

Crofton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116498
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357987
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	James Sage HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1080
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Hardy
Headteacher	Matthew Leeming
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. During the inspection, the team saw 42 teachers and observed teaching and learning in 47 parts of lessons; during these observations, inspectors looked at samples of students' work and discussed these with them. Three meetings were held with different groups of students and discussions took place with a wide range of senior and middle leaders and with three members of the governing body, including the chair. A number of teachers took the opportunity to discuss aspects of the school with the inspection team. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the systems for tracking and monitoring students' progress along with the self-evaluation and improvement plan. Questionnaires from 502 parents and carers were also analysed, in addition to 99 from students and 50 from staff.

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

- Why is students' attainment high when the school judges their overall progress to be satisfactory?
- How effectively do teachers use assessment data to ensure that students' learning and progress in lessons are at least good?
- How well is students' achievement monitored to ensure they make at least good progress?
- How effective is subject leadership?

Information about the school

Crofton School is a larger than average school serving the village of Stubbington on the outskirts of Fareham, although a significant minority of students come from further afield. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. Most students are White British and there are very few students who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the national average, but the proportion with statements is very low. The school was awarded specialist status in science in 2005. In addition it has Enhanced Healthy School Status and the Investor in People award. Specialist provision for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) opened in September 2010, although the purpose-built accommodation will not be ready until the end of December 2010.

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 and improving school. Students enter the school with above average attainment and make good progress so that overall attainment at the end of Year 11 is high. Teaching, learning and progress were good or better in three quarters of the lessons observed, outstanding in one in five and satisfactory in about one in four. Students' overall progress is monitored frequently and systematically; a range of interventions is used to tackle potential underachievement swiftly and effectively. Senior leaders routinely monitor the quality of teaching and have an accurate view of where improvement is required. This is significantly enhanced by involving students from all year groups in evaluating the quality of their learning.

All other outcomes for students are at least good and the extent to which students feel safe in the school and their behaviour are outstanding. Together with their outstanding achievement, this means that outcomes are outstanding overall. Students enjoy coming to the school and make the most of the good range of artistic, sporting and other activities the school provides and achieve well in them, although they are self-critical about how well they adopt healthy lifestyles. Students also participate well in experiences arising from the school's science specialism. Students' understanding of social and moral issues is very strong, contributes highly to the extremely positive ethos in the school and is demonstrated through their outstanding behaviour. Their spiritual and cultural development is less well developed. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory; it is weakest in promoting an understanding of religious and ethnic diversity in the national context that would enhance students' cultural understanding.

All aspects of care, guidance and support are good. Students from the specialist ASD unit are integrated well into the main school. Significant improvements in attendance, so that it is now high, and students' outstanding behaviour indicate the effectiveness of the support for all students. Heads of year have a key role in academic monitoring and mentoring, and this has contributed to raising achievement. The school's engagement with parents and carers to support students' achievement and well-being is outstanding. Parents' and carers' involvement and commitment to the school is shown clearly through the very high number of questionnaires returned and the large number of positive comments made.

The good curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure that it meets students' needs and aspirations well and contributes fully to their achievement. It prepares students well for post-16 courses and beyond for higher education. Partnerships with other schools and colleges are used well to provide good breadth and to match the provision well to particular needs. Students are very enthusiastic about the cross-curricular work in Year 7; this is a good example of effective collaboration across a range of subjects and the impact of specialist status.

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The school has good capacity for sustained improvement. The school's self-evaluation uses rigorous analysis of data and other evidence to support accurate judgements. Senior leaders and governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and key priorities for improvement are identified clearly; for example, the very good professional development programme matches exactly the weaker aspects of teaching identified by the inspection. Rigorous systems for monitoring students' progress are well established. These provide middle and senior leaders with precise information that is used well to identify and implement effective interventions to improve students' achievement and the quality of provision. The governing body also uses the analysis of data well to hold senior leaders to account. Middle leaders generally have a clear understanding of what is required to continue to improve teaching and students' achievement but variations in outcomes and in the quality of provision within and between subjects show that there is some inconsistency in this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise achievement further, increase the proportion of lessons where students' learning and progress are good or better to at least 90%, and those where it is outstanding to at least 30%, by July 2011, through:
 - ensuring that all lesson planning identifies clearly the steps in learning that students are expected to progress through
 - making better use of assessment information to ensure that teaching provides higher levels of challenge for all students
 - ensuring that whole-class teaching and questioning fully engage all students and provide them with opportunities to discuss the work and their own ideas.
- Make effective use of the high quality middle leadership in the school to ensure that all is at this level.
- Develop the national dimension of community cohesion to ensure that students have a deeper understanding of the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students' attainment has been sustained at a high level for some years and is being maintained at this level despite a slight drop in attainment on entry. Students' overall progress has improved and is now good in the large majority, and outstanding in around one in five lessons. Achievement is now outstanding overall. In previous years, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities have made better progress than other students; their good progress has been maintained. Students enjoy many of their lessons and contribute enthusiastically.

The school has given much attention to improving attendance and reducing persistent absence; attendance is now high and students are very positive about coming to school. They move promptly between lessons with a very good sense of purpose. Behaviour in lessons and around the school at lesson changeovers and at break and lunchtime is outstanding. Students support each other extremely well and the school feels very friendly and welcoming. The small number of incidents of inattention and chatter in lessons are

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often the result of teaching that fails to fully involve students rather than inherent poor behaviour.

Students' understanding of how to keep themselves safe is outstanding. In practical lessons they rarely need reminding about safe working practices; they are very well informed about e-safety and talk with great authority about personal safety in a range of situations. They also have a very well-developed sense of the safety of others. The care shown for the well-being of others in physical education lessons is exemplary. Students have a well-developed understanding of healthy eating, the need for exercise and the dangers of drugs and smoking, although they are yet to become 'ambassadors for health'. They also fully involve themselves in the life of the school and many in the wider community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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?

While teaching is good or better in the large majority of lessons and outstanding in one in five, it is satisfactory in around one in four. Good lessons clearly identify the expected steps in learning for students, use an interesting variety of activities and have good pace. Students are fully involved through high quality questioning and well-targeted support by teachers, and where appropriate, by teaching assistants. Prior attainment is used well in planning and in interventions to ensure good progress. Students are confident that improvements in teaching and their enjoyment of many lessons contribute to the school

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being, in their words, 'a very happy place' and to their outstanding behaviour in lessons and around the school. In weaker lessons, the expected steps in learning are not clear, students are not provided with clear feedback on their progress and they are unsure of their next steps. These lessons are often too dominated by the teacher; students have few opportunities to discuss the work and contribute their own ideas, and individuals are not challenged sufficiently to ensure they make good progress.

Most students have very clear ideas about what they want to do when they leave the school and many aspire to higher education; the curriculum meets these aspirations well. The school regularly monitors the effectiveness of the curriculum against students' needs and achievement and this has led to offering a broader range of options in Key Stage 4. Very good use is made of partnerships to match these as closely as possible to students' needs. Schemes of work are being developed well in some, but not all, subjects to have much more focus on developing steps in learning rather than just coverage of topics; this provides teachers with good support in planning sequences of lessons to ensure students make good progress.

The school cares very well for its students and provides them with good guidance and support. The counselling support provided by older students and the work of the Year 9 'transition prefects' is highly valued by younger students. A comprehensive network of interrelated pastoral and academic support ensures that all aspects of students' well-being are taken care of well. Students receive good advice and guidance on their future education and careers.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a sustained trend of improvement in the key outcomes for students and in the provision since the school's last inspection; this demonstrates that senior leaders and the governing body are effective in driving and securing improvement. Very challenging targets, based on the rigorous self-evaluation of all aspects of the school's work, are set and clear plans show how these are to be achieved. Extremely thorough systems are used to monitor progress against these targets, not least frequent monitoring of students' achievement and systematic reviews of the quality of teaching. These enable senior and many middle leaders to make timely and effective interventions. The involvement of a group of students in evaluating the quality of teaching and the curriculum is a very positive development; their judgements are accurate and perceptive and taken seriously by senior leaders.

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Each senior leader's oversight of particular curriculum areas and year groups ensures that all aspects of students' personal and academic development are monitored carefully. However, there is some inconsistency in students' learning, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of monitoring both across and within subjects. A minority of middle leaders are not performing to the high level of the best. Senior leaders are supported well by the governing body. It holds the leaders to account while providing them with good support.

The school has developed a wide range of effective partnerships to support the curriculum and students' achievement and welfare, to broaden community involvement and to provide students with experiences to improve their future life chances. All safeguarding requirements are met, although some governors lack a comprehensive understanding all issues. The school has adopted good, and in some aspects exemplary, procedures across all areas of its work as shown by the extent to which students feel safe in the school.

The school is very careful to look after all students as well as it can. Their well-being, as well as their achievement, is monitored closely. The school is assiduous in collecting data and information to do this. It also keeps a close eye on specific groups, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In this way the promotion of equality of opportunity is done well. However, data, for example about internal exclusions, are not routinely analysed to ensure specific groups are not over- and under-represented.

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	1
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The number of parent and carer questionnaires returned is very high. The very large majority of parents are extremely supportive of the school. A particularly high proportion of parents and carers feel that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe. This is in line with the judgements of the inspection team.

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Some parents feel that their children do not make enough progress, and teaching could be improved, in some subjects. The view of inspectors is that while teaching is good overall, around one in four lessons is satisfactory. This matches the views of parents and carers.

About one in ten parents and carers feel that the school could keep them better informed about their children's progress and take more account of their views. The school has worked really hard on this and the inspection team judges that the engagement with parents and carers is now outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crofton 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 502 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1080 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	151	30	318	63	29	6	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	179	36	309	61	14	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	129	26	307	61	51	10	5	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	133	26	293	58	57	11	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	114	23	315	63	51	10	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	109	22	301	60	68	14	5	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	85	17	322	64	72	14	3	1
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)	134	27	303	60	35	7	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	131	26	301	60	45	9	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	117	23	289	58	59	12	8	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	91	18	302	60	63	13	6	2
The school is led and managed effectively	167	33	277	55	40	8	4	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	180	36	271	54	39	8	6	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.



19 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Crofton School, Stubbington, Fareham PO14 2AT

Following our visit to your school, I would like to thank you for your very friendly welcome and for taking the time to talk to us. You told us that you enjoy being at school and that you feel very safe. We were highly impressed by your behaviour in lessons and around the school, and by your politeness and how willingly you talked to us. We judged the school to be improving and good overall. These are the strengths in the school.

- The school cares well for all of you.
- You make good progress and your achievement is outstanding.
- The school carries out frequent checks on your progress and keeps you well informed.
- You are fully involved in the life of the school and participate highly in the many activities it provides for you.
- Your attendance is very good and you are punctual to lessons.
- The good curriculum meets your needs and aspirations well.

Much of the teaching is good and some is outstanding, but about one in four lessons is satisfactory and you make less progress in these lessons. We have asked the school to make even more lessons at least good by making sure that all of you are fully involved in the lesson, are clear about what you are expected to do and learn, and have work that is challenging and helps you to make as much progress as you can. We have also asked the school to make sure that you have a better understanding of the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of the United Kingdom.

The leaders in your school have a clear understanding of what it needs to do to continue to improve. They have your best interests at heart and will do all that they can to continue to make the school an even better place for you to learn. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

James Sage Her Majesty's Inspector

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