

# Cranborne Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117369
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358127
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graham Preston

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>	440
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Goldfinch
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alan Charles Cocker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Laurel Fields Potters Bar EN6 2BA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 15 teachers in 21 lessons. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, as well as 149 questionnaires from parents and carers and 101 pupils' questionnaires.

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

- To what extent does school data and other evidence indicate that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress, particularly in their writing?
- How successful is school provision in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making sufficient progress?
- How effective are school strategies in reducing inconsistencies in teaching and learning?
- How well has the school coped with the considerable influx of new pupils and staff changes, and addressed the need to strengthen and develop leadership and management across the school?

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than the average sized primary school that has had to absorb a large number of pupils from a nearby school closed as part of local reorganisation. A large majority of pupils are White British, with a growing proportion of pupils from other backgrounds. The percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has experienced significant change in its school leadership team and an increasing number of teaching and support staff. As part of its extended school provision the school runs a breakfast club and provides facilities for a privately run after-school club, which is separately inspected. Much expanded nursery and reception class accommodation is nearing completion. The school has Healthy Schools status.

**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

Cranborne is a satisfactory school. It has coped effectively in maintaining standards and provision in spite of a large increase in pupils from another school and considerable changes in staffing. Throughout this challenging period, the headteacher has demonstrated good leadership and, with the support of a now more active governing body, is enabling the school to improve its provision.

During their time in the school, pupils make satisfactory progress to reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave. Most pupils reach their expected targets and improved school tracking and support is improving the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in the upper years. A specific focus on supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is now enabling them to achieve as well as others.

Despite the increased size and activity of a large and busy school, parents are very confident that their children are safe. Pupils like coming to school, and this is reflected in their improved and now above-average attendance. They behave well in lessons and around the school and cooperate and help each other in classwork. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive relationships with their teachers. They feel well-supported in their learning but are not always clear about their rate of progress. The school council is active and the school regularly involves pupils in making decisions about the school environment and their learning. Pupils are confident and take responsibility, for example, as playground monitors. They initiate activities, including organising charity events, building a float for the local carnival and having a street party for the recent royal wedding. Readiness to celebrate the growing cultural and religious diversity of the school, as well as opportunities for reflection and discussion in assemblies and lessons, all ensure pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good.

Teachers and support staff have positive relationships with pupils and work hard to involve them and engage their interest. Most lessons make good use of information and communication technology for presentations, although these are sometimes overlong, reducing time for follow-up learning activities. Teaching is satisfactory, but not enough lessons reflect the best practice in the school of having clear learning outcomes linked to pupils' targets with varied levels of challenge to match the different abilities. There is developing good practice in assessing pupils' work and linking it to the now good systems for tracking pupils' progress but this has not been developed fully across the school. The school has begun to develop a curriculum that underpins pupils' numeracy and literacy and stimulates pupils' creativity. Extra-curricular provision is strong, especially in music and sports, helped by its use of specialist support from the local community, including the sports partnership with other schools. The good quality of care, guidance and support provided is valued by many parents and carers and has been important in helping to integrate the many pupils who have joined the school in recent years. Committed staff

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work closely with colleagues and outside support agencies to successfully support potentially vulnerable pupils. This work is now having a positive impact on the progress of pupils with specific learning and other needs, including those learning English as an additional language.

Despite recent challenges and staff changes, morale is high in the school and there is a shared commitment to improvement. The governing body is now much more actively involved in the life of the school and participates fully in monitoring and evaluating school practice. Working with the headteacher, it has an accurate and realistic picture of the school's strengths and those areas needing improvement. Together, they have responded to both the loss of some senior leaders and the increasing size of the school by strengthening leadership and management at all levels. This remains 'work in progress', however, with some staff still developing their understanding and skills. Progress made so far demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement and includes detailed tracking of pupils' progress, raised attainment, and the new and much improved accommodation and facilities for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Ensure teaching is consistently good or better by:
  - providing sufficient levels of challenge in learning activities to meet the needs of all pupils
  - enabling a better balance of teacher-led, whole-class work and individual and group learning activities within each lesson
  - improving marking so that it shows pupils how to improve in terms of the National Curriculum levels the school uses to track pupils' progress.
- Strengthen leadership and management across the school by:
  - establishing clearer lines of accountability
  - providing relevant training and development, particularly in terms of monitoring, evaluation and policy implementation.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Standards have been sustained since the last inspection. In some year groups, attainment in mathematics and reading is above average. Writing is not as strong, but initiatives to raise attainment in writing are reducing the difference. Pupils' progress overall is satisfactory, but there is some variation between classes that reflect unevenness in the quality of teaching and learning. When provision is strong, pupils make exceptional progress in their learning and this was evident in both Year 6 classes. In a poetry lesson, pupils demonstrated considerable perception in their analyses of different poems as well as an understanding of different language devices such as alliteration, simile and metaphor, planned to be used writing their own poetry. In a mathematics lesson on decimals and percentages, pupils showed exceptional confidence in choosing and successfully completing the higher level problems. A Year 1 lesson planning for a scientific

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investigation illustrated effective learning by all pupils because the learning purpose was clear and related well to science targets. It provided considerable opportunity for active learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities who, with effective learning support, were fully involved in the session. The school has successfully focused on ensuring that pupils with additional learning needs make similar rates of progress as others. Its detailed analysis similarly shows that pupils learning English as an additional language make at least satisfactory and, on occasion, good progress. All pupils surveyed said they enjoy coming to school and endeavour to adopt healthy lifestyles. The improvement in physical education provision and sports enables high participation levels in after-school sports and physical activities. Pupils behave well and appreciate opportunities to be involved in varied activities. The school council is very active in raising funds for charity and promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils are involved in the local community and show considerable initiative and independence in organising fundraising events.

*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>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</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>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>	2
<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?**

School efforts to establish shared best practice are having some effect but there remains considerable variation in the quality of teaching. Planning is often detailed, with an overall learning outcome. Teachers make learning interesting for the pupils through the good use of interactive whiteboards and learning games. However, some of the whole-class

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activities go on for too long, leaving less time to use support staff and complete the different levels of work prepared for the different ability groups. A concerted whole-school effort to improve writing is having a positive effect. An example of this is the 'bursting to write' books, where pupils produce extended writing that teachers mark in detail with clear points for improvement. However, not all teachers adhere to the school's assessment policy. The curriculum is satisfactory and staff are working to develop new work schemes to increase opportunities for more reading, writing and mathematics across other subjects.

Care, guidance and support are an important strength in a large school where a considerable number have joined the school in recent years. The school provides a welcoming and caring environment, including a breakfast club. The care the school provides was praised by a number of parents and carers who are impressed by the headteacher's apparent ability to remember the name of every child. The school's support has enabled potentially vulnerable pupils who have transferred to the school to rejoin mainstream education. A particularly positive feature is the schools' joint funding of a family support worker and counsellor who is able to support potentially vulnerable pupils in the community. All pupils say adults in the school care for them and the school has effective systems to protect children, ensure they attend regularly and enable pupils with personal and other needs receive effective support.

*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 increase in the school intake necessarily meant the recruitment of new teachers and support staff. At the same time, a number of senior and middle leaders have moved on in their careers. The school leadership has successfully galvanised the staff as a whole to play an active part in school and is in the process of reorganising and redefining leadership and management at all levels. A considerable number of staff are relatively inexperienced and a key priority for the school is to develop and train those individuals.

The school's commitment to equal opportunities is reflected in its caring ethos and careful tracking of pupils' progress, including of those with learning and language needs and an increasing number of pupils learning English as an additional language. The school responded quickly to a recent fall in the progress of some of its pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and gave them additional support that is successfully getting those pupils back on track. One of the areas of greatest challenge has been in engaging those parents and carers who have had to move their children to the school because of school closure. There remain a number who still feel negative but the positive questionnaire responses show that the headteacher, governing body and staff have gained

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the confidence of most through the various parent-school links, including the regular parents' forum.

Safeguarding is secure and carefully monitored. All legal requirements are met, and all necessary training is up to date. The governing body is informed well about child protection and the work of the school in supporting potentially vulnerable pupils. It is rigorous in its checks on risk assessment and has been active in ensuring that the school site is securely fenced with controlled entry.

The school has carefully reviewed its provision for community cohesion and utilised the increasing cultural and religious diversity of its intake to increase pupils' understanding and empathy. It has well developed ties with churches and the local community and has established links with a school in Kenya that the pupils help to fund through their charity work.

*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>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the nursery with knowledge and skills in line with those expected for their age. By the start of Year 1, they are in line with national expectations, representing satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. Progress is most evident in their personal, social and emotional development, reflecting strengths in that area of provision. Some children have less well developed writing skills. Children quickly settle into the life of the school, relating well to each other and showing considerate behaviour. Consequently, they feel safe and secure, and rapidly gain in confidence, knowing staff value and support them. Children display good attitudes to learning and behave well.

Adults have a sound knowledge of the learning and development of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and do their best to provide the necessary range of methods and



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resources within the current temporary setting. This restricts, for example, the free movement of pupils from activity to activity both inside and outside, and so limits their physical development. The nearly finished, much larger accommodation is expected to provide significantly better opportunities. Currently, staff provide a reasonable balance between activities led by the adults and those initiated by the children themselves. Teachers and support staff work very closely to develop appropriate assessment procedures and these are used appropriately to record children's progress across the different areas of learning. Less well developed is the use that staff make of this assessment information to ensure that all children have sufficiently challenging learning activities to accelerate their progress.

The leadership of Early Years Foundation Stage ensures all safeguarding procedures are firmly in place. Good arrangements are made to engage parents and carers in their child's development. The leadership has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and there are firm plans to develop provision in the new accommodation.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

Around 34% of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The great majority are positive about the school but a small proportion whose children transferred from a now closed local primary school were critical of some features of Cranborne. Most of these concerns relate to the increased size of the school and greater pressure on facilities, including the assembly hall and outside play areas at break times. Inspectors noted that assemblies were very full and use of the hall for school meals required rotas, although these situations were managed well. Play areas are busy but safe and the school is in the process of training and developing supervisory staff to provide more constructive play activities.

A significant number of parents and carers comment positively on the leadership of the headteacher and the commitment of teaching and support staff. A number of parents and carers think behaviour could be better but inspectors found behaviour to be good. Although the school provides termly progress meetings, some parents and carers have concerns about their children's progress and would like to be better informed. Inspectors believe that a greater and more explicit use of National Curriculum levels in marking and assessing pupils' work would help parents and carers have a better understanding of their children's progress.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cranborne 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 149 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 440 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	97	65	48	32	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	92	62	50	34	4	3	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	57	38	87	58	3	2	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	43	77	52	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	76	51	68	46	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	46	76	51	1	1	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	43	78	52	4	3	1	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)	58	39	66	44	6	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	42	73	49	6	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	36	73	49	11	7	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	40	69	46	10	7	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	103	69	40	27	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	61	46	31	7	5	2	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.**



25 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cranborne Primary School, Potters Bar, EN6 2BA**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Your school gives you a satisfactory and improving education, and ensures that most of you achieve as well as you should by the time you leave.

Staff take good care of you, and the school is a safe place to be. In the questionnaires, both you and your parents and carers strongly agreed. We were pleased to see how well behaved you are and how you work well together in lessons. We noted that many of you like to take responsibility and have a voice in school matters through the school council. It was good to see that many are committed to healthy eating and are actively involved in different sports and clubs. We were pleased too with your readiness to get involved and show initiative, for example, in supporting different charities and organising a street party to celebrate the recent royal wedding. Congratulations too on winning the 'best float' award in the local carnival for five out of the last six years!

Very many of your parents and carers told us how much you like school, and this is reflected in your much improved attendance. You get on with your teachers and like the opportunities to be actively involved in discussion and group work. We could see that your teachers plan different activities that make your learning interesting. However, you could do even better if teachers tailored classwork more closely to your individual needs to make sure you are all fully challenged. Your teachers mark your work regularly and often tell you how you can improve it. This is very important and we have asked them to do more of this to explain more carefully how you can improve on your National Curriculum levels.

The headteacher, the governing body and all the staff are working hard to further improve the school. You can all help by maintaining your good attendance and continuing to take an active part in school affairs.

Yours sincerely

Graham Preston

Lead inspector

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