

Croyland Primary School

Croyland Road, Wellingborough, NN8 2AX

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good leadership and team work have ensured good improvements in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. There has been effective checking of teaching and learning.
- Most pupils make good progress given their individual starting points. These are often below what is expected typically when they start at the school.
- Pupils frequently make excellent progress in their reading, which helps their other learning considerably and boosts their achievements.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils gaining expected levels in English and mathematics has risen steadily over the past four years and now slightly exceeds the national average.
- There is excellent provision for those pupils in the school's specialist units who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning. They cooperate well together and know how to keep each other safe while at school.
- The large majority of teaching is good throughout the school, and some teaching and learning are outstanding.
- The governing body is active in checking the school's life and work and makes a major contribution, together with the staff, to improving the pupils' education.
- Staff show a strong commitment to ensuring the school's sustained drive for improvement continues.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not yet as strong as that in English.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching because work is not always hard enough for individual pupils and there is not enough sharing of best practice.
- Too few pupils are gaining the higher levels in English and mathematics.
- A few teachers are not making the best use of their teaching assistants to support pupils' learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. All class teachers, with their teaching assistants, were seen working with the pupils.
- Inspectors observed the work of the Key Stage 1 nurture group, support for pupils in the designated special provision for speech and language, and the work of staff in providing additional support to accelerate pupils' reading skills across the school.
- In addition, other direct observations of pupils' learning were undertaken. This included hearing pupils from Years 2 and 6 read, attending an assembly, and a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- General observations were undertaken across the school to observe pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and additional support for disabled pupils or those with special educational needs.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans; policies; self-evaluation reports; monitoring files; safeguarding and curriculum materials; local authority reports on the school; evidence of the school's partnership work; and information for families.
- Governing body documentation was examined, including the headteacher's reports to the governing body, and other reports arising from reviews of school performance by individual governors.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2, including pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable or who were on the school's roll as part of their designated support provision. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the class teachers, office staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and spoke individually with several parents and carers during the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicola Hardman

Additional Inspector

Alan Jarvis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage, or other White ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language, is average.
- An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion of those supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also above average. It is well above average in Key Stage 1.
- On behalf of the local authority the school hosts specially resourced provision for up to 10 pupils with special educational needs from across the local authority area with speech, language and communication needs. Pupils remain in this designated special provision until they no longer require intensive speech and language therapy.
- The school also hosts specially resourced provision for between eight to 12 Key Stage 1 pupils with special educational needs from across the local authority area with identified social, emotional and/or behavioural needs (the Rainbow class nurture group). Such pupils have complex social, emotional, educational and personal needs.
- The school runs a daily breakfast and after-school club for up to 24 of the school's pupils. These are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school holds an International School award, Eco-Schools award, and Healthy Schools status. It holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and a local authority award for anti-bullying.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the momentum for pupils' improved learning and achievement is maintained across all year groups and accelerate further pupils' progress in mathematics to match that in English by:
 - developing additional opportunities for pupils to use their mental mathematics skills
 - extending opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics skills in 'real life' situations.
- Extend the school's work to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring lesson planning makes more extensive use of assessment data to focus work, and identify next steps in learning, for individuals as well as groups of pupils
 - challenging the more-able pupils through different learning activities and a wider range of alternative starting points for them in lessons
 - developing the partnership between teachers and teaching assistants so that all teachers make the best use of teaching assistants in supporting pupils' learning
 - increasing the focus of senior and middle leaders on sharing best practice in teaching amongst all staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class from a wide range of local early years' providers and backgrounds. The range of abilities can span from low to above expectations, but is typically below expectations overall. Most children make good progress in the Reception year and the learning and development of the majority meet national expectations on transfer to Year 1.
- Standards and pupils' achievement are rising steadily across the school. By both Years 2 and 6, and year-by-year overall, the progress made by pupils is better than expected nationally.
- In the summer 2012 tests, Year 6 pupils attained standards that are likely to be at least in line with the national average, and to exceed these in aspects of their English work. Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, make better progress than similar groups nationally. This is because of the focused spending of the pupil premium on specific reading support, interventions and 'reading recovery' work.
- Raising attainment in pupils' literacy skills, and particularly in reading is a key focus for the school. Pupils' achievement is enhanced significantly through the effective teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) throughout the school. This gives the pupils confidence in reading new material and their access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books enhances well their enjoyment in reading.
- Outstanding learning was seen in a Year 6 English lesson as pupils made excellent progress in their exploration of biased and impartial writing. When considering the question as to whether it is ever right to abandon a pet, pupils' levels of discussion and debate enhanced not only their critical and analytical skills, but also the depth of their moral and social awareness.
- Pupils' progress across the school in mathematics, although better than expected nationally, has not accelerated as fast as that in their literacy work. The school is now adapting what is taught in mathematics to focus on the development of mental mathematics work and calculations; this is also part of the school's focus on improving pupils' thinking skills.
- Discussions with disabled pupils and those having special educational needs show they feel supported well by both their teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils appreciate the extra progress they make as a result of the targeted help provided, such as in the Key Stage 1 nurture group. The progress of pupils attached to the designated special provision is accelerated through the excellent speech and language therapy they receive.
- Pupils' cultural development is enhanced through the school's links with African schools. A recent joint project in growing fruit and vegetables, and logging data about this, has enhanced mathematics work for the schools involved. This is also an early example of how the school is working to accelerate progress in mathematics by bringing it more alive for the pupils and relating the subject to 'real life' situations.
- At the time of the last inspection, what was being taught was starting to be developed in more creative and imaginative ways. This has now had time to have an impact and is instrumental in stimulating pupils' progress. Pupils' interest in learning, and their spiritual development in understanding and appreciating human achievement, is also enhanced.

The quality of teaching is good

- The improvements in teaching since the last inspection have been brought about by focused monitoring of teaching by the school's leaders at all levels. This is linked well to the fostering of teachers' professional development.
- There have been a number of recent staffing changes which have led to restructuring. This is resulting in a review of the ways teachers and teaching assistants can support each other and get to know what new staff can add to school development. Some teachers do not provide enough guidance for their teaching assistants, or use the teaching assistants' professional expertise sufficiently effectively.
- In order to extend further the proportion of outstanding teaching, the school has identified that it needs to place a greater emphasis on the sharing of good practice between all teaching and support staff.
- The monitoring of learning is underpinned effectively through well-established assessment systems and the use of data to identify, very early, any potential concerns or underachievement. The school uses this data to help develop a wide range of support strategies, including effective 'reading recovery' work. This has been enhanced by the well-considered use teachers have made of the information gained from the new Year 1 phonics screening check to support pupils whose reading is at risk of falling behind.
- Teachers' planning, and some marking, does not always identify clearly enough the next steps in learning for individual pupils, although it does so for broad ability groups. In particular, different learning activities and alternative starting points in lessons for more-able pupils are not clearly identified. Strategies to enable pupils to gain higher levels are not always obvious.
- There is a great deal of expertise in the school, on the part of teachers and teaching assistants, for the very effective teaching of pupils in the specialist support units, and for guiding the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Outstanding teaching was seen in an excellent food technology lesson in the Key Stage 1 nurture group. The team work between the teacher and teaching assistant enhanced the pupils' learning and personal development significantly. The making, tasting and evaluation of pumpkin soup engaged pupils most effectively, not only in their social development but also in the encouragement of their speaking and listening skills. Language and descriptions such as 'saucy, spicy and peppery' were explored. Pupils, as all cooks should, used their senses of sight, smell and taste exceptionally well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy their learning, and are keen to play an active part in lessons because they see that their teachers have much to offer them. They appreciate the ways staff encourage them to extend their learning and experiences of the world. Breakfast and after-school clubs play a valuable part not only in supporting families, but also in the pupils' social development.
- The school has a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with behavioural, social and emotional needs, particularly in Key Stage 1. Consequently, there are a few pupils who find it very difficult to manage their own behaviour consistently well throughout a school day. Positive behaviour management on the part of staff ensures any disruption to learning is minimal.

- While a couple of responses to Parent View indicated some concern about behaviour and bullying, no parents or carers spoken with by inspectors expressed any such concerns.
- Discussions with pupils show they have a secure understanding of what constitutes bullying. Their moral and social development is such that they recognise and cope well with any instances of human frailty, when their peers may do something foolish. This not only reflects the school's underlying approach to anti-discrimination but also its ethos in ensuring all in its community are appreciated and understood as individuals.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now average. There remains work to be done with some parents and carers, but the school has established good systems for monitoring and supporting families whose children's learning is affected by repeated absences.
- Pupils were invariably polite and interested when talking with inspectors, and show good levels of respect for each other. Adults are good role models. The pupils themselves often quoted the helpful nature of their teachers as one of the best things they liked about the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The professional skills of the headteacher and deputy headteacher complement each other very well. Together they form an effective team. This approach is reflected in the improvements seen since the last inspection and the school's capacity for further improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is involved actively in all aspects of the school's life
 - is well-informed and makes good use of its members' expertise in support of the school
 - takes good care to monitor and evaluate all aspects of school life in order to contribute positively to development and improvement planning
 - monitors regularly the impact of teachers' performance management targets, which are focused well on maintaining and developing further the quality of teaching and learning.
- Joint observations during the inspection confirmed the accuracy of the senior leadership team's assessments of the quality of teaching and learning. New teachers are supported well. There is exemplary practice in the approach of the headteacher and deputy headteacher in their evaluations of new teachers. Early lesson observations provide them with a list of 'things which went well', 'things to think about', and 'a few instant quick-wins'. This approach is valued.
- Performance management is effective, and focused firmly on ensuring pupils' accelerated progress. This is linked securely to professional development and a coaching approach to improve further the quality of teaching. Key improvements to ensure pupils make further gains in their mathematics work, and to develop additional ways lessons are planned for individual pupils, are already embedded in the school's thinking and development planning.
- The school's good arrangements for safeguarding its pupils were confirmed during the inspection. All necessary checks on staff are undertaken. The school is conscientious in monitoring the well-being of pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable.
- The local authority ensures the school's improvement partner visits the school termly to discuss its development and to monitor pupils' progress. This provides basic support for the school.
- The school itself contributes effectively to the work of its education partners in the area,

particularly through its work with pupils from other schools who attend its specialist support units. Correspondence from the school's partners shows how much they value the school's work, and expertise, with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

- There is close work with the local university on the training of teachers. Senior leaders have been involved in international conferences on subjects such as transition arrangements between schools and key stages. The school's success in promoting pupils' literacy work has been augmented through its involvement in a European project designed to raise pupils' communication skills.

- Overall, the school's leaders and staff have shown the school is all about unlocking and celebrating the pupils' potential, helping them to develop their creativity and valuing their ideas, encouraging their independence and appreciating what they have to offer as individuals and future citizens. In all these things the school has been conspicuously successful since its last inspection and it is now striving for excellence.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	133600
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	406535

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	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Packwood
Headteacher	Tim Hill
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2010
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