

The Craylands School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	132764
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	381471
Inspection dates	30–31 May 2012
Lead inspector	Robin Gaff

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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Lees
Headteacher	Anna Pattenden
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Robin Gaff

Additional Inspector

Barbara Firth

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors watched 15 part lessons taught by nine teachers and teaching assistants. They also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms in order to observe groups of pupils at work and to listen to them read. Inspectors talked to pupils and looked at their work, and held meetings with groups of pupils, school leaders, representatives of the governing body, and parents and carers. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. In addition, they reviewed documents provided by the school, including safeguarding and attendance records, monitoring files, and planning documents. They considered questionnaire responses from pupils and staff, as well as 117 completed questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

The Craylands School is smaller than the average primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are currently taught in one Reception class. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average, although the proportion supported by school action is above average. The largest group represented is that of pupils who have speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has not met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Following the retirement of the previous headteacher in July 2010, the deputy headteacher led the school on an interim basis until the current headteacher took up post in April 2011.

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	3
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school, which is improving rapidly because of the concerted and effective actions taken by school leaders to address the weaknesses they have accurately identified. It is not yet good, because those measures have not yet had time to impact fully on pupils' achievement and behaviour and on the quality of teaching. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points to reach levels of attainment which are broadly average by the time they leave the school. Their achievement is improving because leaders have modified the curriculum, raised the quality of teaching, and have established robust systems for monitoring pupils' progress and intervening to support pupils when necessary. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because of the effective support which they are given by teachers and other adults.
- Teaching throughout the school is typically satisfactory, with an increasing proportion of good and some outstanding practice. Teachers relate well to pupils and make good use of other adults in the classroom. They do not always ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately to make the progress of which they are capable, or give them sufficiently detailed information to enable them to improve their work.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are not worried about bullying. Their behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good, especially when activities in lessons are sufficiently stimulating to engage fully their interest. The school has developed effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, but these are not always applied consistently by all staff.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have accurately evaluated the quality of provision. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance, including professional development for teachers, have brought about significant improvement in pupils' achievement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good or outstanding teaching by July 2013, in order to raise pupils' attainment, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan sufficient activities that are tailored to match closely pupils' interests and different levels of ability
 - conduct lessons at a sufficient pace to challenge pupils appropriately and maintain their interest
 - give pupils enough detailed advice to enable them to know the next steps they need to take to improve their work.
- Make sure that all members of staff apply the school's procedures for promoting good behaviour consistently.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The skill levels of children when they start school in the Reception class have varied from year to year, but are typically below age-related expectations. The children make good progress, for example in learning to work and play independently as well as with other children, so that their attainment when they begin Year 1 is broadly average. Their progress throughout the school is satisfactory, with the result that pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average. School leaders have successfully tackled the dip in attainment in 2011, when the proportion of pupils who reached the higher levels in English and mathematics national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was well below average. The school's reliable data relating to current Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading, writing, and mathematics indicate that the gap has closed and attainment is now broadly average. Leaders have developed robust systems for assessing pupils' levels of attainment and for tracking their progress and have successfully tackled weaknesses in teaching. As a result, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and is improving strongly. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress which is at least as good as that of their peers, because the school identifies their needs quickly and takes effective action to help these pupils to overcome the specific difficulties that they face.

Pupils, generally, learn well in most subjects. They are particularly proficient in music, as demonstrated by the high proportion of pupils who learn to play an instrument and the quality of their singing in assemblies. Pupils work productively together in group and paired activities in the classroom and make good progress when they are given sufficiently challenging and stimulating activities. Where learning is slower, this is often because tasks are not adapted well to meet the needs of all individuals and groups.

Most parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress. Inspectors found that, while pupils usually learn well in lessons and their

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achievement is rising, their progress is satisfactory overall.

Quality of teaching

A very large majority of parents and carers believe that their children are taught well. Inspectors' findings show that, while the quality of teaching is improving, with examples of good and outstanding practice, it is typically satisfactory.

Most teachers have a good knowledge of and expertise in the subjects they teach and explain topics and activities clearly to pupils. On occasion, they take too long in doing so before enabling pupils to start working together and learning independently. Teachers include a variety of tasks in their lessons. They work effectively with teaching assistants by ensuring that they understand and are able to fulfil their role in helping groups and individuals, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to play a full part in classroom activities. The school has improved the teaching of phonics (linking sounds to letters). Pupils' attainment in reading is now assessed frequently and accurately and pupils are taught in groups which correspond to their current attainment rather than their age. That enables staff to ensure that the pupils make faster progress.

Inspectors observed several examples of good and some outstanding teaching. In a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher used a good range of resources, including an interactive whiteboard, to help pupils to learn how to produce as many combinations of a set number of colours as possible. She challenged pupils appropriately by providing groups with different versions of the main task which corresponded to their ability levels and used questioning skilfully to check their understanding and to reinforce their learning. When pupils make slower progress, this is because they are not given sufficiently challenging tasks, or because teachers do not expect them to work quickly enough throughout the lesson. Teachers mark pupils' written work regularly and accurately. Some, but not all, give pupils detailed and informative feedback, which enables them to understand what they have done well, as well as how they can improve their work.

Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development effectively. For example, a Key Stage 2 lesson in which pupils enjoyed thoroughly learning and performing a lullaby, enhanced both their cultural and their spiritual development. Most lessons give pupils good opportunities to work together and to understand the importance of listening to and learning from others' contributions.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Teachers, typically, have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and evidence shows that it is usually satisfactory. Pupils are mostly keen to learn, cooperate with and are respectful towards their teachers. Major disruption to learning is uncommon and is dealt with swiftly and effectively if it does occur. Exclusions are increasingly rare because the school has developed alternative methods of improving the behaviour of those pupils who find it hard to meet its expectations, for example, by isolating them

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within school. That ensures that pupils understand the consequences of their actions. On occasion, pupils become distracted, because teachers talk for too long or do not give them sufficiently interesting and engaging activities, or because the work is too easy for some and too difficult for others. School leaders ensure that pupils, as well as their parents and carers, appreciate the importance of regular attendance. As a result, attendance is above average and has risen steadily.

Pupils play together safely and sensibly during play and lunch times and older pupils are beginning to take responsibility for organising activities for younger ones. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know about and understand prejudice-based bullying, as well as the potential dangers posed by misuse of the internet and mobile phones. Several pupils told inspectors that behaviour was improving and a large majority confirms that the school deals well with all types of bullying. In assemblies, pupils showed their good moral and social development in the way they applauded enthusiastically the large number who had received awards for good behaviour.

Inspectors judged behaviour to be satisfactory overall, but found that it is improving and that the school has robust systems for dealing with incidences of poor behaviour. However, not all the adults in the school apply its procedures consistently, leading to a sense of unfairness among some pupils. A very large majority of parents and carers believes that behaviour is good, that their children are safe, and that bullying is dealt with effectively, although a few raised concerns which inspectors discussed with school leaders.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior team, several of whom are relatively new to their posts, are strongly committed to improving provision and outcomes for pupils and have successfully communicated their high expectations to staff. The impact of that is seen in robust performance management. Regular monitoring of teaching, followed by tightly focused and well-tailored intervention to eradicate weaknesses, has resulted in a marked improvement in teaching quality and, consequently, in pupils' achievement. Staff morale is high and teachers grasp opportunities enthusiastically to improve their own practice by, for example, attending courses and visiting other schools. The governing body includes a good range of experience and expertise. It has increased its awareness of the issues facing the school and its ability to challenge, as well as to support, school leaders. The local authority has supported leaders and managers well by helping them to set ambitious, but realistic targets.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development effectively, so that pupils develop skills and talents which will stand them in good stead in secondary school and beyond. Pupils acquire a good knowledge and understanding of ways of life in other countries by means of, for example, links that have been established with a school in France. Opportunities for pupils to gain an appreciation of the different traditions represented in the United Kingdom are more limited.

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The school's effective promotion of equality of opportunity is demonstrated by the fact that there are no significant gaps in achievement between different groups, including pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals. Leaders' willingness to tackle discrimination is evident in their establishment and robust application of policies and procedures designed to combat racist behaviour, of which there are few incidences. The school meets requirements fully for safeguarding children, including taking all reasonable precautions to ensure the premises are secure and vetting all new staff appointments thoroughly. Leaders' accurate self-evaluation and their success in tackling weaknesses indicate the school's strong capacity for sustained 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.



1 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Craylands School, Swanscombe DA10 0LP

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and helpful to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. Thank you, too, for filling in the questionnaire.

Craylands is a satisfactory school, which is improving quickly. You make the progress expected of you in reaching levels that are similar to those of most pupils of your age when you leave the school. We enjoyed listening to you singing in the assemblies. You told us that you feel safe in school and that you are not worried about bullying because the school deals with it well if it happens. You say that behaviour is improving, although sometimes not all of you are as sensible as you could be, or work hard enough in lessons.

The headteacher, senior staff, and the governing body know what needs to be done to make the school even better. To help them to do this, we have asked them to make sure that all the teachers give you activities in their lessons which correspond to your different needs, enable you to work quickly, and keep you interested all the time. We have also asked them to give you enough detailed advice about how you can improve your work. We have also asked them to make sure that all the adults apply the rules for behaviour in the same way all the time. You can help by always behaving as well as you can, and by telling your teachers what you think would make lessons more interesting.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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