

Crab Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105465
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	377246
Inspection dates	30 April–1 May 2012
Lead inspector	Bernard Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Barnes
Headteacher	Pat Adams
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Bernard Jones
Susan Walters
Elaine Maloney

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons involving 14 teachers and listened to a sample of pupils reading. Meetings were held with pupils and staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and the local authority adviser for the school. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation provided by the school, which included pupils' work, teachers' planning, assessments of pupils' progress and information about safeguarding and child protection. Questionnaire returns from staff and pupils were analysed along with 49 returns from the questionnaires sent out to parents and carers.

Information about the school

Crab Lane is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. Very few pupils are at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school organises a breakfast club. It has achieved Healthy School status and the Eco School award. The school meets the current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Crab Lane is a good school. It is not outstanding because recent initiatives have not had time to impact fully in countering the legacy of significant underachievement. Attainment in English and mathematics are now in line with the national average. Previous weak performance in mathematics has been remedied. Pupils of all levels of ability now make good progress throughout the school. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Most children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are low in relation to those expected for their age. Children settle in quickly and make good progress. This continues through Key Stages 1 and 2, by the end of which pupils' attainment is broadly average.
- There are some notable strengths in the way pupils behave, their attitudes to learning and their enthusiasm for coming to school. Pupils' behaviour is good in class and around the school. Pupils feel safe. Bullying is almost non-existent and when it does occur it is dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils enjoy their work and attendance has improved and is now above average. The positive partnerships recently formed with parents and carers are proving a key strength in driving improvement.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. This, combined with the broad and exciting curriculum, engages and maintains pupils' interests. Teachers' planning is not precise enough, however, to challenge pupils of all abilities to make the best progress they are capable of. Opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects are underdeveloped.
- The school is well led and managed. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are well-planned and effective. However, middle leaders' roles are not well enough developed for them to obtain the most from observing and supporting colleagues. Self-evaluation is accurate and ensures that the school's plans are appropriate to maintain further improvement. The governing body plays a valuable part in the evaluating and planning processes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure a higher proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - building on the excellent practice that exists
 - ensuring that teachers are clear about what constitutes good and better progress for different groups of pupils, and plan carefully to achieve this in their lessons
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Develop the role of middle managers so that they are better equipped to monitor and support colleagues in teaching their subjects.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. In particular, they improve their numeracy and social skills as well as their communication, language and literacy skills. This reflects the way the staff use accurate assessment to identify children's needs and ensure good quality learning experiences across a wide range of activities to meet those needs. By the time they leave the Reception Year, attainment has improved from the low skills on entry to the nursery and is nearer to, but still below, average. Pupils' achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. Attainment in reading is average at the ends of Year 2 and Year 6, reflecting good progress in this area in response to good and well-focused teaching. Pupils make good progress in writing and they make similarly good progress in mathematics, so that attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 6.

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children make good progress and that they are helped to develop basic skills, with any particular needs being met. One response typifies the view of the large majority, 'My child is very happy at school and is making fantastic progress in all areas.' Inspectors agree. Pupils demonstrated enjoyment and progress in all lessons observed. When set problems, pupils can be relied upon to work independently and tackle these opportunities with enthusiasm and commitment. In a mixed Year 1 and 2 class, pupils were introduced to the idea of 'remainders' when 27 is divided by five. They used number lines and then demonstrated their answers on the interactive whiteboard. There was genuine excitement as the penny dropped and the concept emerged and excellent progress was made.

The school has enjoyed a good measure of success in identifying and closing gaps in attainment that existed previously when compared to pupils nationally. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable have closed the gap in attainment in relation to their peers, as have pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in line with their classmates because of effectively targeted support. Careful charting of the progress made by all these different groups of pupils assist teachers and their assistants in making well-managed interventions that are successful in ensuring good achievement.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Pupils benefit from teachers' consistently high expectations of their behaviour and approach to learning. Particular attention is paid to pupils' personal and wider development, underpinned by strong values that impact well on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their child is taught well, a view endorsed by the inspectors. As a result, all groups of pupils enjoy their lessons, participate fully and achieve well. Teachers and pupils use information and communication technology effectively in lessons. This engages pupils and capitalises on their interest in new technology. Imaginative use of 'talking partners' is eagerly seized upon by pupils throughout the school and they relish sharing their ideas, for example, when editing diary excerpts in a Year 6 literacy class. Teachers use questioning very effectively to include all pupils, assess their understanding and to target areas where any initial confusion needs to be cleared up. Teachers ensure that the materials produced to help learning are interesting and appropriate to the pupils' different needs. Classroom displays are of high quality and celebrate pupils' work. They are used effectively to reinforce and consolidate learning across the full range of subjects. Most lessons are characterised by good pace and little time lost to routines and class management. Teachers' good subject knowledge generally helps them to plan activities that engage pupils.

Learning targets are used well to help pupils stay on track and most know their own targets and can point to the progress they are making. On occasion, the objectives set in lessons are too general and opportunities are missed to ensure that pupils make the very best progress of which they are capable. Teachers plan carefully and mostly use assessment data well to ensure that pupils with different needs and abilities are provided with levels of work that they enjoy and succeed in completing. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to further develop literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful contexts in a range of subjects. Classroom assistants play a valuable role and are fully involved in planning and evaluating the success of teaching. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit particularly and take full part in classroom learning and make good progress as a result.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

A strong feature of the school is the consistent approach taken by all staff to ensure good behaviour. As a result, pupils feel secure in school and learning is rarely interrupted by inappropriate behaviour in classrooms. The curriculum ensures that pupils can identify areas and situations where there is potential for danger to their well-being. For example, they are taught to adopt safe practices on the internet and gain a good awareness of different forms of bullying. During the inspection, all groups of pupils said they feel safe in school and bullying is not an issue. They play well together at break times. Most pupils and all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that behaviour is good and pupils feel safe. Inspectors observed many examples where pupils' good behaviour was a positive force in their learning. They show enthusiasm, politeness, consideration for others, and are keen to make a contribution to school, for example, through the school council. This is typical of the qualities found over time as reflected in the school's records. Exclusions, either permanent or fixed-term, are rare. When asked to work on their own or in groups, pupils can be relied upon to maintain their efforts while the teacher helps other groups, so developing their independent learning skills.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has been central in a sustained drive to create a successful school. Her vision of raising attainment and ensuring all pupils achieve well is central and has been embraced by all staff; morale is high. There is a strong drive for further improvement. Staff are ambitious and standards are rising as the legacy of past underachievement continues to be vigorously tackled. Assessment procedures are good. As a result, targets for the whole school are realistic and challenging. Significant staff turbulence in recent years has led to a position where middle leaders are mainly new to management duties. They are developing in their roles but have not yet acquired the necessary skills to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision in their subjects or, for example, assess the contribution their subject makes to developing skills in literacy and numeracy.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and modified according to needs. It meets the varying needs of pupils well and is enhanced by a good range of educational visits, visitors to the school and additional extra-curricular clubs and activities. The school is careful to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all the opportunities offered, and no discrimination is tolerated. Detailed analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils identifies any at risk of falling behind so that interventions can be used to prevent any gaps from appearing in their attainment. In this way, all groups of pupils are effectively given equal opportunities to achieve their potential. Productive partnerships have been established with other schools in the local area and pupils study life in Gambia. These initiatives help pupils to understand their place in the local and wider communities and their duties and responsibilities to themselves and others.

The governing body takes an active role and is effective in supporting the school and ensuring adequate challenge to its senior management team. School leaders and the governing body make sure that safeguarding arrangements are comprehensive and ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and staff. Professional development of staff is effective and benefits pupils' learning because staff are kept up-to-date and their performance is judged appropriately by the progress their pupils make. The school's recent successful track record of improvements, including in the quality of teaching, coupled with accurate self-evaluation and good planning, reflect good capacity for further improvement.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



2 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crab Lane Primary School, Manchester, M9 8NB

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome when my colleagues and I inspected your school recently. Please thank your parents and carers for their questionnaire returns and for taking the time to talk to us. We found that you go to a good school. We enjoyed watching and listening to you in your lessons, reading your work and talking to you. It was a real pleasure to hear the choir's rendition of 'Jacob's song'. The care you receive and the progress you make means that you develop into mature young people, ready for the next stage in your education.

The teaching you receive is good and some is outstanding. We found that your headteacher leads the school well. This helps you achieve well, making good progress throughout the school from your starting points on joining the Nursery class. You were very positive in your questionnaire responses about your teachers, how much you learn and how you feel the school helps you progress. You were also positive about behaviour in class and how you feel safe. We, too found behaviour to be good.

To make things even better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to help you make the best possible progress you can by planning lessons to fit your needs with even greater accuracy. You also need more opportunities to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. We have also asked that teachers new to their responsibilities are given more training and help. I hope you continue to enjoy school and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Jones
Lead Inspector

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