

Crick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121812
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380328
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Joseph Peacock

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Rowe
Headteacher	Janet James
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who visited six lessons and observed five teachers. They held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body and staff; talked to parents, carers and children; and looked at school planning and assessment data. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including minutes of governing body meetings, improvement planning and that relating to safeguarding and children's welfare. They scrutinised 49 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff and pupils.

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

- How effectively the quality of teaching and the curriculum is raising attainment in reading and writing, particularly for boys, by the end of Year 2.
- The involvement of senior staff and governing body in monitoring school effectiveness and how effectively they identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- In Reception, how effectively the individual learning needs of children are being met.
- Whether pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of cultures beyond their own.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average primary school and local population trends are resulting in a falling roll. Most pupils in this rural area are of White British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Very few are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has Healthy Schools status and an Eco Award in recognition of its work in the environment. The charity Dyslexia Action maintains an outpost at the school.

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 school. Improvement has been steady since the previous inspection as a result of effective leadership, management and governance. Previous issues have been thoroughly addressed, with assessment information being used more extensively by teachers to plan challenging tasks for pupils. The senior leadership team and governing body are fully involved in monitoring attainment, and the quality of teaching is evaluated at least twice, and sometimes three times, each year. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is good and there is a rising trend in attainment by Year 6. However, overall attainment by Year 2 is adversely affected by the lower performance of boys in reading and writing. Far fewer boys are able to match the attainment of girls in these two subject areas.

Children in the Reception class have a good start to school and make good progress in all areas of learning. This is due to the effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the consistently good quality of teaching. Careful planning, following an accurate assessment when children start school, ensures that learning for girls and boys is closely matched to their individual needs. Early writing skills are not as well developed as other areas when children enter Year 1. They are, however, improving as a result of the strong emphasis on teaching letters and sounds and staff promoting early writing skills more effectively as children work and play.

Pupils' attainment is significantly above average in mathematics and above average in English by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who benefit from additional support in lessons provided by staff and, on occasions, other pupils when working in small groups. The well-planned curriculum ensures that most pupils have challenging and interesting tasks to complete. Other experiences, including sporting activities, music and extra-curricular clubs such as citizenship, add considerably to pupils' enjoyment of school. The level of care, guidance and support is good and ensures every pupil is treated equally and valued.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around school, ensuring that all feel safe and special. The outstanding level of attendance reflects pupils' pride in their school and how much they enjoy their learning. 'Awesome' was the way one pupil chose to describe the school. All aspects of pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. This reflects the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and good quality of care, guidance and

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support provided by staff. Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding of living a healthy lifestyle. Parents and carers, in their questionnaire responses, unanimously agree.

The improvement from a satisfactory school to a good one has been achieved through the headteacher's effective leadership and management, and staff working as a cohesive team. There is an effective partnership with other local schools and good use is made of specialist help, particularly from the staff of Dyslexia Action. This has played an important role in helping some pupils to achieve higher standards in their work. The headteacher, all staff and the dedicated governing body have a clear ambition to continue improving outcomes and provision. Their self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate. The school makes the necessary checks on staff and volunteers and the required risk assessments are in place. However, limited whole-school training has been undertaken in implementing and monitoring policies relating to health and safety, resulting in some inconsistencies in the school's practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment for boys in Key Stage 1 in reading and writing by:
 - ensuring that reading material is more appealing to boys
 - providing more exciting opportunities to motivate boys to write
 - planning tasks that are sufficiently challenging for boys of all ability levels.
- Ensure that appropriate training in implementing and monitoring policies relating to health and safety is undertaken by staff and members of the governing body.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In most lessons, pupils listen attentively and are keen to answer questions. Their concentration is usually good and all work hard to complete tasks set for them. As a result, attainment is improving in English and mathematics and most make good progress.

Pupils are set by ability in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and attainment is significantly above average as pupils benefit from effective teaching in smaller groups with others working at a similar level. Attainment in English is above average. The gap in attainment between boys and girls is being closed rapidly, particularly in writing. Effective strategies such as the implementation of a published scheme to promote higher level writing and the emphasis teachers in the junior classes are placing on writing in all subject areas are having a positive impact. The gap in attainment between girls and boys is much more pronounced in Key Stage 1. Boys of all ability levels do not do as well as girls in reading or writing. When the same task is planned for the whole class, it does not always provide appropriate challenge for some pupils.

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Furthermore, boys are not always sufficiently motivated by the tasks they are expected to complete. In mathematics, there is little difference in the performance of girls and boys by Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils. Detailed lesson planning ensures that their specific learning needs are being met effectively.

Pupils are invariably polite, and show kindness and consideration for others. Their good behaviour is a key factor in how well they learn in lessons. All thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their excellent attendance. Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to them by, for example, attending many of the clubs and sporting activities that the school organises. Most have an excellent understanding of staying fit and healthy, and a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They also develop a good understanding of responsibility through their roles as play leaders, house captains or their duties on the pupil council. The school is an integral part of the local community and pupils enjoy community activities such as the May Day celebrations, their close links with the church, and regular contact with the more senior members of the community. Taking on additional responsibilities in school and the local community considerably extends their social development. Excellent attitudes to learning and competent skills when using computers ensure that pupils are well prepared for their future learning.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and learning support assistants have high expectations of pupils and are

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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totally committed to meeting the needs of every pupil. All pupils know their targets for learning and are keen to achieve them. The much improved use of assessment information to inform pupils’ next steps in learning is helping standards to rise. Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to work independently or collaboratively with others in lessons. Strengths common to most lessons are the rapport and relationships between staff and pupils, the support provided for all in the six fairly small classes, and tasks that are closely matched to the different abilities of pupils. Where teaching is less effective, introductions to the whole class are too long and the concentration of some pupils waivers.

There is a strong emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy skills throughout the school. This is ensuring most pupils make good progress. However, the curriculum in Key Stage 1 is not yet having sufficient impact on the attainment of boys to improve their reading or writing skills. A creative curriculum is well established, with topics such as ‘Egyptians’ that integrate skills from different subject areas. Pupils particularly enjoyed writing instructions about how to mummify someone. The curriculum is also enhanced by French lessons, residential visits and extra-curricular clubs such as ‘Let’s get cooking’ and gardening.

Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported in a positive atmosphere that enables them to feel safe and become confident. Parents and carers are very positive about how well their children are cared for and looked after by staff. Provision to help the few pupils who may be more vulnerable is good. A wide range of partners with specialist knowledge and expertise make a strong contribution, guiding and supporting staff and pupils. Their contribution ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such as dyslexia, successfully overcome barriers to learning and achieve their true potential. Transition arrangements into school and between classes are a strength and ensure that pupils settle quickly and make friends. Excellent attendance is successfully promoted by staff and extremely well supported by parents and carers who clearly value what the school provides each day for their children.

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?

Staff work as an effective team, ensuring that most pupils make good progress. Their drive and determination to eliminate any weaknesses relies on an accurate assessment of their own and pupils’ performance. All are increasingly involved in

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carefully monitoring and evaluating pupils’ progress and the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body is well informed and has a very clear view of the school’s strengths and where improvements can be made. Governors are just as keen to see the school improve as staff. They use their wide range of expertise to challenge and support the school, playing their part in driving up standards. As a result, the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

The school engages with parents and carers effectively. Parents’ and carers’ views are regularly sought and acted upon. Improving information between home and school is a recent example of how the staff listen and respond to parental concerns. Most parents and carers responded positively to the inspection questionnaire. ‘Children are very happy in a loving environment with fantastic staff,’ was a typical view. Safeguarding is satisfactory. Some minor omissions to the school’s records were identified and corrected, in line with inspection guidance. The school has established strong links with a community in Kenya. This, coupled with the frequent visits and visitors linked to minority ethnic groups is ensuring that pupils have a good understanding of communities beyond their own and of different cultures in this country and abroad.

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	2
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	3
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 in Reception are a happy bunch because the experienced, caring and conscientious staff ensure that they settle quickly and are provided with valuable learning experiences, tailored to meet individual needs. As a result, children enjoy the exciting and challenging activities provided for them, such as waving ribbons when following an exercise video or creating ‘leaf man’ pictures using natural materials.

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Children enter Reception with knowledge and skills that are broadly average. The exceptions are in linking letters and sounds, and calculation, both of which are below the levels expected. Generally, girls are more advanced than boys in these and other aspects of learning and skills. The effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that individual needs of boys and girls are accurately assessed and that activities successfully develop key skills for both. As a result, children make good progress in all areas of learning. The strong emphasis on learning phonics and developing numeracy skills ensures rapid progress in these aspects. Most children enter Year 1 with above average skills in all areas except writing, which is average despite some good progress.

The close partnerships between home and school, and with pre-school settings, ensure that children are happy and confident about coming to school. The warm, friendly and caring staff add significantly to children’s sense of security and confidence. There are high expectations for behaviour and the calm atmosphere for learning that these generate ensures class routines are soon established and children develop excellent attitudes towards learning. Resources, including modern technology are used imaginatively indoors and outside. Excellent use is made of the spacious covered area, with activities such as music making or role play in the school office area. Children share resources sensibly and relationships with staff and other children are outstanding. A strong feature was the way staff talked to children, valuing their achievements and giving encouragement and praise. In all activities indoors and out, there is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities.

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

Almost all of the parents and carers who returned their questionnaires held positive views about the school. Everyone who replied, for example, agreed that the school successfully promotes a healthy lifestyle for their children. Parents and carers fully appreciate how safe their children are in school. Other comments were particularly appreciative of the ‘fantastic’ staff who create a ‘loving environment’ and a typical comment was that ‘children go to school with a smile’. Inspection evidence confirms the positive views of parents and carers. A very small number disagreed that unacceptable behaviour was dealt with effectively. This translated into a disproportionately high percentage because of the relatively small number of

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questionnaires returned. Inspectors found that behaviour is good and pupils do not share the concerns expressed by those parents and carers. They say that they feel safe in this friendly, caring school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crick 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 143 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	67	13	27	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	59	18	37	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	18	37	29	59	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	37	25	51	3	6	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	21	43	25	51	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	20	41	25	51	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	41	29	59	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)	14	29	31	63	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	19	39	27	55	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	31	25	51	5	10	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	37	24	49	3	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	20	41	23	47	5	10	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	47	22	45	3	6	1	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	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 Crick Primary School, Northampton NN6 7TU

The inspectors enjoyed their visit to your school. You go to a good. We can see why your parents and carers say that you set off to school with a smile on your faces. Your teachers and their helpers work hard to make school exciting and a happy place for everyone. All of you are to be congratulated on how well you behave in your lessons and around school. It was good to see how kind and thoughtful you are to one another. It helps you to enjoy school and being with your friends. Your excellent attendance shows the inspectors how much you enjoy coming to school each day.

You, your headteacher and all the staff are to be congratulated on the good progress you make as you move through the school, achieving above average standards in English and high standards in mathematics by the time you are in Year 6. We hope that all the efforts your teachers are making to help more of you, especially the boys achieve above average standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 will pay off soon. We are asking your teachers to try and plan even more interesting and exciting things for the boys to do in lessons to encourage you to read and write much more. Come on boys - we are sure you can do as well as the girls!

The youngest of you do well in Reception and have many activities to enjoy in the classroom and outside. It was good to see how much you use computers and cameras when you are working. We hope staff will take the opportunity when the pre-school starts in January to try and create a bit more outside space for you to enjoy.

Inspectors could see how proud you are of your school. Your parents and carers are just as pleased about your school judging from their comments when we met them and their responses in the questionnaires.

We do hope you all continue to enjoy school, and help it to improve still further by working just as hard in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Joseph Peacock
Lead inspector

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