

# Croftway Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122255
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	360798
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Carol Gater

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	489
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Dave Grey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Charles Ellis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	William Street Blyth Northumberland NE24 2HP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 353258
<b>Fax number</b>	01670 797531
<b>Email address</b>	2398admin@northumberland.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 18 lessons and observed sixteen teachers. Discussions were held with staff, parents, carers, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. Inspectors also looked at a range of documentation, including safeguarding policies, assessment data, monitoring records and pupils' work. They analysed 95 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- The impact of the school's actions to raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly that of boys.
- The quality of teaching and learning and how effectively teachers plan activities that match pupils' abilities.
- The way in which the school uses support programmes to improve the rate of pupils' progress.

## Information about the school

Since the time of the previous inspection the school has changed its status. Under Northumberland County Council's reorganisation of educational provision, it opened as a primary school in September 2009. There is an additional building to cope with the increased number of pupils on roll. A number of new teachers and support staff have been appointed and a significant number of pupils have joined since the beginning of the reorganisation.

Croftway is much larger than the average sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There has been an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and this is well above average.

The school runs a daily breakfast club.

The school has many awards, including Eco Bronze, Healthy School status, Active Mark and Investors in People.

**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

Croftway Primary is a good school that provides outstanding care and support for all its pupils. The headteacher's commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where pupils can achieve their best is shared by all staff and governors. Parents and carers hold the headteacher in high regard and comment that their children 'thrive' in this 'fantastic primary school' where 'pastoral care is exemplary'. The school is exceptionally successful in its communication with parents and carers. 'We are as much a part of the school as our children are' is a comment that reflects the views of many. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that the school keeps their children safe.

There are many opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe and they have an excellent understanding of this. They know that if they have any worries, there are trusted adults who will listen to them. An outstanding feature of pupils' personal development is the positive contribution they make to the school and the wider community. The school council has been involved with the Friends of the School in the planning of playground markings and an impressive willow structure. This has improved the environment. Pupils enjoy school and say that teachers make learning 'fun', through interesting topics such as the Italian project and Blyth's fishing heritage. Because of good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching, they make good progress from their relative starting points. When this happens, time in lessons is used effectively and activities are well matched to all levels of ability. In a few lessons, however, this practice is not consistent and progress slows. Provision for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities is highly effective. Well-trained teaching assistants and support staff expertly deliver programmes that result in pupils making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.

The deputy headteacher works in close partnership with the headteacher and has been instrumental in setting up effective systems to analyse pupils' progress. Accurate evaluation is undertaken by leaders and governors. Actions taken have resulted in improved attainment in reading, particularly for boys. The school is now well placed to adopt the best practice from successful initiatives to further accelerate progress in mathematics. Issues from the last inspection have been fully tackled. The governing body has grown in strength and the range of its expertise is used to both support and challenge the school. As such, the school represents good value for money and has a good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics by:

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- ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better in that teachers plan activities that are well-matched to the next steps in pupils' learning
- using time more effectively to increase the pace of learning in lessons
- closely evaluating the impact of support programmes and using the best practice across the school to further accelerate progress.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy the challenges and problem-solving activities set in lessons. Younger pupils are engrossed in calculating the effect of price increases in a local supermarket, while older, more-able pupils diligently take on the roles of business people, costing the tiles required for their original designs. They work cooperatively and listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. Pupils take a pride in their work; handwriting and presentation have improved.

When children start nursery their skills are often well below those typical for their age, especially in social, language and number development. Because of good teaching and high quality support that is targeted to the needs of individuals, all groups make good progress. A number of pupils, in particular those with special needs and/or disabilities, have small group or one-to-one teaching which enables them to make good or better progress from their starting points. Current data and the work in books indicate that Year 6 will reach levels of attainment in line with the national average. This is a good achievement for the school, as a high percentage of pupils joined the school after Year 2.

All pupils settle well in the school's very positive, safe environment where relationships are good; they behave well and treat each other with respect. They are keen to take on responsibilities and act as excellent role models. There are many examples of ways in which older pupils support those younger than themselves, such as PALs, young leaders and reading buddies. In assemblies, children in reception feel secure because each one is seated next to a Year 6 pupil. Pupils have a good awareness of keeping healthy and many participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities such as dance, football and netball. Their involvement in cookery sessions and in running the school's kitchen garden gives them a good knowledge of healthy food.

The school council takes its role very seriously. There are regular meetings, presentations to the governing body and contributions to newsletters to parents and carers. Pupils apply for posts of responsibility within the school and undergo interviews. Their technology skills are excellent, as seen in their making of a film that explores other cultures and faiths. Throughout school, pupils gain self-esteem and interact confidently with different groups of people. They are sensitive to those less fortunate than themselves and have raised money to support various charities. Alongside their punctuality and improved attendance, these skills prepare them well for the future.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</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 high expectations of pupils. They provide clear explanations, so pupils settle quickly to group or independent work. Skilful questioning extends pupils' thinking and reasoning. Resources, including the use of interactive whiteboards, are effectively used to engage pupils' interest. In one lesson, the creative use of materials to depict the setting for a myth fired pupils' imagination, making all of them eager to write. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils can do to set targets for the next steps in their learning. Generally, they use this information to plan appropriate tasks to challenge all pupils. In a few lessons, tasks are not well matched and progress slows. Teachers work very closely with teaching assistants who have developed a wealth of expertise to support different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A range of programmes are timetabled to provide support and good use is made of all available space in the school. Breakfast club not only offers a time for social interaction, but also provides opportunities for individual pupils to receive extra tuition in reading and mathematics. Links are made between subjects to make learning more meaningful. The curriculum is further enriched through sports partnerships, extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. It has a positive impact on pupils' personal development.

Outstanding quality of care and support for all pupils is at the heart of the school. Staff know their pupils extremely well and are quick to identify any barriers to learning. The

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school makes it a priority to provide support for vulnerable pupils and their families and works closely with external agencies to achieve this. There are also experts on site who sensitively handle pupils' worries or concerns. Attendance has improved as a result of the inclusion mentor's good relationships with parents and carers. Pupils are well supported as they move to different year groups. Induction procedures for new starters are excellent. A pupil, who joined later than the Reception class, comments, 'I feel like I have always been here!'

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has created a positive ethos, based on valuing all individuals. As a result, school leaders, all staff and the governing body are passionate in their drive for continued school improvement. The governing body regularly works with school leaders and shares an accurate and honest evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development. It is very effective in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are robust. Everything possible is done to provide exemplary care for all pupils and the school is successful in promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. Excellent communication with parents and carers and good links with other agencies enhance pupils' learning and personal development. This is particularly so in the case of vulnerable pupils and their families. A national programme that supports pupils' emotional well-being is successfully run and is seen as being integral to the school's philosophy.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work in close partnership. They responded quickly when the school's status changed and deployed staff to minimise any disruption to pupils' learning. Their careful analysis of data informs actions. Well-targeted support programmes are impacting on the progress that pupils make in reading and are beginning to do so in mathematics. Leaders have identified the need to further evaluate these programmes and adopt the best practice throughout the school. The monitoring of teaching is thorough and is closely linked to training and development; the headteacher actively encourages the professional development of all staff. The school is a very cohesive, family community and there are strong links with the local community. Through their studies, pupils have a good awareness of other cultures, both in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

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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>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter nursery with skills that are lower than those typical for their age. Because of good teaching children make good progress, although their skills at the start of Year 1 are still below average.

Children settle well into the warm, friendly environment and thrive because of their teachers' high expectations. They quickly learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They excitedly join in a very lively 'wake up, shake up' morning session, as do all staff! At the end, they all proudly feel the increase in their heartbeats. There is a good focus on the development of children's social skills which results in even the youngest children knowing how to take turns and listen to each other. The whole team approach to planning and the organisation of the unit, ensure that children access exciting activities both indoors and outside. Planning is linked to a theme but also takes account of children's own interests. There are focused adult-led sessions in which adults effectively model language and use questions to extend children's vocabulary at every opportunity. Alongside these, children develop independent learning skills by confidently choosing their own activities.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong and is securely based on an excellent knowledge of how children develop. Both leaders have created a dedicated team that is committed to giving children the very best start to their education. They have developed a range of assessments that inform planning. As a result, more focused work on language and number is beginning to accelerate progress in these areas. Excellent care is provided for all. Attention to safeguarding is good and all welfare requirements are met. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective adult support so that they are able to access the full curriculum. Because of this, they often make outstanding progress in their personal development. Parents and carers comment on 'the brilliant Early Years team' and value the way they are involved in their children's learning.

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They attend courses run by the staff and enjoy contributing to the learning journals that record their children's achievements.

*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

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school. All respondents agree that teaching is good. Almost all say that their children enjoy school and they feel that it keeps them safe. A very small minority felt that the school does not prepare their children sufficiently well for the next stage in their education. Parents and carers whom inspectors spoke to during the inspection did not voice this concern. There were many additional positive comments such as 'I like the way they encourage parental involvement' and the school is 'like a big family'.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Croftway 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 489 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	67	29	31	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	73	77	21	22	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	59	62	35	37	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	56	59	33	35	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	64	67	30	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	66	29	31	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	60	37	39	1	1	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)	48	51	38	40	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	55	39	41	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	47	47	49	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	49	43	45	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	64	67	26	27	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	69	27	28	2	2	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](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.**



11 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Croftway Primary School, Blyth, NE24 2HP**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and appreciated the information you gave us.

You go to a good school that provides excellent care and supports you in your learning. We were very impressed with how much you knew about keeping safe and healthy. Many of you take advantage of after school activities such as football, netball and dance. We think an outstanding feature is the way in which you value your school. You willingly apply for important positions, taking on responsibilities such as members of the school council, PALs, reading buddies and young leaders. Older pupils act as good role models and support the very young children in assembly. By raising money for different charities, you show how much you care for those less fortunate than yourselves.

You enjoy your lessons and say that your teachers make learning 'fun'. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding and this helps you to make good progress. We have asked your headteacher and deputy headteacher to help you to reach higher standards in mathematics by ensuring that all lessons are consistently good or better. We have also asked them to evaluate the support programmes to see which ones are the most effective and can be offered to more pupils.

You can help by continuing to work hard on your targets in all your lessons.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Carol Gater

Lead inspector

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