

# Croftlands Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112198
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	357062
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Sharkey

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Glenn Rhodes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss C Styles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Oakwood Drive Ulverston Cumbria LA12 9JU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed seven teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, pupils, parents and carers, representatives of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed pupils' work and looked at the school's system for tracking pupils' progress, safeguarding documents and key policies. Inspection questionnaires from 97 parents and carers, 18 school staff and 102 pupils were also taken into account.

- Strategies the school has in place to raise attainment in English, particularly writing, and how successful these have been.
- How the school makes use of assessment to support pupils' learning.
- Whether monitoring is rigorous enough and how the school uses this to raise attainment and improve provision.
- Whether teaching is challenging enough for pupils to make the best progress possible.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than that usually found. There have been significant changes in staffing over the last year and a new headteacher took up post in September 2009. The school has Healthy School status and also the Activemark for its work in sport.

**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

Croftlands Junior School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It gives satisfactory value for money. Parents comment on the very good support given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities saying, 'The school has a wonderful, caring atmosphere and is inclusive.' The promotion of healthy living is good. Pupils know how to eat healthily and appreciate the many opportunities to take part in fitness activities during lessons, after school and with a range of partners. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and they say that, occasionally, others can disturb them in lessons. Around the school, they are orderly and show politeness towards others.

Pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics. However, this is not consistently evident in their daily work, especially in writing, and particularly for the more able pupils, who are not challenged consistently enough. Expectations of pupils' handwriting are not always high enough and their written work does not always demonstrate the range of skills they have learnt. In most writing, pupils do not reach national standards and this is why progress overall is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who benefit from extra support and amended tasks that meet their needs well, make good progress.

Teaching is monitored regularly but remains satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, pupils are engaged, teachers' expectations are high and discussions are lively. There are occasions when lessons lack pace and pupils become disengaged. Teachers sometimes give pupils too much information, rather than allowing time for them to work independently and seek their own answers. Targets and assessments are not always used consistently during lessons to ensure that activities match pupils' needs, in order to help them improve their work. The curriculum is appropriately planned but changes are being made in order to motivate pupils more, engage their interest and inspire their eagerness to learn. It is enhanced by additional activities and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential experience. These activities help to raise pupils' awareness of different people's needs and life experiences and provide sound preparation for their future.

Improvements since the previous inspection and the school's accurate evaluation of its own performance enable leaders to plan effectively for further improvement. The headteacher has put in place a number of systems to raise standards, particularly in English, including a well-informed school development plan, with detail for monitoring and evaluation. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

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.

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

- Raise standards and improve progress in writing by:
  - ensuring that more-able pupils are consistently challenged
  - ensuring that there are always high expectations of pupils' handwriting.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better across the school by:
  - ensuring lessons are always delivered at a brisk pace in order to capture pupils' enthusiasm
  - providing less teacher-direction, to enable pupils to become more independent in their learning
  - providing more consistency in the use of targets and assessment during lessons to ensure tasks always match pupils' abilities and to give them more advice on how they can improve their work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils enjoy learning and they talk excitedly about going out into the community, talking with members of the council and singing in the town's public hall. The school has a focus on improving writing and during a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were eager to respond to the teacher's questions. They used dictionaries and a thesaurus to improve and extend their vocabulary and, whilst working in groups, they each carried out roles that challenged their thinking. For example, one pupil was responsible for the inclusion of 'wow!' words and enjoyed the importance of his task. In another Year 5 and 6 class, pupils had been investigating the loss of a cat. Following this detective work they worked in pairs to report the news of the lost cat on film. They talked confidently picking out the headlines and the key words. This was followed by support from the class who spontaneously applauded the newsreaders.

Pupils generally enter the school with broadly average standards. Even though attainment in English and mathematics is above average at the end of Year 6, pupils' progress is inconsistent across classes and only accelerates in Years 5 and 6. As a result, pupils' progress, learning and achievement are satisfactory overall, rather than good. There is a variation in the rate of pupils' learning. Although standards are above average in English and mathematics, the more able pupils are not consistently challenged in writing and, as result, attainment in writing has been below average for the last two years. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because well-focused support for them is readily available.

Pupils say they feel safe and secure. They are keen to talk about how adults in school make sure they are safe and the importance of safe practices when using the internet. Pupils are developing a good awareness of the importance of being healthy. They talk about what they have learnt in science, the importance of looking after their bodies and how they enjoy the weekly healthy eating club, especially the times when they can take home the meal they have made. Pupils participate effectively in the school council and are pleased that they have helped to improve playtimes by suggesting the need for different equipment to improve the range of activities available for everyone.

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

*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>	2
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>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</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>3</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?

Notable strengths in teaching include the good relationships in all classes and well-prepared resources that help lessons run smoothly. Good teaching, as seen during the inspection, shows that activities are well planned and questioning of pupils challenges their thinking. However, there are occasions when too much information is given to pupils so that they have little opportunity to carry out independent learning. The quality of pupils' handwriting varies and the expectations of teachers are not high enough to ensure that it is always of a good standard. In some lessons, the pace of learning is slow because there is too little difference between teachers' expectations of the most and the least able pupils and work is not closely matched to their needs. As a result, pupils sometimes lose enthusiasm. The extent to which teachers use targets and assessment during lessons to make sure that work is always appropriate for each pupil varies across the school, so that pupils do not always know how to improve their work. Well-trained teaching assistants make a positive contribution to the learning of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities who make good progress as a result.

The school is currently making changes to the curriculum to make learning more exciting and to ensure that pupils' own interests are taken into consideration. The curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. For example, a good range of well-attended sports clubs is available to pupils. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning

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experiences and links with other schools and the community extend the range of activities. Provision for art and music is good and the school makes good use of high quality art work by displaying it around the school for all to see.

Pastoral care is good. The school provides good support for pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable and staff make good use of external help to enhance learning. Pupils' attendance is average and the school has a number of well-founded strategies in place to encourage pupils to come to school regularly. For example, punctuality has been a problem for some pupils, so the school has changed the daily timetable to make pupils more aware of the importance of arriving on time. This has been successful.

*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?

The school is now settled after changes in both staffing and the leadership team. The headteacher is embedding ambition and drive throughout all areas of the school. Together with the two assistant headteachers, she is initiating new procedures to improve provision, raise standards and improve pupils' progress. Roles and responsibilities are clearly understood, with the result that the expertise of teaching assistants, as well as teachers is now effectively utilised, especially in the support of vulnerable pupils. Pupils' work and progress are checked efficiently and underachievement identified so that additional support is put in place. However, this does not always ensure that the more able pupils make good progress, particularly in writing.

Members of the governing body challenge school leaders appropriately and are aware that pupils' attainment and achievement are a high priority. They ensure child protection and safeguarding procedures meet requirements. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory: it has a positive impact within the school and links with the local community are strengthening. The promotion of equality of opportunity for all is satisfactory and the school has effective systems in place for tackling any form of discrimination. The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory. The school is pleased that links are improving and parents and carers are taking opportunities to come into school to talk about their children or see their children performing, in assemblies, for example.

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*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>3</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>

## Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are pleased with their children's progress. Some parents and carers took time to add comments to the questionnaire they returned, many to reinforce their positive views. A small minority of parents and carers raised concerns and these were looked into during the inspection. A few parents and carers raised some concern about how they are informed of their children's progress and the handling of behaviour in school. The inspectors investigated these during the course of the inspection and found that recent changes have been made. Parents now have the opportunity to talk with staff at private appointments each October and March. This includes late-night sessions, as well as a written report in the summer term. Staff comment that parents and carers are welcome to talk with staff informally. Inspectors judge behaviour to be satisfactory and believe that any unacceptable behaviour is managed by staff effectively. When appropriate, pupils are given sanctions and the school says they talk with parents and carers in cases of persistent misbehaviour.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Croftlands Junior 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 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 152 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	48	47	48	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	53	44	45	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	37	53	55	6	6	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	37	53	55	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	43	49	51	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	33	54	56	7	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	37	57	59	3	3	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)	35	36	50	52	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	37	56	58	4	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	26	54	56	9	9	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	32	55	57	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	41	42	49	51	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	49	44	45	3	3	2	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	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](http://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"><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.**



10 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Croftlands Junior School, Ulverston, LA12 9JU**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn in lessons. We were pleased with how well you understand the importance of keeping healthy. Your healthy eating club sounds great; you must take home some tasty meals!

We think your behaviour is satisfactory and we congratulate you for raising money for various charities. Overall, we find that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and have suggested that in lessons teachers challenge you more, so that you can achieve higher levels, particularly in your writing.

I have asked the school to do some other things to help make it better. The second thing is to make sure that you always do your very best handwriting when you are writing. Thirdly, I have asked your teachers to keep the lessons going quickly so that this will help to keep you keen and excited. Teachers are good at giving you all kinds of information in lessons but we have suggested that they do not tell you too much so that you can have more opportunities to find out answers for yourselves in lots of different ways. Finally, I have suggested that teachers use your English and mathematics targets, as well as questions during lessons, to make sure that the work they give you is always suitable for you and that you know how to improve.

I am really pleased that you said that you enjoy coming to school. Please remember always to do your best and to help your teachers. Thank you for helping me during the inspection.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Sharkey

Lead Inspector

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