

# Cromwell Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132071
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360358
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 November 2010–1 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Sudworth

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helena Baxter & Diane Hudson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephanie Barnard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Parkway Huntingdon PE29 6JA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01480 437830
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<b>Email address</b>	office@cromwellpark.cambs.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 November 2010–1 December 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	360358



**Number of children on roll in the registered  
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered  
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, one of whom spent just half a day in the school and looked at safeguarding. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons of differing duration taught by nine teachers including two visits to the pre-school. They held meetings with one of the Co-Chairs of the Governing Body, the vice-chair/special educational needs governor, the safeguarding governor, headteacher and other staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, for example, that relating to safeguarding, curriculum organisation, pupils' work and information about their progress. The 38 questionnaire responses from parents and carers were analysed and also staff and pupil responses.

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

- Why did results fall in reading in Year 2 in 2010, what has the school done to address this and what is it doing to raise standards in writing which has traditionally been a weaker area?
- What is the school doing to attend to the fall in results in English in Key Stage 2 and what provision does it make for science which has also been a weaker area of the curriculum in terms of results?
- How effectively does the school provide for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, especially those at an early stage?

## Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school with eight classes and a nurture group which caters for pupils who have specific social and emotional needs. Children begin the Reception class full time in the September preceding their fifth birthday on a staggered group basis with the youngest group commencing first. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A higher percentage of pupils than is normally found join or leave the school at times other than the usual ones. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities is about the same as that found nationally, although the school has significantly more statemented pupils than in most schools. Most of these are for moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is about the same as in most schools, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The governing body manages its own pre-school provision. There is a privately organised after-school club which is inspected separately. The school has several awards, including the Silver Eco award and National Healthy Schools status. There have been a lot of staff changes during the last three years for a variety of reasons.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress is satisfactory in the other key stages. Some aspects of the school are good, such as pupils' personal development and the care that the staff take of the pupils. As one parent wrote, 'I have been particularly pleased with the school's support when my child has had emotional concerns.'

Pupils report that they enjoy school and are clearly proud of it. They express confidence in the staff, feel safe and help one another. They participate very regularly in sport and other activities and have a very good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet. The school's provision for pupils who have special education needs/and or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language is good. Teaching, including marking, and pupils' learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 are, otherwise, satisfactory. Rates of progress have been declining and attainment has fallen in recent years. The school has started to take action to address this with specific teaching programmes and new approaches in reading and writing, although the end result is still to be seen in improved outcomes. Overall, pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education.

Parents and carers express mixed views about the school but the sample responding to the questionnaire was very small and not a fair representation of the whole age spread. Their concern about the many staff changes is understandable as, undoubtedly, this has affected progress. Inspectors examined a list of staffing changes and there does not appear to be any overarching reason for this. The school plans to have a parents' forum in the New Year to try and establish improved relationships with all parents and carers. The school's own survey prior to the inspection using the same questions was much more favourable than the responses received in the inspection questionnaire.

The school is led and managed satisfactorily. The governing body has gone through several recent changes. Several members are new but they are keen to undergo training to improve their knowledge and to increase their skills. Some have specific roles and undertake these with a keen involvement. The school's plan for community cohesion has still to be put fully into action, particularly in respect of the national and global aspects in order to prepare pupils to become understanding and tolerant adults. The school's satisfactory, although at times optimistic, evaluation of itself, the recent history of falling results and staffing difficulties, combined with the good progress that specific groups of pupils make, indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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

- Improve attainment and rates of progress so that all groups of pupils make good progress by:

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- making every effort to secure a stable teaching staff
  - raising the quality of teaching further for all groups of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2
  - providing better guidance in marking to help pupils to improve their work
  - analysing data more effectively to ensure that pupils build on their above average level of attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Strengthen relationships with parents and carers by implementing plans for a parents' forum and consider a joint headteacher's/ governors' surgery to address specific parental anxieties.
  - Put the community cohesion plan into action to improve pupils' knowledge of how different people live in the national and international communities.
  - About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Attainment on entry is around that expected for their children's age. From the consistently above average results at the end of the Reception year in all aspects of learning, pupils achieve satisfactorily in Key Stages 1 and 2. However, results have been falling in both key stages, and pupils reach standards that are slightly higher than the national average overall by the end of Year 6. The decline in pupils' attainment is in part due to demographic changes and also to an increase in the number of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than the usual ones. It is also a result of frequent staff changes. Additionally, the school has a much larger number of statemented pupils than is usually found. Effective small group tuition supports the good progress of pupils who have special educational needs/and or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The school is taking concentrated action to address the fall in results. Its programmes for reading, where pupils select from banded reading books, and an emphasis on extending pupils' vocabulary in writing throughout the school are showing early signs of success but it is still too early to judge their overall impact. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils were trying to capture vocabulary to link with their history work on the Victorians and through imagery wrote sentences about the workhouse. One wrote, 'The workhouse is a graveyard guarded by death himself.' Such sharp, short early morning sessions are commonplace and are keeping pupils focused on specific aspects in both writing and reading to keep them alert to improvements in their overall English work.

Pupils enjoy school. As one pupil said, 'The best thing about this school is that everyone gets along.' Pupils are considerate of one another and display responsible attitudes in class. They have an excellent knowledge of healthy living for their age and respond very positively to the school's well-devised health promotion strategies. School council members gave advice to other pupils about healthy lunch boxes. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through the school council, their eco work and as monitors and buddies to others and have good links with the children's ward in the neighbouring hospital. They write letters to the local council about local planning matters

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but their contribution to the wider community is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils get on well together, are polite and show a good appreciation of others through supporting various charities.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage them well so that lessons proceed smoothly in an atmosphere of trust and openness where pupils are confident to answer questions. Teachers use praise selectively and appropriately. The good use of modern technology enables pupils to experience learning visually and assists their concentration and interest. Marking is up to date but the comments in pupils' books do not consistently inform them about how to improve. The pace of lessons is satisfactory in the main and occasionally brisk. Learning intentions are shared effectively so that pupils are clear what they are meant to learn but they do not always know well enough what to do to succeed with the activities and when writing in different styles. Pupils engage well with one another in groups and in pairs when required to do so and they share their perspectives on ideas effectively. They are clear about their individual mathematics targets but less so in English.

The curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Given the size of the school, there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, which



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supports pupils in adopting healthy lifestyles. A good emphasis is put on basic skills but on some days the curriculum does not leave enough room for other learning. The application of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. In some classes, the use of worksheets, for example in science, limits pupils' own thinking about investigation and their own ideas of how to record their work. The school makes good use of visits, for example, to religious buildings and of visitors and theme days to add variety to the usual routines. The school places a good emphasis on ecological matters.

The staff take good care of the pupils. The Family Liaison and Inclusion Officer and special educational needs coordinator ensure that any pupils with learning or emotional difficulties are well provided for. The nurture group is an example of excellent practice. It enables the pupils attending to make significant progress in their ability to access education and in their personal development and well-being. The school has good links with other professionals, such as speech and occupational therapists whose visits support the pupils and also help the teachers in assisting those with specific needs. The school has an adequate number of staff with first-aid qualifications. Transition arrangements from the school's own pre-school into the Reception class are good as they are from class to class and on to the secondary school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are clearly motivated to seek further improvement. They are developing new systems to support their analysis of data which in the past has not always been sufficiently well focused. For example, subject leaders' reports are not sufficiently succinct in bringing out strengths and weaknesses. The drive to increase rates of progress has been hampered by the frequent changes of staff which has affected the embedding of leaders' ambition. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place but this has tended to focus on the lesson presentation rather than the quality of pupils' learning. The school development plan contains the right areas for development, although it is over detailed. Self-evaluation is satisfactory; there are instances when it is too optimistic.

The governing body is still developing its expertise on data to enable it to hold the school better to account. It has a good knowledge of the school's strengths but is less aware of its areas for improvement. The governing body has ensured that safeguarding arrangements comply with requirements. Risk assessment and child protection arrangements are thorough. Specific governors for safeguarding and special educational needs take a keen interest in these matters.

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Relationships with parents are generally, but not wholly, positive. Communication is regular. The school frequently seeks the views of all stakeholders, including parents but it is not always able to respond to the views of parents in the way that they would like. Good links have been established with other schools and professionals. These support pupils' well-being and learning, particularly for those whose circumstances mean they may be vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school provides satisfactorily in ensuring that pupils have equal opportunities in their learning and in other activities. There is no evidence of discrimination.

The school has a plan for community cohesion but this is not securely based on an audit. The school, rightly, recognises the need to develop further both the national and global perspectives to ensure that pupils grow up as tolerant and understanding adults.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children traditionally make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their starting points. By the end of the Reception year, their attainment is securely above the national average in the different areas of their learning. There are very good links with the school's pre-school provision. Both settings are well led with good teaching which supports the good progress that the children make. Staff in both settings take good care of the children in secure and welcoming environments. Good use is made of the well-equipped outdoor learning area but sometimes the whole class is timetabled for its use which restricts the opportunity for children to select either indoor or outdoor activities for themselves. When riding their large wheeled toys along a marked route, children learn to respond to electronic traffic lights and pay attention to the zebra crossing. Children make a good start to learning the sounds of letters and letter blends and 'tricky' words and begin to blend letter sounds together. They get along very well together, take turns and

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choose their activities sensibly. Assessments of children's progress are good and parents are kept well informed about their children's development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A very small percentage of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Over half of these were from parents of pupils in Years 1 and 5 where there have been recent staffing or organisational changes. The inspectors also studied the same questionnaire responses issued by the school itself in November 2010 before it knew of its inspection when 68 parents responded with a greater range of year groups represented. That particular analysis was very much more favourable and did not indicate any major disagreement. Inspectors do not agree that there are major concerns with the leadership of the school. It is led and managed satisfactorily. Pupils behave well and the school deals well with unacceptable behaviour. Pupils make satisfactory progress and have their needs met satisfactorily. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language have their needs met well and make good progress. Some parents feel that communication systems are ineffective but the evidence provided suggests that the school works hard to inform parents of school events and specific changes. The inspection team concurs that the school has experienced a large number of staff changes and examined the evidence for this. From discussions and examination of written evidence, there is no apparent reason for this large number but the inspection team agrees that this has been a factor in pupils not always maintaining the good progress seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cromwell Park 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 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 221 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	32	19	50	4	11	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	16	43	18	49	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	8	21	21	55	9	24	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	24	19	51	8	22	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	32	16	43	6	16	2	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	27	20	54	6	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	32	22	58	4	11	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)	9	26	14	40	4	11	2	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	24	14	38	10	27	3	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	16	16	43	10	27	3	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	16	9	24	15	41	7	19
The school is led and managed effectively	8	22	4	11	11	30	14	38
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	21	16	42	7	18	3	8

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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



2 December 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cromwell Park Primary School, Huntingdon, PE29 6JA**

We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you when we visited your school. Thank you for making us so welcome and also for letting us see your work. We found you to be polite and well behaved. You told us that you enjoy school and like making friends. You look after one another well. We were pleased to see so many of you taking part in sport which helps to keep you healthy. We were also pleased to learn that you feel safe in school. The staff take much care of you. It was good to see that you like and respect your teachers.

The school provides a satisfactory education for you. The pupils who find learning more difficult make good progress because of the help that is provided as do those who speak English as an additional language. Some parents are worried about the changes in staff as this does not help your progress. We understand this and we hope, too, that staff are able to stay for longer.

We have asked the school to do three things to make the school even better:

- to help all of you to make good progress
- to set up a system of meetings for parents to sort out any anxieties that they may have about your education
- to help you to understand how different people live and the customs that they have.

You all can help by doing your best in your lessons and working as hard as you can and making the most of each moment. Thank you once again for your help. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth

Lead inspector

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