

Crags Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106870
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	377478
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2012
Lead inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Thompson
Headteacher	Shelia Ralph
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Glynis Bradley-Peat
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Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 part lessons taught by 18 teachers and talked with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents associated with safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation. They examined data and other information about pupils' progress, listened to pupils reading and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors scrutinised the school's improvement plans, the curriculum and teachers' planning for lessons. Inspectors analysed the questionnaires returned by 26 parents and carers during the inspection.

Information about the school

The vast majority of the pupils at this larger-than-average primary school are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils supported by School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The previously inspected infant school amalgamated with the junior school on the same site in September 2010.

The school has won a number of awards and has secured Healthy School status. There is a large breakfast club run by 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school in which pupils achieve well. Parents and carers praise the school for its work and most would recommend it to another parent or carer. The school is not outstanding because there are inconsistencies in teaching, particularly in the marking of mathematics work, and behaviour is satisfactory. Not all staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- When children start school they arrive with skills that are well below those typical of their age. However, good and sometimes outstanding teaching ensures an extremely positive start to their education. As pupils move through the school they make good progress so that, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average.
- Good teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge and lessons which provide a wide range of activities to promote interest and motivation. Marking is better in English than in mathematics. Some work remains unmarked and contains mistakes. In some books, teachers' comments are cursory and do not help pupils to improve. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to act upon remarks from teachers.
- Behaviour is typically satisfactory. Pupils are safe and understand how to remain so. While many pupils display positive attitudes to learning, occasionally learning slows because a few pupils become noisy and over excited. Attendance, although below average, is improving steadily.
- The ambitious drive shared by leaders at all levels aims to make the school the best it can be. Performance is managed well, with training to help teachers improve their practice. As a result, weak teaching has been eradicated. A caring and inclusive ethos contributes to the strong promotion of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Sensitive and effective handling of the amalgamation has ensured that the school has been able to improve quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve behaviour, so that it is at least good, by:
 - making sure all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy
 - focusing monitoring on the use of the behaviour policy in all classrooms and around the school
 - providing identified staff with tailored professional development.

- Improve marking and feedback to pupils, particularly in mathematics at Key Stage 2, by ensuring that:
 - all work is checked for accuracy so that misconceptions can be swiftly put right
 - comments provide next steps for learning
 - teachers provide time for pupils to reflect and act upon comments made.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that their children make good progress. Children receive a highly positive start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. On entry to the Nursery, children have skills which are well below those expected for their age and a significant proportion of children have additional problems, such as social and emotional difficulties and speech and language needs. By the time they start Year 1, pupils have matured well and achieve above average levels in personal, social and emotional development, but remain just below average in all other areas of learning. Through Years 1 to 6 pupils make good progress overall, although progress is faster in some year groups than in others. There are some examples of outstanding progress; these were confirmed through lesson observations, the quality of pupils' work and the school's tracking data. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn exceptionally well because of the highly appropriate and wide ranging activities on offer. There are excellent opportunities for children to develop independence. During a focused writing activity which used text from 'The Lion King', children clearly understood and used their targets to improve their written work. Following the morning's activities, children tidied up after themselves very efficiently, showing a sense of responsibility.

Further up the school, there is some variability in progress which is evident in the few less effective lessons where some pupils are not always fully engaged with their learning. However, in many lessons, good use of appropriate resources promotes good progress. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, the use of dice in a practical activity to investigate probability helped pupils to understand that the more throws of the dice they recorded, the more accurate their predictions became. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 systematically develop their skills in reading. They are able to tackle unknown words by sounding out letters within words. Although standards in reading are below average by the end of Key Stage 1, progress is good considering the starting points of the pupils. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they are competent readers and standards are just above average. Overall

attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to that of their peers.

Quality of teaching

All parents and carers who returned questionnaires believe that teaching is good. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, which has a positive impact on their learning and well being. This is because all staff place a high priority on promoting pupils' self-esteem and confidence. In an outstanding 'circle time' session with a group of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, the nurture group, the teacher's sensitive handling of a discussion about teamwork ensured that all pupils were able to make considered responses to searching questions. Their progress was excellent. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good teaching; the provision is well organised and support staff make a good contribution. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils to ensure that they provide support for those who need it. Basic skills, including writing, are taught well. For example, one teacher linked the writing of a report to a local mining disaster and this immediately caught the pupils' attention. They were able to report the facts in chronological order while learning about the history and culture of the local area. The teacher's good subject knowledge added a great deal to the pupils' learning and progress. In mathematics lessons, pupils are regularly provided with opportunities to investigate for themselves. In an outstanding session, some pupils astutely recorded how they could maximise profits while planning an end of term disco.

Key features of the good curriculum planning are the way innovative ideas are used to interest and motivate pupils. During the recent Jubilee celebrations, children read a story about 'The Queen's Knickers' which provided a fun stimulus for a design and make activity. They are provided with good opportunities to use basic skills across subjects. In a geography lesson, where pupils were learning to use an atlas to locate places on a map, they used alphabetical order and their knowledge of a particular vocabulary to help them.

The quality of marking is better in English than in mathematics. Teachers provide clear feedback for pupils in English, and mark their writing carefully. However, their comments are not so precise in mathematics, particularly for the older pupils. In addition, pieces of unmarked work contain misconceptions which are not addressed. There are very few examples of pupils responding to teachers' comments, or of teachers following them up to check that pupils have taken the necessary action.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The large majority of pupils are considerate and show respect towards each other and their teachers. However, although satisfactory, behaviour in lessons varies, because not all teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently enough. In a few lessons, some pupils become over excited. They call out and do not listen well enough to other pupils or to their teacher and the resulting noise level can slow the pace of learning for some pupils. Occasionally, there is evidence of some disengagement during lessons. The school is aware of the issue and is working hard

to resolve it. Parents and carers who returned the questionnaires and some of those to whom inspectors spoke also reflected some concerns about what behaviour is like for a small minority of pupils. Behaviour around the school and outside is typically satisfactory. Pupils are well behaved in the dining hall.

Pupils report that they feel safe and trust their teachers and other adults to help sort out any problems as they arise. Pupils are confident to use the 'worry box' and to ask for help and advice when they need it. They are aware of danger and particular risks, such as internet safety, and manage these well. They are knowledgeable about bullying in all its forms and say that any instances that do occur are dealt with promptly. All parents and carers and almost all pupils believe they are safe in school. The very few pupils who do not feel safe are known to staff, who make extra provision for them.

Attendance has been low in the past, but because of the determined efforts of the school, it is improving strongly. Rates are higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The number of persistent absentees is falling significantly.

Leadership and management

Since the time of the previous inspection, but particularly since the more recent amalgamation, the headteacher has developed the capacity of all leaders to drive forward improvement. High expectations are communicated and shared by all staff and there is a very strong sense of teamwork. Senior leaders have not shied away from making difficult decisions. They have tackled weak practice exceptionally well. Teaching has improved because quality is robustly monitored and evaluated. In addition, there is a good quality programme of professional development for teachers. Pupil progress meetings hold teachers to account rigorously for pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is robust and accurate. The outcomes are used well to raise standards of achievement and to tackle areas of weakness. Although leaders have done much to improve behaviour and to remove barriers to learning for the most challenging pupils, not all staff apply the school's behaviour policy with consistency.

The governing body provides quality support and challenge for the leadership team. It is able to check the school's work effectively because of the well established systems in place. It ensures that all safeguarding requirements are met. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Because of the drive to improve the quality of teaching for all pupils, there is little difference between the performance of different groups. However, those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals perform particularly well, when compared to the same group nationally. The school has remained successful since the previous inspection despite almost doubling in size. This is a credit to the leadership team who have handled the amalgamation very well. The school is already functioning well as a single unit. Standards are already rising at Key Stage 2 and there has been a good improvement in the rate of attendance, an area identified for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. There is good capacity for further improvement.

The school provides an interesting and exciting curriculum that is well focused on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. It balances the need for the teaching of basic skills while successfully providing a variety of opportunities to extend learning across a range of subjects.

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.



21 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Craggs Community School, Rotherham, S66 7QJ

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school recently. A number of you spoke with inspectors and filled in questionnaires, we would like to thank you in particular. We listened to readers which was very enjoyable. I really enjoyed the story about the elephant's trunk. We agree with you and your parents and carers that Craggs Community School is good. It does lots of things really well. You make good progress and your attainment is average by the time you leave in Year 6. In most of your lessons you are very eager to learn and your teachers provide you with interesting activities to complete in your lessons. This is particularly so for the youngest children in the school. Your headteacher and her deputy headteachers do a good job.

You told us you feel safe in school, and your parents and carers agree. You have a good understanding of how to stay safe. We think that you behave satisfactorily, but that improvements could be made. You can help very much with this one. It is important that you all listen well in lessons and that you don't call out without being asked. Sometimes this stops other children from learning as well as they could. We have asked that your headteacher ensures that all teachers use the behaviour rules all the time in class. We have also asked your teachers to give you more helpful tips when they mark your books, particularly in mathematics. We have also asked that all your work is marked. You can help by reading their comments carefully and trying your best to improve in the way they suggest.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat
Lead inspector

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