or challenging behaviour.

Pupils are well looked after and cared for. The school is a safe and secure environment. Following a recent health check by the local authority safeguarding team, the school was deemed to meet all safeguarding requirements. To support pupils and families the school has very good partnerships with a wide range of external agencies, including Children and

Mental Health Services (CAMHS), educational psychologists, family support workers, local high schools, the church, local schools, the local community and social services.

## **Leadership and management**

Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully raised standards in mathematics and improved the quality of teaching in this subject through the monitoring of lessons and pupils' work and by reorganising the teaching groups for Years 2 and 5/6. Following analysis of the school's most recent test and assessment results, the governing body and the headteacher had already identified reading as the next area for further development. An action plan was drawn up, new resources purchased and training for staff identified. The headteacher sets a clear vision for the staff and pupils and in this she has the full support of the governing body.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its development plans focus on the right priorities. However, some lesson observations are not rigorous enough and the governing body is not sufficiently robust in its role as a critical friend. Nevertheless, recent performance management of teachers is being undertaken with more rigour. A range of professional development opportunities are used to improve teaching, including training by external consultants. Most recently, school staff have undertaken training on how to teach letter sounds (phonics).

The school's curriculum contributes to pupils' achievement and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Extra-curricular activities are extensive: the school runs clubs at lunchtimes and after school so that pupils who travel to school on the school bus do not miss out. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils but there is still more to do to improve provision for the teaching of reading and writing.

The school promotes equality satisfactorily. Provision to foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The governing body fulfils all statutory requirements in respect of safeguarding and ensures that the building is safe and well maintained. The governing body has been instrumental in overseeing the building of an additional extension and refurbishment of part of the building, ensuring a safe and secure environment for the pupils and staff.

Parents and carers who returned completed questionnaires are very happy with the school's work. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.



## 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](http://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.
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.**



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Crowton Christ Church CE Primary School, Northwich, CW8 2RW**

As you know, I visited your school recently. Thank you very much for being so friendly and for welcoming me. Thank you, especially to those of you who completed the questionnaires and who met me to talk about your school. I could tell that you are very proud of it. Crowton is a satisfactory school. These are just a few of the best things about your school.

- You enjoy school; you are happy there. You behave well and your parents and carers are happy with the school. The school keeps you safe and makes sure you know how to keep yourselves safe.
- The teaching is satisfactory overall but there is some good teaching too.
- The school helps you to grow into decent, kind and responsible young people.
- The headteacher, teachers and the governing body are committed to doing their best to make sure that the school keeps getting better.

I have asked your headteacher and the governing body to look again at three important things. I think that you could do better in your reading and writing. I know that the teachers are already trying to make these better. I have also asked them to think again about how they decide whether your lessons are good enough and whether you are making enough progress.

I am sure that you will continue to work hard for your teachers and to help them to make your school even better. Thank you again for making me so welcome!

Yours sincerely

Angela Westington  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).