

Croyland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133600
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	360542
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Kathy Hooper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Packwood
Headteacher	Tim Hill
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed; 14 teachers were seen; meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looking at pupils' work, teachers' records, the school's analysis of its data on achievement, and documents used to monitor pupils' progress. Inspectors analysed 55 parental questionnaires, 47 pupil questionnaires and 22 staff questionnaires.

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

- The role and effectiveness of middle managers in improving pupils' progress.
- How the improvements in teaching have had an effect on the progress of more able pupils.
- In what ways have the enriched curriculum and the support and guidance of pupils enabled slow moving pupils to achieve.
- Any improvements brought about by the new management.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average school. It has a lower than average number of girls. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are higher than average numbers of pupils from minority groups. Twenty-nine have English as an additional language, predominantly Polish, a few of whom are at an early stage of language acquisition. The school has a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but the proportion has fallen since the last inspection from 45% to 25%. The school has two kinds of designated special provision on site, one for pupils with speech and language difficulties, and the other for Key Stage 1 pupils with social and emotional difficulties. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, Activemark Award, and the Bronze Award for anti-bullying.

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

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Progress is satisfactory and the pace is increasing because the school has developed good monitoring systems and is addressing gaps in pupils' understanding. Increasing numbers of pupils are making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language receive good support and overall they make satisfactory progress. Pupils with speech and language difficulties make good progress in the designated special resource.

Pupils enjoy school, say they feel safe, and want to learn. They have a good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles. There has been a significant increase in the numbers having school meals, because the school council has initiated improvements. Behaviour is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils take increasing responsibility within school and contribute well to the wider community. Attendance is inadequate. This affects pupils' achievement and future economic well-being. Pupils work productively and harmoniously together, and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Links with other countries enable them to gain insights into different ways of living. There are good opportunities for reflection during daily assemblies. Pupils' art and design work is creative, and the number of pupils taking up a musical instrument has increased.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is well focused on learning but tasks are not always broken down into sufficiently small steps for some less able pupils, and there is not enough challenge for the more-able. Teachers check and reinforce learning throughout lessons. Pupils' work is regularly marked, but they do not always know their targets or how to improve their work.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school is making great efforts to generate a more creative curriculum, but it is too early for it to be securely embedded. Nevertheless, there is good extra-curricular provision and it is well attended. The quality of support and guidance for pupils' well-being is good. Every pupil knows who to go to for help. There is an extensive range of support for those pupils who need particular kinds of help, such as counselling, and those who are making slow progress. The breakfast club and after school clubs promote pupils' personal development and well-being well. There are robust strategies for improving attendance. Serious illnesses are among the reasons for some persist absences.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have successfully changed the school's ethos to focus clearly on pupils' learning. Monitoring of pupils' progress is rigorous and exceptionally analytical. Middle managers adopt an informed leadership role in developing their subjects, but their role in implementing an interesting curriculum is underdeveloped. The governing body is well-informed, through regular and purposeful visits, and holds the school to account.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Concerted efforts to engage parents and carers have led to a good partnership with them. There are robust safeguarding procedures. The school provides satisfactory value for money and has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by
 - providing greater challenge for more able pupils
 - using assessments to set targets, share them with pupils, and use them to support learning.
 - Develop the role of middle managers to secure the implementation of an exciting curriculum that stimulates all pupils' interests in learning.
- Improve pupils' attendance rates.
- Up to 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

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average. Nevertheless, since 2008, improvements and initiatives have led to an increased number of pupils reaching age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. A parent of a Year 6 pupil states that her child is 'well ahead with his maths and reading, and any concerns are always sorted out.' Over the last three years, the number of pupils attaining levels expected of them by Year 6 has improved considerably, particularly in reading and mathematics. A group of less able Year 6 pupils, whose progress had been slow, were totally engaged in writing a story, to be presented to others. They were clearly making substantial progress because they had a clear structure for writing successfully, the subject matter appealed to them, it was fun and there was a high level of adult support. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress. Accelerated progress of some pupils is due to well-focused interventions and improved teaching.

Most pupils enjoy school and feel safe. There has been a reduction in the amount of bullying which is now rare and swiftly addressed. Behaviour is satisfactory and improving. Pupils have a good understanding of health issues. They all take part in sports activities and an increasing number are cycling to school. Pupils relish taking a more prominent role in their contributions to the school and local community. They are involved in decisions regarding the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Productive relationships with the local police give them a good understanding of local issues. Despite the school's best efforts, the attendance rate remains stubbornly low although some improvements can be detected. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social development is satisfactory.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	4
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 and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is well focused on learning. All lessons are characterised by good relationships and pupils keen to learn. Teaching assistants make an increasingly effective contribution to pupils' learning. Where pupils are engaged in practical activities, such as drama, or interactive information and communication technology, their engagement is very good. Occasionally, the extension activities planned for more able pupils are not always sufficiently exciting and challenging to secure the best possible progress. In the best lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding well, but there is inconsistent practice across the school. Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to improve. While all pupils have targets, they are not always used to support improvements.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There have been good developments in the design of the curriculum to make it more relevant, creative and coherent. The impact on learning, however, is not yet realised. Pupils are well supported and every effort is made to promote their well-being. Where the stringent monitoring of pupils' progress shows gaps in learning, these are addressed by a comprehensive range of effective intervention strategies, which are improving the rate of progress. Pupils with considerable personal issues are well supported.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Following considerable staff changes, the senior managers have welded themselves into a team that is well focused on improving teaching and learning. As a result, the ethos of the school has become better focused on achievement. The governing body has identified its priorities, based on the needs of the school, and a regular programme of monitoring, which includes checking attendance, has been implemented. The school's plans for improvement emphasise the need to raise achievement and are rigorously monitored and evaluated. Initiatives to improve partnerships with parents and carers have not been easy, but the school's often imaginative approach is beginning to pay dividends. Safeguarding procedures are embedded, and the school actively seeks to maintain the highest possible standards in this regard. All necessary checks are carried out on staff. Risk assessments are used carefully to keep pupils safe.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children join the school with levels of attainment below those expected for their age. Children make good progress and enter Key Stage 1 with attainment that is average. Although there are inconsistencies in provision across the two classes, there is an exciting range of activities, both adult and child-initiated that meet children's needs well. A group of boys and girls were totally engrossed by a fibre optic lamp that changed colour. The experience generated amazement and good use of language. There is an effective system for assessing children's progress, well used by teachers and teaching assistants. The curriculum themes, such as space rockets, are exciting and relevant.

The leadership and management are good. The leader is well informed about how children learn, and developments are well focused on improving achievement. As a result, achievement has risen over the last three years.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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

Although the number of returns was low, most parents and carers have positive views about the school. A few have concerns, for example, regarding behaviour, while others believe that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have better support than others. The inspectors judged that the school makes satisfactory provision for its pupils overall and that it is improving the achievement of all of them. Behaviour is judged satisfactory. The recent changes in organisation have enabled the deployment of teaching assistants to provide better support for learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Croyland 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 326 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	46	26	46	3	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	63	19	32	2	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	46	26	46	3	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	48	24	41	3	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	48	26	46	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	46	27	48	0	0	2	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	46	28	51	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	41	26	48	5	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	48	24	41	3	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	40	24	42	8	15	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	39	28	50	5	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	43	26	46	3	8	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	41	27	48	3	8	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.



8 December 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Croyland Primary School, Wellingborough, NN8 2AX

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed being in your lessons, looking at your work and discussing your views about school. Yours is a satisfactory school.

We were pleased to find that you enjoy school, and feel safe there. We were impressed by your understanding of how to make good choices about your health. You are making satisfactory progress and becoming responsible members of your community. We particularly enjoyed those lessons where you were engrossed effectively in your learning and delighted to see the creative work you have displayed.

All your teachers are trying hard to make the school as good as possible. Senior staff have brought about some good improvements in the school. It is good to learn that more of your parents and carers are becoming involved in the school. We enjoyed hearing about your activities in the town, setting up a market stall, and making hanging baskets.

In order to make it even better, I have asked the school to:

- make sure you all reach standards that are as high as possible in reading, writing and mathematics
- make sure all your lessons are challenging and help you to improve your work
- make what you learn more exciting and creative
- improve the attendance for some of you.

Perhaps you can think of ways of helping them to do this, for example, everyone making a big effort to get to school every day.

Once again, thank you for a very enjoyable and rewarding visit.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper

Lead inspector

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