

Richard Crosse CofE (A) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124338
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380864
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Jeffery Plumb

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Swift
Headteacher	Paul Lovern
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2006
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven lessons taught by five different teachers. Inspectors held meetings with representative governors, and with groups of staff and pupils. They analysed a wide range of evidence, including: data on pupils' progress and attainment, attendance data, curriculum planning, a sample of learning journeys and pupils' exercise books. They also scrutinised safeguarding policies, minutes of governing body meetings, the school improvement plan, two case studies of pupils in vulnerable circumstances and 56 questionnaire returns from parents and carers.

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

- What is the impact of the recently implemented strategy to raise pupils' achievement in writing?
- How effective is the school in raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity?

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average as is the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are white British. A few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, but none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The school works in federation with St Mary's Primary Church of England School, Colton. The headteacher is an executive headteacher of this school and St Marys. There is a shared governing body and policies are the same for both schools.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The Richard Crosse Church of England Primary School provides an outstanding quality of education and care. Innovative and creative teaching, dynamic leadership and the successful implementation of a challenging and relevant curriculum contribute to pupils' outstanding achievement and high standards.

Attainment on entry to Year 1 is above average. All pupils make rapid gains in learning as they move through the school so that by Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are significantly above the national average. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance. They engage enthusiastically with learning in all lessons because activities are consistently challenging and relevant. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Older pupils act as sport coaches for younger children, contributing to their physical fitness. All pupils understand the importance of eating healthy food. Pupils feel safe and skilfully assess risks in new learning environments, for example when they participate in outdoor activities such as body boarding and rock climbing. Their contribution to the wider community is outstanding. Pupils wrote very persuasive letters to the prime minister, based on meticulous research of the benefits and disadvantages of the impact of the proposed development of the high speed train on their local community. Older pupils run a successful mini-business and all pupils participate in setting out stalls at the summer fair. Their spiritual and cultural diversity awareness is outstanding because of their active participation in collective worship and engagement with pupils throughout the world as pen friends and through video conferencing.

Teaching is outstanding. Lessons hum with learning as pupils are engaged with tasks which extend them and so they make rapid progress. Exceptional plans, based on pupils' prior attainment, are implemented briskly. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve and teachers check that they achieve their learning outcomes. All pupils exceed their expectations and through enquiry and research solve demanding problems and produce very high quality writing. They enjoy reading and reach very high standards. Basic skills are delivered through exciting curriculum themes, which are based on pupils' interests. For example, literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are delivered through a module, which focuses on the sinking of the Titanic in Years 3 and 4. In another year group everything was woven through a theme about miners trapped underground. The quality of care is exceptional for all pupils and their families. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because the quality of teaching and the curriculum are good. However, on some

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occasions teachers do not respond quickly to children's needs and interests and although there is an agreed assessment procedure it is not always implemented consistently. Consequently opportunities can be missed at times to move children on with their learning quickly enough.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The senior leadership team and subject leaders focus on improving the quality of their work. They are exceptionally well-supported by governors in implementing new and pioneering strategies to further improve the quality of education for pupils. The school trials a number of national projects for primary schools and is at the fore front of change to ensure that provision equips pupils to be successful in the 21st century. The school's thorough and detailed evaluation informs decisive action; this has driven up standards. Given the success of actions taken since the last inspection to improve teaching, the curriculum, pupils' writing skills and the sustained high standards over the past five years the school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and so accelerate children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - consistently implementing the agreed assessment procedure and use on-the-spot assessments to re-align practice and move children on with new and immediate learning; and
 - ensuring that the whole staff team respond to children's interests immediately to motivate their learning and so raise their achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

All groups of pupils make outstanding progress in lessons because teachers use assessments of pupils' prior attainment very effectively to plan specific activities matched to their needs. In an outstanding Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher combined outstanding subject knowledge with high expectations and so each group of pupils produced quality writing measured against their capability. In response to the question: 'What is figurative language?' high achievers confidently said, 'Alliteration, personification, simile and onomatopoeia' and went on to improve their sentences with powerful examples of similes. In the same lesson pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities excelled in their learning and wrote sentences, with figurative language, at age expectation. National curriculum test results for 11-year-old pupils have been consistently and significantly high for the last five years, with each sub-group of pupils exceeding national standards in English and mathematics. The progress for all groups of pupils has been consistently outstanding over the same period of time.

Pupils have an adult in whom they trust and who they can turn to with any problems. Pupils are involved in improving their school and they plan and execute a wide

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number of charity fund raising events. They know their rights, but exercise responsibility. They are keen to take up jobs at school and to be involved in a wide range of community initiatives beyond the school’s gates. Their moral and social awareness is outstanding for their age. Through their involvement in a personal, social and philosophy project they have a conceptual understanding of what it means to be human, which far exceeds what is typical for pupils of their age.

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	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is relevant, challenging and very successfully engages pupils’ interest and so accelerates their learning. Exceptionally well-planned activities are based on the assessment of the important next steps of learning required for all pupils. In an outstanding literacy lesson higher achieving pupils, supported by a power-point presentation, very skilfully constructed alternative endings to a story. Other pupils use pictures successfully to sequence a story; and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by a high quality teaching assistant made rapid gains in improving their writing through a role play activity. In a numeracy lesson all pupils successfully engaged in problem solving activities and deepened their understanding of the ‘carry forward’ method in working out their calculations because of diligent checking by the teacher that every pupil had ‘got the method’.

The curriculum is flexibly planned and innovative; it meets pupils’ needs exceptionally well. Project work is very successful and contributes strongly to the development of

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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pupils’ excellent research skills. The teachers’ focus on philosophy of learning within each theme enables pupils to think critically. Information and communication technology is embedded through the curriculum. Pupils communicate with other pupils around the globe on world issues via video conferencing, thus significantly enhancing their awareness of cultural diversity. Individual therapeutic needs are met well and emotional barriers to learning experienced by a few pupils are removed. Curriculum enrichment is excellent and significantly enhances pupils’ learning. Pupils learn French and German, participate in high quality music concerts and supported by external coaches develop a wide range physical education skills.

Induction arrangements for children into the Nursery are good and they settle in very quickly. Year 6 pupils are very well-prepared to move on to secondary school. Exceptionally well-planned workshops provide valuable guidance for parents and carers on how to help their children learn to read. This contributes to pupils’ high standards in reading. Social service staff, health professionals and educational staff work in very effective partnerships to remove the emotional barriers that can impede learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they make outstanding progress. Creative strategies, which are rigorously implemented ensure consistently high attendance year-on-year.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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 senior leadership team, led by the executive headteacher, very effectively promotes drive and ambition which focuses on raising pupils’ achievement. Ambitious targets are set for each pupil and they are met. Leadership responsibilities are shared and the whole staff team are involved in implementing decisive actions to improve the quality of education for every pupil. This is a school which is never complacent about improvement and pioneers innovative practice. Subject leaders’ research and establish new strategies to improve pupils’ achievement. A recently introduced strategy to raise achievement in writing has been particularly successful. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and feedback is given very successfully to enable teachers to improve their practice.

Through a very extensive range of partnerships the school successfully enhances pupils’ learning and so raises their achievement. Parents and carers are very well supported in enabling their children to learn. Equality of opportunity lies at the heart of this school, race relations are excellent, and there is a strong commitment that

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every child will be successful. This commitment is realised in practice. Very effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure pupils are safe. Child protection procedures meet all statutory requirements. All staff are very carefully vetted when appointed to the school and risk assessments are exceptionally thorough and detailed. Community cohesion is outstanding. Pupils understanding and involvement in their local, national and global communities is exceptional. They are actively involved; including supporting senior citizens in their local community, writing to their member of parliament about national issues that concern them; and discussing global issues with pupils in Thailand and Iraq via video conferencing. Governance is both challenging and very supportive. Governors address issues of concern with the local authority and ask the headteacher penetrating and challenging questions about individual pupil’s achievement.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is average. Children make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 standards are above average. In recent years there has been a small increase in the number of children entering the Nursery with undeveloped speech and lower personal and social development skills than what has been typical over the years in this school. Because of good support these children soon develop good speech and social skills.

The teaching, curriculum and care children experience are good overall. However, the agreed assessment procedure to log children’s immediate developments so as to inform ‘on-the-spot’ re-alignment of practice to raise achievement is not always consistently adhered to. Consequently, on rare occasions opportunities are missed to move children forward with their learning immediately. Usually the staff team allow

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children to initiate their own learning and they are very keen to respond to children’s interests so as to accelerate their learning. On rare occasions in lessons action to enable this to happen is not sufficiently immediate and so opportunities for new learning are missed and children’s learning is slowed.

The staff team are deeply reflective about their practice. At the end of each day they discuss how they can improve the learning for individual children. They then take decisive action and factor in specific programmes to move these children on in their learning with a considerable measure of success. Parents and carers are very well-supported in helping their children to learn.

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

Inspectors agree with parents and carers positive comments about the school. A few parents and carers expressed concern about the way in which the school manages behaviour. Inspectors investigated this thoroughly and found that behaviour is outstanding and that the policy to manage the rare instances of unacceptable behaviour that occur is implemented very effectively. Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire wrote very positive comments. They wrote that: ‘this school provides a wonderful nurturing environment’; ‘this school is good at listening to parents’; and ‘in this caring community the children are important’.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Richard Crosse CofE (A) 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 121 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	73	14	25	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	80	8	14	3	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	31	55	21	38	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	57	20	36	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	71	13	23	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	39	70	16	29	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	68	16	29	2	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	35	63	16	29	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	38	68	15	27	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	48	21	38	6	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	52	23	41	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	70	13	23	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	38	68	18	32	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



17 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Richard Crosse CofE (A) Primary School, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 7JE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us as visitors to your school. It was a privilege for us to see the quality of your work and we greatly enjoyed talking with so many of you. We found that your school is outstanding.

Here are the main things we found:

- Your lessons are challenging and you make outstanding progress and reach very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are provided with lots of exciting music, sport and outdoor activities.
- You take on responsibilities enthusiastically, behave exceptionally well and have an excellent understanding of people in this country and around the world that hold different beliefs from those which you hold.
- You act as advocates to promote healthy lifestyles amongst your friends and know how to keep safe when you find yourselves participating in new and exciting learning activities outdoors.
- You use computers exceptionally well to research your exciting project work and you are very good at solving problems.
- Your school is exceptionally well-led and managed.

We have asked your headteacher to ensure that teachers and teaching assistants in the Nursery and Reception class make learning for the younger children even better than what it is at the moment. We have asked him to ensure that staff take immediate note of what you enjoy and use your interests quickly to help you learn.

Yours sincerely

Jeffery Plumb
Lead Inspector

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