

Crownfield Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102295
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	355167
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Peter Sudworth

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Miller
Headteacher	Sharon Nacmias
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons taught by 10 teachers. They held meetings with two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, 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 the information used to track pupils' progress. The 114 questionnaire responses from parents and carers were analysed, as were staff responses to their own questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Why pupils' attainment in mathematics is typically not as strong as it is in reading and writing and what the school is doing to address this.
- How quickly the newly formed senior management team has settled into its role and whether the impact of its actions is beginning to show.
- Whether the school's assessment systems are leading to improvements in pupils' progress and attainment.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized infant school with nine classes. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than in most schools. The percentage of pupils designated as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. These pupils mainly have moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals is slightly higher than the national average. The school has gained several awards including Healthy Schools, Basic Skills, Activemark and Investors in People. The school manages its own breakfast club. There is a privately organised pre-school on the school site which was not part of this inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It is led and managed effectively. Pupils achieve well because the staff work cooperatively as a team to plan and share ideas, make the curriculum interesting and work very hard on the pupils' behalf. For example, they run extra lessons after school on a regular basis which helps to secure the pupils' understanding in basic skills. Consequently, the pupils make good progress in reaching broadly average attainment. They also get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents and carers are very happy with the school and are full of praise for the teachers' efforts. As one parent wrote, echoing many other comments, 'Crownfield is a lovely school, all the staff are very approachable and go that extra mile to help.' It is an extremely caring school where pupils and families are known well.

Pupils much enjoy school and get along well together, participating in the wide range of clubs that the school offers throughout the year and which extends their interests. The pupils themselves have a good understanding of healthy and safe living and undertake their various responsibilities conscientiously. They are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education. They behave well and show good attitudes to their work. Good teaching keeps the pupils interested in their learning. Good developments in the teaching of writing are apparent in pupils' growing confidence in writing stories. Their mathematics skills are not as good as their reading and writing skills because learning is not sufficiently practical enough and the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently well. The staff recognise the need to make the learning of mathematics more exciting for the pupils so they not only gain in their skills but they also enjoy this subject more. Training has commenced to secure this and good practice is beginning to be shared as a follow up to courses.

The school has a new senior management team which is focused well on further improvements. While a good variety of techniques is used to monitor the school's work, staff across the school are still having to improve their skills in observing and monitoring the school's work so that past improvements continue. Nevertheless, school self-evaluation is very accurate and the governing body provides good support and challenge to the school.

The school has a good capacity to improve further. Pupils' attainment is rising, and the staff show a ready keenness and willingness to do their best for the pupils. The governing body and members of the senior management team work well together and the whole staff have the best interests of the school at heart.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further in mathematics by:

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- devising a more practical approach to the mathematics curriculum and using learning resources more frequently
- sharing good practice across the school and training staff in new approaches to make learning mathematics more exciting for pupils
- providing a greater challenge for the more able pupils.
- Assist the staff to increase their skills in monitoring teaching and learning by:
 - coaching staff and sharing techniques
 - sharpening the analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Attainment on entry overall is well below expectations when the children first enter the Reception class. The pupils make good progress throughout the school, although attainment in basic skills at the start of Year 1 is still lower than expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is broadly average, although the pupils have consistently attained more highly in reading and writing than in mathematics. Exceptionally in 2010, results were above the national average in reading, writing, and also in mathematics, although less so. A good focus on writing through a structured programme of teaching letter sounds and blends is helping the pupils to make good improvements in their writing and in making their meaning clear. Good attention to adjectives, punctuation and story structure supports their good progress.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs because of their moderate learning difficulties also make good progress because of the individual attention that they receive, which helps to boost their confidence. Reading recovery sessions are most successful for individual pupils who have failed to make a good start to reading. The teachers do not always challenge the pupils well enough in mathematics and consequently, fewer pupils than in English reach the higher level. Pupils make good progress in science and benefit from the practical approach to learning. In a Year 2 class, pupils responded enthusiastically to a 'letter' from the lighthouse keeper in a book they had been studying by suggesting ways to mend his damaged lighthouse after completing an electric circuit.

Pupils feel very safe because they like their teachers and know that they will be listened to. They also know how to be aware of their own safety when out and about. They behave well and really enjoy their work. They try hard in their lessons and want to do their best. Pupils contribute well to the school community by proudly fulfilling various roles, such as eco warriors caring for the environment or as play leaders during break times. They regularly take part in physical activities and the wide range of clubs. They know what foods are healthy. This knowledge and participation in sport have contributed to the awards the school has obtained. Pupils join in well in the local community by singing to the older residents and they raise much money for different charities. Pupils develop good social skills, which are reinforced in the breakfast club, and learn about other cultures. The school organises exchanges with a Hindu school and pupils learn to appreciate one another's customs. Music and art contribute well to pupils' spiritual development. Attendance has improved because of the school's good efforts and is around

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the national average. Pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education. Mathematics is still lagging behind attainment in reading and writing.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Teachers create a good atmosphere for learning in which the pupils strive to do their best and feel confident to contribute. They manage the pupils well. They share the intentions of what the pupils are to learn and make clear to them what they expect to see in their finished work. This supports the pupils' efforts. Marking is good and contains a balance of praise and pointers for improvement. Teachers make good use of modern technology, enabling them, for example, to project particular things to be learned onto a large electronic screen, such as how to use a ruler for counting purposes. Pupils know their targets for improvement which are clearly set out on their tables and which they can refer to. Teachers have increased the rigour in the tracking of the pupils' progress and this has led to a greater awareness by all staff of those pupils who need specific support to accelerate their progress. Teaching assistants are deployed well and are constantly active in support of pupils or the teachers. Teachers are not as confident in teaching mathematics in an imaginative and challenging way as they are in English in which learning is often creative. Year 2 pupils engaged with much interest in their composition of a story about Little Red Riding Hood and the wolf with their roles reversed from the traditional story.

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The curriculum is balanced and meets statutory requirements, with good inclusion of practical activities. The wide range of extra-curricular activities extends the pupils' interests well with sport, music, gardening and yoga all popular with pupils. Selective use of visits, as to a farm, and visitors to school, for example theatre groups, combined with special weeks such as art week, means that the routine does not become stale and keeps the pupils' interests alive. Year 2 pupils have a video conferencing link with another local school and were seen enthusiastically sharing their stories together. Pupils enjoy their music lessons and they sing well, showing their enthusiasm. Personal, social and health education lessons contribute much to the way that pupils get along so well together.

The pupils are extremely well cared for in all aspects of their life at school, including their time in the breakfast club. The school has excellent links with other professional agencies to support pupils with specific difficulties. Staff keep a very close watch on any pupil who may be vulnerable. Home visiting and thorough induction procedures before the children begin school help the staff to gain a very good knowledge of the children and so the children settle extremely quickly. Procedures for child protection are very secure and training is undertaken regularly. The school has very close links with other schools, which assists transition between phases. Pupils know the procedures and the actions to take if they should have any worries. Parents rightly feel that their children are safe and well looked after in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is embedding ambition and driving improvement well, as seen in the rigour of the new senior management team, the improvement in results and the action and interventions that result from the very effective tracking of the pupils' progress. Continuing professional development for staff is encouraged, is increasing the staff's skills further and is reflected in the school's Investors in People status. Teaching and learning are monitored at regular intervals but it is intended to develop further the staff's skills in monitoring teaching and learning so that all staff are better equipped to analyse strengths and identify aspects of teaching and learning that require improvement. Coaching and learning from each other have developed well as part of this initiative.

The school development plan is detailed and targets the correct areas for improvement, although it does not always include numerical targets so that the school can judge the degree of success. The governing body is well organised with a good structure of committees. Statutory duties are discharged well. The governing body is both supportive and challenging. Members visit the school regularly and focus on the school development

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plan's priorities. They have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and its areas for development through their links with different classes. The breakfast club is managed well and serves a very useful purpose for those who attend.

The school has good lines of communication and enjoys the very good support of parents and carers. Partnerships with other schools and professionals foster effectively the pupils' learning and well-being. Equal opportunity is fostered well. Good systems identify achievement of different groups and target support. Effective procedures ensure a harmonious school. There is no evidence of discrimination. Safeguarding is good because this very caring school follows guidelines carefully, knows each family very well and has good links with other professionals.

The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school knows its community well, and has made effective links with local churches and beyond. The school develops the pupils' understanding of different countries and cultures well through its curriculum. Good links have been made with a different part of the country and international links established, supported by information and communication technology.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

'We have been very pleased with our child's progress.' 'We are very impressed with the way the Reception classes work together.' These parental comments are fitting and widely shared tributes to the good quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The children settle well due to the good care and welfare they receive, coupled with very good induction procedures and effective links with pre-school settings. The children demonstrate high levels of enjoyment, independence and concentration in their learning because of the good curriculum on offer and the good quality teaching. Staff encourage children to make choices for themselves from the wide range of activities available.

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Effective links with local pre-schools ensure support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in place the minute the children start school. As a result, they make immediate good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Family workshops support parents, carers and children in building very positive relationships with the school and each other.

Lessons are vibrant, full of rich, well-resourced opportunities for children to explore the world around them, as shown when staff motivated, enthused and helped children to develop their garage and repair centre. This gave children purposeful opportunities to write and to record outside. Generally, the outside environment is more appealing than that indoors. The children develop important skills in language, numeracy, information and communication technology and personal development as they cooperate with each other. Staff model and reinforce language very well, which is particularly beneficial to those children with speech and language difficulties or who are at an early stage of learning English.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, with rigorous self-evaluation driving improvements. The children make good progress and many reach the expected goals in their personal and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have a very good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 larger than usual proportion of parents and carers responded. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive in their views of the school. They praise the hard work of the staff in a school which they correctly report runs very smoothly and is well organised. They praise the excellent care taken of their children and rightly feel that their children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents and carers report that the school cares for the whole family and individuals report how the school has given them strength through difficult times. They also rightly feel that the school gives the pupils lots of experiences. These widen the pupils' horizons. There are occasional comments which are less positive but there is no specific theme to these. Individual parents and carers comment that sometimes the reading books are too easy or not changed regularly enough. The inspection team did not find evidence to support these very few individual views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crownfield Infant 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 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 248 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	68	33	29	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	74	65	37	32	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	55	46	40	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	53	51	45	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	70	61	41	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	54	48	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	50	53	46	2	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)	51	45	51	45	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	57	50	51	45	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	48	51	45	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	41	54	47	5	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	63	55	48	42	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	80	70	32	28	0	0	0	0

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



29 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crownfield Infant School, Romford, RM7 8JB

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed the time that we shared with you. You attend a good school where the teachers take excellent care of you. You behave well and enjoy your work. You make good progress. We were very impressed with the way that you undertake your jobs around the school, such as when you are eco warriors and play leaders. You all get along so well together and make good friends. The teachers work very hard to make school interesting for you. Your parents and carers are glad that you attend Crownfield Infant School and say lots of nice things about the school and the staff. We were very interested to see the Year 2 pupils sharing their stories with the pupils from another school through a video link.

We have two things to suggest to make the school even better. The first is to help you to do even better in your mathematics work, because several of you do not do as well in mathematics as you do in reading and writing. The other is to help the teachers to keep an eye on all that is done in the school so that the school continues to improve. You can help in this by always doing your best and working as hard as you can.

Thank you once again for your help and talking to us about what you do.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth

Lead inspector

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