

Crazies Hill CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109983
Local Authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	363759
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trina Noyes
Headteacher	Eileen Holmes
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and observed four teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors and staff and talked with pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 66 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- The progress pupils are making in writing in Years 3 to 6
- How well teachers pitch work at appropriate levels for all pupils in the mixed-age classes.
- The accuracy of the school's judgement that it has moved from good to outstanding since the last inspection in respect of:
 - care, guidance and support
 - - engagement with parents and carers.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than average. Except for the Reception class, pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes, comprising Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The school has the Activemark.

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

Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and achieve well within a stimulating, purposeful and productive environment. Relationships between the school and parents and carers are outstanding. One parent, reflecting the views of the overwhelming majority commented, 'The school provides a very positive, constructive and successful educational environment. It is dynamic and inventive, providing an enormously productive learning space.' Another described how the school 'engenders a strong sense of community and belonging'.

The outstanding curriculum provides a wealth of memorable experiences and makes a strong contribution to pupils' academic progress and to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They behave exceptionally well and their enthusiasm for school is seen in the high levels of attendance. All pupils are known to all staff and this is a significant factor in the outstanding care, guidance and support pupils enjoy. The provision for pupils who find learning difficult is particularly successful enabling them to make great strides from their starting points. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their particular gifts or talents.

Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. This begins in Reception where children respond very positively to the warm welcome by adults. Children soon become confident and interact well with one another. Good use is made of the rather small indoor area and spacious outdoor area, although there are too few opportunities to promote children's social, language and creative development through role play, especially in the outdoor area.

Teachers use imaginative ways to engage pupils and sustain their attention. A strong feature of most lessons is pupils' clear understanding of what they are meant to learn and their involvement in reviewing their own progress. Teachers generally set work with a good level of challenge for all children in the mixed-age classes. This is firmly established in the Year 5/6 class. In the other classes, although the most-able pupils are usually set more demanding tasks, they sometimes have to cover old ground before tackling them and, in this small minority of lessons therefore, they do not always make as much progress as they should.

A shared determination to improve is underpinned by effective leadership by senior staff and outstanding governance. Members of the governing body keep a sharp eye on the outcomes for pupils and their strategic planning is informed by consultation with parents, links with subject leaders and focused school visits. Priorities are correctly identified through accurate self-evaluation. Good headway has been made since the last inspection in consolidating strengths and tackling the relative weaknesses identified at that time, indicating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help the most-able pupils in Years 1 to 4 to make faster progress by:
 - refining lesson introductions to ensure that the most-able pupils are not covering old ground
 - setting tasks for the most-able pupils to tackle independently and ensuring they have sufficient time in lessons to tackle them
 - deploying support staff so that they are engaged with pupils throughout lessons
- Increase opportunities for role play in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the outdoor area to further promote children's social, language and creative development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils really enjoy school and achieve well in their academic work and in their personal development. They display very good attitudes in class, where they are attentive, cooperative, interested and keen to do well. Attainment in English and mathematics is above average.

Pupils who find learning difficult make outstanding progress. Many achieve exceptionally well due to first-class support. Their rate of progress is sometimes twice that expected so that, from low starting points, they reach the expected levels for their age and no longer need special help

As children start Reception, their level of social and language development is broadly as expected. They make good progress throughout the school. Levels of attainment are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2. In recent years, pupils' progress in Years 3 and 4 has been steady, followed by rapid gains in Years 5 and 6. Although levels of achievement still accelerate in Years 5 and 6, pupils are now making good progress across Key Stage 2. This was confirmed during the inspection in the lessons observed and in pupils' books. During a Year 3/4 lesson for example, pupils quickly learned how words, such as altogether, total and difference, gave clues to solving problems in mathematics. Year 6 pupils confidently converted fractions to decimals and percentages, and they deftly used coordinates to rotate shapes within four quadrants.

More-able pupils make good progress and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in both English and mathematics is above average. Occasionally these pupils do not make the progress they might, however, due to the structure and organisation of some lessons.

Pupils' pride in their work is evident in their effort to present their cross-curricular topic work as attractively as possible. Above-average standards in writing are evident in pupils' well-constructed, accurately punctuated and neatly written sentences. A Year 2 pupil, describing the Great Fire of London, wrote, for example, 'The King's men tried to pull the houses down so other houses did not catch fire. They needed more places to get water and more fire buckets.' Pupils in the Year 5/6 class similarly made excellent progress during a lesson on journalistic writing. They identified features of news reports, including the use of bold titles 'to draw you in', paragraphs to separate information and interviews to sustain interest. They went on to incorporate these features in their own news articles.

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Pupils say they feel extremely safe in school; they are aware of the potential pitfalls in using the internet and mobile phones. They have a secure understanding of what constitutes healthy living and participate enthusiastically in physical education lessons, reflected in the school's Activemark. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and are keen to support those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have respect for themselves and for others. As one parent commented, 'There is a very special school ethos as the older ones nurture and play with the younger ones.' Pupils demonstrate an expressive and creative impulse in their sensitive singing and thoughtful artwork. Their positive attitudes and enthusiasm for school together with good skills in language and mathematics, and confidence in using modern technology, provide a strong basis for their future education and beyond.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Lessons are underpinned by excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, and teachers are skilled in generating pupils' interest and sustaining their engagement. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class, for example, were introduced to 'Inspector Clue' who invited them to suggest ways of solving problems in mathematics. Teachers use modern technology, such as interactive whiteboards, frequently to support pupils' learning. Pupils have many opportunities to use the computer suite, the bank of laptops and netbooks. One Year 1

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pupil remarked, 'It's totally wicked!' after he created an alien landscape using a paint program.

Teachers generally use assessment information well to provide sufficient challenge and support for pupils of differing abilities in the mixed-age classes. This was exemplified during an excellent literacy lesson in Year 5/6 where the teacher skilfully targeted her questions to draw on pupils' various levels of knowledge and extend their understanding. At the beginning of lessons, teachers ensure that pupils are aware of what they are to do and explain the success criteria. In Years 1 to 4, these introductions often involve all pupils listening to what each group is to do. This means that the most-able pupils cover old ground and the time available for them to work independently is limited. Sometimes, however, they have to complete the same work as the other pupils rather than tackle more challenging work immediately, and this restricts their progress. The highly skilled teaching assistants come into their own when working with small groups, especially in providing excellent support for pupils who find learning more difficult, but their potential contribution in introducing new work to different groups early in the lesson is not fully exploited.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and offer both encouragement and guidance about how they could improve their work, using a colour-coded system. Older pupils increasingly reflect on their own work and review that of their classmates, showing very mature attitudes to learning.

The curriculum is imaginatively planned to ensure that pupils benefit from absorbing topic work with key skills as a focus. Following a visit from a 'Victorian' farmer, Years 1 and 2 pupils practised writing a sequenced account. One wrote, for example, 'First of all we had to pick up all the stones and weeds. After that Richard showed us the scythe. It had a blade at the end and was used to cut the corn. Next?.'

Creative activities play a central role in promoting pupils' personal development. Music has a strong presence in the curriculum. All pupils have an opportunity to learn an instrument and many have home tuition. The impact of skilled teaching by the music specialists on the staff is evident not only in the expertise of the school choir but also during whole school assemblies where all pupils sing in harmony tunefully and expressively.

High quality pastoral support for pupils is at the heart of the school's work. This is reflected in the positive responses from pupils to inspection and school surveys and also in the views of parents and carers. As one parent commented, 'Every possible effort was made to ensure the children felt welcome and at ease when they arrived.'; another wrote, 'My children have experienced a loving and caring education.' Sensitive mentoring in a tranquil atmosphere puts pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities at their ease. This helps them to make the most of the one-to-one support on offer so that they make good and sometimes extremely rapid progress.

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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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The success of the school's mission to promote Christian values is evident in the warm and mutually supportive relationships among adults and children. The headteacher, with strong support from the Senco, transmits high expectations clearly to all members of the school community. Senior leaders form a strong team and work hard to ensure that good standards are maintained and that the school continues to improve. There is a common ambition to ensure pupils do as well as they can. The quality of teaching is monitored closely. Teachers' professional development needs are identified and closely linked to school improvement priorities. Pupils' individual progress is tracked well to spot any underachievement, although the use of assessment information to build up a broader picture of trends over time is less precise.

Parents are fully involved as partners in their children's education and are kept extremely well informed by regular newsletters, information leaflets and the school website. The positive relationships between parents, staff and governors were evident as parents dropped off and collected their children. One remarked, 'As a mother, I feel well supported by this network of parents and teachers.' A flourishing parent/teacher association arranges events which provide extra funds and keeps the school in the public eye; for example the recent 150 year anniversary fayre, which was opened by the Home Secretary.

The governing body is extremely active in reviewing performance, setting strategic direction and holding the school to account. Members use a wide range of monitoring information and assessment data and visit the school regularly to gain a secure understanding of pupils' needs, identify priorities and allocate resources, and ensure the school promotes equality of opportunity well. Safeguarding procedures are good. Staff and members of the governing body are well aware of their responsibilities, although some staff training is behind schedule. Community cohesion is promoted successfully. The school provides a focal point for many activities in its rather isolated rural location. Joint events with schools serving more mixed communities provide pupils with first-hand experiences of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom, while studies in French and geography provide insights into wider communities.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in social and language development. By the end of Reception, their attainment is above the expectation for their age. Children settle in quickly and soon gain confidence due to the well-organised induction process. Adults provide lots of opportunities for speaking and listening. They model language well and plan stimulating activities which develop and extend children's skills.

Children enjoy learning and are invariably absorbed in the various activities. They are ever eager to talk about what they are doing and share their ideas. 'Welcome to Remenham' (the name of the Reception class), said one, 'Would you like to play this game with me?' Learning is typified by a buzz of purposeful activity as children work with adults or pursue their own interests. During one session, for example, a small group worked with the teacher, learning how to blend individual letter sounds into words. Outdoors, others were constructing an obstacle course for horses with good support from the teaching assistant, while the rest were painting or exploring how various objects floated in the water trough. Later, the teacher worked with some children to create symmetrical patterns on laptops; 'It's magic!' exclaimed one. Others investigated symmetry by placing mirrors against objects and making ladybirds from play dough with an equal number of dots on each wing.

The indoor area is rather small for the number of children. It offers just sufficient space for whole class and group work but a sheltered outdoor deck extends this provision. Children have opportunities to play and learn using peddled vehicles, although these have to be at specific times rather than freely chosen as these resources are not adjacent to the reception classroom. Pupils engage in role play during these periods, such as police directing traffic and workmen mending the roads. The extensive outdoor area adjacent to the classroom is generally used well and children are just as likely to be found learning

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outside as they are inside, although resources for role play in both these areas are not as imaginative or inviting as they need to be.

Children's progress is monitored closely and recorded in a cumulative 'learning journey' portfolio. Staff make a prompt response to any who show signs of falling behind. The strong partnership with parents and carers is evident in the warm relationships and informal rapport shown as parents and carers accompany their children into school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned was well above average. The very large majority of parents and carers are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. All respondents felt happy overall with their children's experience. Within these positive views, a small minority raised individual concerns, almost all of which were relatively minor and not borne out by the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crazies Hill CE 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 91 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	80	12	18	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	76	16	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	58	28	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	55	27	41	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	58	28	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	48	31	47	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	56	29	44	0	0	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)	42	64	23	35	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	65	22	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	67	19	29	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	58	27	41	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	47	71	18	27	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	71	18	27	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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).

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">■ 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.



13 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crazies Hill CE Primary School, Wargrave RG10 8LY

Thank you for making us so welcome during our visit to your school. The most striking thing we found was how everyone pupils, staff and parents gets on well together. Crazies Hill is a good school. It is a really friendly place and it was good to see how you welcome newcomers and help them settle in. All the adults in the school have your best interests at heart and they take great care to ensure that you know how to keep safe and know the importance of a healthy diet and exercise. You do a lot to help the school run smoothly and we enjoyed talking to the school council about their ideas and suggestions. We really enjoyed hearing your singing in assembly and during choir practice.

Teachers and the support staff are doing a good job in making lessons interesting and you told us how much you enjoy school. We were pleased to see that, at the beginning of most lessons, you think about what you have learned so far and what you need to do next. This is helping everyone to make good progress.

In order to make the school even better, we have suggested that staff make sure that those of you who are confident in English and mathematics are given more time to tackle challenging work. We think some lesson introductions could be shorter to allow you more time to work independently. Teaching assistants could help with this by taking small groups earlier in lessons. We have also suggested that children in the Reception class could be given more opportunities to learn through role play.

We found that the school is well run and that the headteacher, staff and governors work together successfully to help you get the most you can from school life. You can do your bit by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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