

Crowlands Primary School

London Road, Romford, Essex, RM7 9EJ

Inspection dates 19–20 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Special measures	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- While pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are above national levels, variations remain in the rates of progress in different year groups and classes.
- The quality of teaching lacks consistency because the recent improvements in teaching introduced by the acting headteacher have not had sufficient time to improve achievement across the school.
- Activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are thoughtfully planned, but opportunities to develop children's language through dialogue are missed because children have to work independently for too long without sufficient support from adults.
- The curriculum is at the early stages of evolving into a skills-based model and the school recognises more work is needed to secure the progressive development of pupils' skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The upward trend in pupils' attainment at both keystages has been sustained.
- The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are committed to school improvement and have successfully led the staff through the difficulties of recent changes by communicating ambitions for the school's future, which all staff know and understand.
- Early reading is developed well by highly structured and effective phonic programmes (the linking of letters and the sounds they make) enabling pupils to segment and blend effectively.
- Pupils are courteous, polite and friendly and relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are good.
- The improvement in pupils' attendance which, over the past two years, has risen substantially and is now above the average for primary schools nationally.

Information about this inspection

- In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school no longer requires special measures.
- The inspection team observed 23 lessons, of which nine were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Three meetings were held with pupils of all ages and inspectors listened to nine pupils read from Years 1, 2 and 6. Further meetings were held with senior and middle managers, and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the comments made by a very small number of parents and carers in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school’s work, looked at the school’s self-evaluation of its own effectiveness, examined policies, including those relating to safeguarding, records of pupils’ progress, monitoring records of teaching and learning, attendance figures and the school’s improvement planning.

Inspection team

Kekshan Salaria, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Michael Sutherland-Harper

Additional inspector

Ann Short

Additional inspector

Clare Gillies

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school, which opened in April 2009 through the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, although an increasing number come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. A smaller-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as disabled or with special educational needs is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average. These needs are linked mainly to specific learning difficulty, moderate learning difficulty, emotional and social difficulties and speech and language communication needs.
- When the school was inspected in May 2010, it was judged to require special measures and since then five monitoring inspections have taken place. Initially the school made good progress but this was not sustained. The school has undergone a turbulent period over the last two years, with a number of changes to staffing and the leadership of the school. Since March 2012 the school has been led by an acting headteacher.
- The school is currently above the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of all pupils by ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better by teachers focusing on:
 - ensuring that teaching strategies and resources maximise learning opportunities for each pupil in every lesson
 - assessing pupils' work within lessons in order to adapt teaching to the pupils' needs as the lesson progresses
 - providing clear guidance to all pupils so that they know how to improve their work
 - ensuring that the curriculum supports progression in the development of skills.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage further to ensure that pupils get a good start to their education.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children arrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills broadly expected for their age. They have access to an attractive outdoor learning environment and a range of indoor learning resources. They make expected progress because the organisation of their learning helps them to develop their personal and social skills. However, acting senior leaders realise that more needs to be done to develop children's skills in communication, language and literacy, particularly as these skills are often at a relatively lower level when children start school. Staff have correctly focused on improving children's skills in linking letters with sounds and their writing skills. Children's work shows signs that they are making better progress in this area of learning.
- When compared with the 2010 results, attainment in 2012 in the national tests for Year 6 pupils improved significantly with the majority reaching above expected levels of attainment in English and mathematics. The school's comprehensive tracking data show that although progress in mathematics is improving, pupils generally perform better in English than in mathematics throughout the school. This trend is now being halted in Key Stage 1 where externally moderated reading, writing and mathematics outcomes show that by the end of Year 2, pupils are attaining above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, tracking data for 2012, based on reliable assessments, which have been moderated, indicate the majority of pupils are now making at least expected progress, and for many it is now good.
- The school has carefully used the Pupil Premium to target support for groups of pupils in danger of falling behind. The introduction of more frequent and rigorous checks on pupils' progress by both teachers and acting senior leaders is ensuring that early signs of underachievement are dealt with promptly through well-delivered intervention sessions.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make just as good progress as their peers because their provision is carefully thought out and small group work is specifically tailored to meet their needs.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is uneven and not enough is of a good enough quality to narrow the attainment gap for all pupils.
- In the best lessons teachers link subjects together to make them more meaningful for pupils. They engage pupils fully in active learning and tailor the work carefully to meet pupils' particular needs. They are able to do this because they keep track of how well pupils have understood each stage of learning. This good practice is becoming more widespread but is not yet consistent in all classes and all areas of the curriculum.
- The feedback pupils receive about their work, both during lessons and through marking, contributes to the better progress made by pupils in the most effective lessons. There are examples of this good practice throughout the school, but it is not consistently applied in all classes and subjects.
- Where teaching requires improvement, planning and the use of resources are not well matched to the needs of pupils and time is not always used well and teachers do not readily adapt tasks if pupils do not respond as expected.
- Teaching assistants work well with class teachers, modelling and supporting groups and individuals with specific needs.
- The teaching of early reading and writing, including systematic phonics, is highly effective in securing pupils' confidence and, thus, high standards in these areas.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Throughout the school pupils respond well to their teachers' consistent expectations for their behaviour. Positive attitudes to learning are a feature of each classroom. Pupils are very polite towards adults and considerate of the concerns and feelings of others.
- Pupils themselves say that behaviour is usually good at break and lunchtime. In discussion, pupils acknowledged that bullying sometimes occurs but are confident in the effective way the school deals with this. Pupils interviewed expressed strong moral values and were particularly intolerant about prejudiced-based bullying, including racist name calling. On the rare occasions when racist behaviour occurs, pupils noted that they would speak up for the victim and against such behaviour. Parents and carers spoken to during this inspection also noted that acting senior leaders act quickly to help pupils to sort out their arguments.
- Pupils are well aware of the need for good attendance and are motivated by individual and class rewards. Hence, attendance has risen to above the national average and punctuality has improved.
- Although pupils are happy and most enjoy coming to school, they would like to be more actively involved in activities in the school and wider community.

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher provides strong, clear-sighted leadership. She has established a systematic approach to leadership at both senior and middle levels and in so doing has provided the model through which staff at various levels are successfully developing their capacity as leaders.
- The acting senior leaders have very high aspirations for the school and know the school well. Despite the many recent staff changes, acting senior leaders have used their substantial expertise to create a culture of continuous improvement and to encourage staff to take a lead in trying new ways of doing things to improve the school. Systems work well because of good teamwork and communication.
- The school acknowledges that the quality of teaching is not consistently good enough. Nevertheless, the rising trend of attainment and steady improvement to pupils' learning are secure indications of the school's good capacity to continue to improve. The school has also been successful in improving attendance, in particular by reducing the number of pupils whose attendance has been poor.
- The systems which acting senior staff use to regularly track pupils' progress are good. They give a clear picture of individual pupils' attainment and progress in relation to national expectations and are an important tool for identifying those pupils who need additional support. However, in the Early Years Foundation Stage opportunities are sometimes missed to make informal observations to feed into future planning.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are strong and the large majority are pleased with the school. Understandably, they have the same high aspirations for the school as it has for itself.
- The school's procedures for safeguarding are secure. Checks on new staff are carried out correctly and recorded well.
- The curriculum is at the early stage of development. The evidence around the school, in books and observed in lessons indicates the focus has been literacy and numeracy. Acting senior leaders acknowledge the need to develop a curriculum which secures the progressive development of pupils' skills. A thematic approach is in place based on increasingly relevant links between subjects. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for instance through topics based on particular countries and periods in history.

The governance of the school:

The governing body has shown considerable resilience in recent months having taken difficult but

decisive action. It draws well on the expertise and knowledge of individual governors when challenging leaders and managers about performance and provision. The governing body has increased its capacity to challenge the school and scrutinises its work in relation to provision and outcomes.

Local authority support

Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided a high level of support which has both challenged and supported the school, for example, in the training provided for staff, which has resulted in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. The link adviser has wisely adjusted and amended the support needed.

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	135812
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	381925

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	577
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Wood
Headteacher	Hayley McClenaghan (Acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 May 2010
Telephone number	01708 743402
Fax number	01708 742175
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