

The Crescent Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115886
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	395466
Inspection dates	14–15 May
Lead inspector	Liz Bowes

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	401
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Westcott
Headteacher	Veronica Stoodley
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2009
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	14–15 May
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Introduction

Inspection team

Liz Bowes

Additional inspector

Richard Sutton

Additional inspector

Frances Hurd

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 lessons or part lessons and 15 teachers were observed teaching. There were three joint observations. In addition inspectors made short visits to phonics sessions (which teach about the way sounds and letters are linked) and listened to pupils read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and the school staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including improvement planning and records of pupils' progress and attainment. During the inspection 119 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed together with those completed by 93 pupils and 23 staff.

Information about the school

The Crescent is a larger than average sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is close to the average, as is the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils' known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a two reception classes. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupil's attainment and progress. There is an on-site breakfast club which is managed by the governing body. The school is federated with Norwood Primary School, and the two schools share a governing body and head of federation; there is also a head of school.

The school holds a number of awards including the UNICEF UK recognition of commitment for Rights Respecting 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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not good because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that have resulted in some uneven progress. Since the appointment of the senior leadership team there have been significant improvements. The positive impact of being federated has been shown by improvements in target setting, attendance and behaviour. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before the next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement overall is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. In mathematics at Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is good. The effective provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress relative to their starting points. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress and benefit from well targeted support
- Overall teaching is satisfactory. It is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although there are many strong features in teaching, at times, teachers spend too long explaining tasks and give pupils too few opportunities to investigate and learn independently. Teachers' planned activities are not always closely matched to the needs of all learners, particularly the more able. Marking does not always help pupils understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Respectful and supportive relationships throughout the school enable pupils to develop good levels of self-esteem and confidence.
- As a result of the senior leadership team's drive and accurate evaluation of school performance, there are distinct signs of improvement in all aspects of the school's work, including in teaching. However, the full impact of this has yet to be realised as, apart from mathematics at Key Stage 2, there have been limited

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sustained improvements in achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality and consistency of teaching in order to accelerate rates of progress by:
 - planning activities to match more closely the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly the most able
 - reducing the amount of time teachers spend on explaining to pupils what they need to do
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves and work independentlyadopting consistent marking strategies that show pupils what level they are working at and how they can improve.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are complimentary about the amount of progress their children are making. Inspectors found that pupils make satisfactory progress, as although pupils make rapid progress in some lessons, the benefits are offset by slower progress in others. Often the pace of learning is not always fast enough for all abilities, particularly for the more able. A consistent feature throughout the school is pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of mathematics, which they find interesting and challenging. Pupils enjoy tackling problems and are persistent when trying to reach an answer. This was demonstrated when pupils were seen calculating numerical differences using number lines. Pupils say that they value the new target cards that clearly explain the next steps in their learning. However, the link between the cards and marked work is unclear and pupils do not always know what level they are working at or how to improve. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported, and appropriate tasks are set for them. As a result, they make comparable progress to their peers. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals also achieve in line with other pupils.

Children join the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age. However they make good progress and enjoy the imaginative, stimulating environment which enables them to develop their skills in learning numbers and letters. By the time they enter Year 1 skill development is generally at the expected level.

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The senior leadership team discovered gaps in pupils' learning in reading and introduced a new scheme of letters and sounds (phonics). As a result of this, the secure grounding that children receive in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now built upon effectively. Pupils demonstrate confidence in decoding unfamiliar words and sounds and by the end of Year 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average. Pupils' writing skills develop satisfactorily with ample opportunities to practise these in other subjects and lunchtime clubs. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 and in mathematics it is above average with an increasing proportion of the current Year 6 pupils on target to attain higher levels.

Quality of teaching

Teaching, while satisfactory, does not consistently ensure that pupils' make at least good progress. Many teachers spend too long explaining to pupils what they have to do and leave too little time for them to complete tasks. The school has amassed accurate data on how well pupils are achieving but not all teachers use this information to ensure work is always sufficiently challenging. As a result, more-able pupils do not consistently progress as well as they should. Particularly for these pupils, teachers provide too much information, limiting opportunities for independent learning. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Although remarks are encouraging, not all teachers provide sufficient advice as to what pupils need to do to achieve their target level or provide opportunities for them to respond to advice.

In the lessons where teaching is best seen during the inspection, teachers were enthusiastic and challenging, which motivated the children to achieve. For example, in a computer lesson when pupils were researching the painter Lowry to create a presentation, teaching was characterised by a suitably fast pace, excellent resources and exciting activities. Teaching assistants help to ensure that all groups of pupils take a full part in lessons; they are well deployed and make a particularly strong contribution to the learning made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. There are many opportunities for pupils to work with their peers and this helps them to develop social skills. Pupils acquire a good knowledge and awareness of different cultures and religions in a range of subjects and therefore, the positive impact of the planned curriculum is clearly evident. Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, in one lesson pupils were given the opportunity to reflect and write about the different kinds of love.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is good and letter sounds are well taught by both teachers and teaching assistants. This effective practice is reflected in pupils' enthusiasm for reading throughout the school. Parents and carers are very pleased with the support their children receive. The views of those who responded to the inspection questionnaire are accurately reflected by one who commented, 'our children are very happy at school and they have a good attitude to learning. The teachers have been friendly yet honest about areas of learning the children need support with'.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Warm relationships between adults and pupils exist throughout the school. Evidence shows that pupils' behaviour over time is good and the very large majority of parents agree. Behaviour in the breakfast club is also good and the well supervised provision enables pupils to socialise with others productively at the beginning of the school day. Pupils act with consideration and courtesy, when approaching their learning. They regularly work well together and demonstrate high levels of concentration, particularly when tasks are challenging. During intervention sessions, pupils often have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy and state that they feel safe on the residential trips. In discussions pupils say, 'it's good to be green', referring to the traffic light levels of the behaviour policy. The playground is a harmonious environment and pupils like playing the games arranged by the play leaders.

Pupils are confident that any behavioural incidents are dealt with swiftly and that the resolution is fair. Through a well-planned curriculum which includes an anti-bullying week, pupils are helped to develop a range of strategies so they are able to manage risks well. They have a clear awareness of the different forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. On the rare occasions where there has been any form of bullying, this has been dealt with effectively. For example, pupils were very pleased with the way an incident of persistent name-calling was stopped.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe and recently members of the school council were involved in risk assessments of the school site. Almost all parents and carers express their confidence that the school keeps their child safe. There has been a relentless focus on raising attendance which is now above average.

Leadership and management

Since arriving, the head of federation and the head of school have accurately evaluated performance and there are rigorous systems now in place to enable the school to continue improving. The positive impact of being federated has been shown by improvements in target setting, attendance and behaviour. However, apart from mathematics at Key Stage 2, there have been limited sustained improvements in achievement as new systems still have to demonstrate their full impact. Consequently, leadership and management overall are satisfactory and improving, rather than good. Leaders have effectively used performance management through a period of staffing turbulence which has resulted in a strong team of middle leaders who have benefitted from extensive professional development. Teaching is well led and coaching is effective to help staff realise the school's expectations of teaching and learning. The federated governing body is well-informed and has provided good support; its members have a secure understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to improve. The school is now on a firm footing from which to achieve further improvement.

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Significant benefits are also reaped from being part of a federation in terms of staffing and the curriculum. The school monitors pupils' progress closely and intervention strategies, such as the booster classes and boot up sessions provided by a teacher in the federation, are having a significant impact on progress. The curriculum is good because it is well planned and meets pupils' needs effectively. Pupils benefit from the federation's music and drama events and joint residential trips which promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Many pupils, including those who have disabilities or special educational needs, participate in several of the numerous extra-curricular activities. The governing body, senior leaders and staff promote equality of opportunity well and make sure that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

The school has strong partnerships with parents and carers by keeping them well informed of their children's progress with reading diaries and regular reports. A handbook for parents to help children learn has been well received. The school has close working relationships with a number of outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements, are managed well and are consistently applied.

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.



16 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Crescent Primary School, Eastleigh, SO50 9DH

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We appreciated you talking to us about your work, and telling us about your school and what you enjoy about it. We particularly enjoyed hearing you sing so enthusiastically. We would especially like to thank those of you who met with an inspector or completed our questionnaire. You, your parents and carers together with all the staff can be proud of your good behaviour and how polite you are.

You told me how much you enjoyed coming to school and liked to go on trips and visits, particularly the residential journeys. The school is giving you a satisfactory education, and your attainment is broadly in line with pupils nationally by the time you reach Year 6, except in mathematics where you do better.

We have asked the school to ensure that you always experience teaching of the highest quality so that you can all make faster progress. We are asking your teachers to make sure that they plan activities that are just right for you, not too hard or too easy. We are also asking them to use time better so you learn more quickly and have opportunities to find things out for yourselves. Teachers already provide you with clear targets but we have asked them to give you more precise information about how to achieve them when they mark your work, so that you can take more responsibility for your own progress. You can help them by continuing to work hard.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Liz Bowes
Lead Inspector

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