

Crawford's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124733
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359758
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Cheryl Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Weaver
Headteacher	Clare Farrant
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Seven lessons and some short sessions for teaching letter sounds were observed, involving all teachers. The work of teaching assistants supporting small groups of pupils was also observed. Meetings were held with staff, governors, groups of pupils and a local authority adviser. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school evaluation documents, data on pupils' progress, external monitoring reports and development planning. Responses from 50 parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- Is teaching good enough to ensure pupils, especially the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make enough progress?
- Is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage good enough to ensure children get a good start to school and make secure progress in early literacy and numeracy skills?
- Do the headteacher and governors have clear strategies to bring about improvement?

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average primary school serving the villages of Haughley and Wetherden. At present the school caters for pupils up to the end of Year 4. They are taught in three mixed age classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in a mixed Reception/Key Stage 1 class. At the time of the inspection there were 11 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attending part-time and two full-time. Children start school in September or January, depending on birth date, and attend part-time for a while. All pupils are of White British heritage. There is an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school has Healthy School status.

The school is subject to a local authority reorganisation plan for it to become an all through primary school, where pupils leave at the end of Year 6. Since the previous inspection there has been a significant turnover of teaching staff, especially in the past 18 months. The local authority undertook a review of the school's provision in September 2010.

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

3

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 significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in teaching, the use of assessment and the progress children make.

Crawford's Primary provides an acceptable standard of education for the large majority of pupils and ensures these make at least satisfactory progress.

Children in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class are not receiving an acceptable standard of education; consequently their progress is inadequate. Teaching for this class is not focused sufficiently clearly on what the pupils know and need to learn next, especially in early literacy and numeracy skills.

For the remaining Year 1 pupils, and those in Years 2 to 4, teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. However, both the school's good systems for tracking pupils' progress and the scrutiny of their work indicate that some of the more-able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Plans do not always identify challenging work for this group.

Governance is inadequate. A high turnover of governors and two vacancies has left the governing body with too few knowledgeable governors to challenge and support the school.

Behaviour is satisfactory, and the behaviour of some individuals has significantly improved. The reason behaviour is not good is because some pupils can take too long to do as they are asked and do not always consider others.

The capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. The headteacher and senior teacher have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. Strategies to improve have had a good impact in some areas, such as behaviour. Staffing difficulties have slowed improvements to teaching, because changes to personnel have disrupted the well-planned monitoring schedule and its regular follow-up.

Pupils who have the highest level of special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in local authority care receive good care and support. They make good progress because work and support is planned explicitly to match their needs and delivered by highly proficient teaching assistants.

Links with parents and carers are good. For example, parents are well supported in helping their child at home with reading.

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Good partnerships with specialist teachers and services have a good impact on the provision for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Strong links with local schools have a positive impact on teachers' professional development and wider opportunities for pupils to enjoy such as a range of sports and residential visits. These contribute to pupils' understanding of healthy life-styles.

Staff know pupils well so any unhappiness or uncharacteristic behaviour is noted quickly and something done. Pupils are confident that they are safe at school and have a good idea of how to keep themselves fit and healthy.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation/Year 1 class by:
 - increasing teachers' knowledge of up-to-date methodology for effective teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills
 - making effective use of assessment to plan precise next steps for individuals
 - setting higher expectations for children's behaviour so that they develop positive habits for learning.
- Improve governance by:
 - helping new or inexperienced governors to develop their understanding of their role
 - ensuring that the governing body takes a more active approach to supporting and challenging the school to do better.
- Increase the rate of progress and raise attainment further especially for the more-able pupils by:
 - using the school's precise assessment at the start of Year 1 to set aspirational targets throughout the school, especially for more-able pupils
 - improving the school's system of planning so that extension activities for the more-able pupils are routinely identified to ensure they are always challenged
 - rigorous and regular monitoring to ensure consistently high standards of planning and delivery of lessons, throughout the school.
- Improve behaviour to a consistently good level by:
 - all adults and pupils agreeing their criteria for good and timely behaviour
 - all adults demanding that these criteria are met consistently.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

As there are small numbers in each year group, attainment on entry to Reception can vary considerably from year to year but it is generally around that expected in all areas of learning. Attainment by the end of Year 4 varies similarly, but is broadly average. With the exception of the ten pupils in Year 1 who are taught with Reception children, pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory as they move from Year 1 to Year 4. However, inadequate progress for these younger pupils, around one third of the total in the school, means learning and progress are judged inadequate overall. Pupils with special

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educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress as a whole, though strong support has made a particular difference to some individuals, resulting in more rapid learning. More-able pupils make satisfactory progress, though occasionally their pace of work drops in lessons when tasks lack challenge.

Pupils enjoy learning. During the inspection, Year 3 and 4 pupils had great fun being archaeologists and 'discovering' buried ancient Greek jewellery and pottery. A good level of discussion followed as to who would have owned such finds. Information and communication technology skills are used well by these year groups to find further information about ancient Greek culture as well as to record and illustrate stories. Pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class enjoyed the activity of naming and describing the features of two-dimensional shapes. More-able pupils could describe the attributes of several three-dimensional shapes. Pupils in this class showed considerable maturity when asked what they felt their 'new' teacher would like to know about them. They were very keen on the idea of writing letters to her, but took a considerable time to apply themselves to the task.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The great majority of pupils say they like school and demonstrate this with their above-average attendance. As one pupil said, 'The teachers are nice and we have lots of friends'. A few pupils commented that the behaviour of some used to upset them but they think it is better now. This is supported by data. The high number of exclusions for unacceptable behaviour has decreased substantially, as a result of strong action taken by the school. However, not all adults insist on the same standards of behaviour, especially in terms of quick response to instructions. Some, but not all, pupils have been involved in drafting criteria to define good behaviour, relating it to rights and responsibilities. Older pupils take pride in being members of the school council and think that they make a difference to the school. Pupils also take responsibility for organising fundraising activities for several national charities. They have a satisfactory understanding of their personal targets and what they have to do to improve further.

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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	3
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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching for the large majority of pupils is at least satisfactory, but the inadequacies for the remainder mean teaching is judged inadequate overall. Teachers have established good relationships with their pupils, and, in the better lessons, manage them well. In a good lesson observed, the teacher set high expectations for pupils' behaviour, their application to task and progress, which pupils were keen to meet. One reason that lessons do not have consistently good outcomes over time is related to a high turnover of staff. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge and currently assessment is not used precisely enough in all classes to pinpoint these gaps and ensure pupils catch up. In Year 3 and 4 where assessment is used effectively, work and support is closely matched to pupils' diverse needs and they, especially Year 3, are closing gaps in their learning.

In some ways, teachers prepare their lessons well, for example often making good use of interesting resources. Written planning, however, is not always precise enough. Though the more able are not always challenged well, the teaching of letter sounds and spelling is good for more-able older pupils. They enjoy the challenge, for example, of discovering and using homophones (words that sound the same but have different spelling) correctly. Pupils have targets, but these do not always draw sufficiently on the accurate baseline assessments made in Year 1, so in some cases, particularly for the more-able, they are not high enough.

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The curriculum is satisfactory and provides a good range of visits and visitors and strong links with the church. The school is developing ways to weave subjects together to make pupils' learning more interesting, initially through theme weeks and topics. Pupils are well known by all staff. Vulnerable pupils, especially those who have difficulties managing their behaviour receive very good support. Pupils with a high level of special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in local authority care are catered for well, and as a result make good progress. With guidance from specialist teachers, the school has organised support for individuals out of the classroom to ensure they complete their tasks. The excellent relationships established with teaching assistants have helped these pupils to moderate their behaviour so that they can now take advantage of whole-class activities without disruption.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior teacher are an effective team and, currently, share the responsibility for all aspects of the school's work because other teachers are either temporary or newly qualified. In an eighteen-month period of considerable instability, they have correctly identified and prioritised improvements and implemented appropriate strategies to ensure that most pupils make satisfactory progress. These have had an impact on individuals' behaviour, and hence the quality of learning, but a series of changes of teachers has slowed the impact on teaching. Though weaknesses are identified accurately, leaders and managers have not had the opportunity to drive improvements through at a good pace. The current system of using commercially produced planning is rightly under review. It has been very helpful in keeping a common format and basic progression in the curriculum during the time of a high turnover of staff, but the head and senior teacher know that it curtails teachers' flexibility, including, in most cases, the planning of challenging work for the more-able pupils.

Governors appreciate the nurturing ethos of the school but are not sufficiently supporting the headteacher in times of difficulty. They are provided with detailed analyses of pupil progress data but are not questioning or challenging the school to do even better. Resources are used effectively in the school but value for money is insufficient because outcomes are inadequate.

The school satisfactorily ensures that pupils have equal opportunities because recent staff training and deployment is having an excellent impact on helping to break down any barriers to learning. Consequently, those at risk of not succeeding are making good progress in relation to their starting points. The school uses a wide range of methods to

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communicate with and involve parents and carers of all backgrounds. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements, and safeguarding plans identify appropriate priorities. The school is a cohesive community. It has good links with the local community and in its evaluation of its work on community cohesion recognises that the global dimension of its curriculum is a weaker area.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children like coming to school and have formed good friendships. Relationships between children and staff are good. Children trust their teachers and say they feel safe. Their welfare needs are suitably met. Children soon learn routines for snack time and break times.

The quantity and quality of resources is good. There is a suitable range of activities available in the classroom and outside. These activities reflect children's interests. However, expectations of behaviour and learning are not consistently applied: the children tend to flit from one activity to another and play too boisterously outside. The reason these activities do not hold children's interest is because planning is imprecise and there are not clear expectations as to what children are expected to learn from undertaking the activity. As a result, adult interaction is not focused on ensuring children benefit from the experiences, for example, encouraging curiosity as to what might happen next or developing specific vocabulary.

The teaching of letter sounds and basic letter formation is inadequate, not only for Reception children but for the ten Year 1 pupils as well. Neither group make as much progress as they should because staff have insufficient understanding of good methodology. Similarly, the use of precise assessment to pinpoint what a child already

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knows and needs to know next is inadequate and leads to slower progress in developing basic numeracy skills.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in all the activities and have appropriate support. Parents are pleased with the provision and information about the school and say that their children are helped to settle quickly. They appreciate the opportunities for their child to visit the school several times before starting in the class. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactorily led and managed by the headteacher. In challenging circumstances, she has a very clear understanding of the areas to improve and is using appropriate strategies, including advice and support from the local authority. There have been notable improvements to the range of activities as a result, but as yet less impact on other weaknesses.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a high return of questionnaires from parents and carers. The large majority who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the provision the school makes for their children, and are happy with their children's experience. Two main concerns raised by a few parents or carers were that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that the school does not help them to support their children's learning. These concerns were followed up during the inspection. Behaviour was investigated in a range of ways and judged to be satisfactory. Reading diaries indicate that parents and carers contribute significantly to the progress pupils make. The school intends to review the ways it helps parents and carers know about any other homework their children are asked to do.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crawford's Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 69 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	62	16	32	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	64	15	30	2	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	48	23	46	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	58	19	38	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	58	17	34	4	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	46	21	42	5	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	54	21	42	1	2	0	0
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)	24	48	18	36	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	52	18	36	4	8	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	44	19	38	3	6	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	40	23	46	1	2	6	12
The school is led and managed effectively	24	48	25	50	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	70	11	22	3	6	1	2

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



22 October 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Crawford's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Stowmarket, IP14 3QZ

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently.

My particular thanks to those of you who sat and talked to me at lunchtime and who shared your thoughts and ideas about the school with me.

I think that you are looked after well and kept safe in school because the staff know you well. Although some things are good about your school, I am concerned that the teaching for the Reception children is not helping them enough to make steady progress especially in learning the skills you need for reading, writing and number work. I have judged that your school needs a 'notice to improve'. This means that it will be checked up on again in a few months' time to make sure that it is improving. I have asked the school to do three things to make it better.

A few children in Years 1 to 4 do not always make enough progress because their work does not make them think hard, so the staff need to make sure the work is always hard enough.

Quite a lot of you take some time to do as your teachers ask you and at playtimes you sometimes rush about too much. You can all help by trying hard to listen and do as your teachers ask you and, at playtimes, think carefully about what you are doing.

The senior staff need to help the governors to improve what they do so that they can keep an eye on the school and make sure it improves.

Your headteacher and senior teacher provide satisfactory leadership and know what needs to be done. Thank you again for your help and all good wishes for your success.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Thompson

Lead inspector

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