

Crossgates Primary School

Kiln Lane, Milnrow, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 3HB

Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils are full of praise for their school. They say, for example, 'If you come here you make friends in an instant!' and 'It's not just work, work, work: we do fun things too'.
- As they move up through the school, pupils make good progress. They often do particularly well in English.
- Teachers plan lessons carefully. They choose interesting activities that are often linked to topics such as 'The Second World War'. Work is usually set at just the right level for the different groups of pupils: not too hard and not too easy.
- Pupils' behaviour is sometimes excellent, for example, during assemblies and when teaching is outstanding. Lessons are seldom interrupted by inconsiderate behaviour. Pupils feel safe in school and instances of bullying are very unusual.
- The headteacher has been the driving force behind the many improvements made in recent years. Other leaders, staff and governors are right behind her and are helping to make sure that teaching and pupils' achievement continue to improve.
- Pupils have superb opportunities to learn music.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school's leaders are keen for all teachers to have chance to learn from those whose teaching is outstanding. There is not yet enough teaching of this quality. In some cases, learning slows down too much during particular parts of the lesson. Not all teachers include helpful comments when they mark pupils' books.
- Pupils, particularly some of the girls, do not get on quite as well in mathematics as in English. They do not have as many chances to practise using their mathematics skills when doing topic work.
- The outdoor area used by children in the Reception Year does not enable them to learn as well as the indoor classrooms do. Leaders know this and intend to improve the outdoors but the plans they have made are too vague.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons involving 11 teachers.
- They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and a representative of the local authority. Informal conversations took place between inspectors and parents.
- Samples of pupils' work were looked at along with assessments of their progress and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- Responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered as was information from the school's own most recent parent questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rosemary Eaton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maria McGarry	Additional Inspector
John Shutt	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Crossgates is an average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher has joined the school since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - pupils learn quickly during every part of each lesson
 - marking always informs pupils about how they can improve their work
 - all teachers have opportunities to learn from those whose teaching is already outstanding.
- Improve achievement in mathematics by:
 - encouraging girls, especially those who are neither weaker nor more able in the subject, to contribute to discussions during mathematics lessons
 - giving pupils more chances to practise mathematics when they are learning in other subjects or during topic work.
- Ensure that Reception Year children are able to learn as well outdoors as they do when indoors. Achieve this by drawing up more precise plans that show:
 - what actions are to be taken and how they will improve children's learning
 - the dates by which each step is to be completed
 - how much money and other resources, such as staff training, will be required.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start school with skills that are typical for their age. They quickly settle into the Reception classes, becoming happy and confident learners and making good progress during the Reception Year.
- During each of the past few years, the standards reached by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, have risen. More and more pupils are reaching levels higher than those expected for their age. The improvements in writing are particularly impressive. They are the result of leaders and staff working together, for example, to make sure that work set in writing is always hard enough.
- Pupils are currently making good progress. Many make progress at faster rates than are expected nationally. Progress tends to be rather slower in mathematics than English, especially for those girls whose mathematical ability is roughly average compared to others in the same class.
- As the school provides pupils with equal opportunities to make good progress, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Staff very quickly notice when pupils are having difficulties and organise additional help, such as time with a teaching assistant to work on improving spelling or numeracy.
- A number of pupils have personal circumstances that make it hard for them to concentrate on their school work. They are given support to help them cope with their emotions and worries and this enables them to make the same good progress as other pupils.
- The progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is speeding up because the funds are often used in imaginative ways that benefit individual pupils.
- Pupils throughout the school use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make well to help them read and spell. By Year 6, many read widely, accurately, and with understanding. There are plentiful examples of pupils using their writing skills in different subjects.
- Children in the Reception Year learn more rapidly indoors than when they are outside. Although adults organise some excellent outdoor activities, such as using spades to mix mud 'potions' at Halloween, there are not as many good opportunities to learn outside as inside.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils say that they enjoy lessons and that these are often fun. Teachers plan so that pupils learn in a variety of ways such as through drama, designing and making things or using modern technology. These keep pupils interested in learning and mean that they often work without asking adults for help.
- Topics, for example, 'The Tudors' often link different subjects together and help pupils to see the significance of what they learn, especially in English. For example, pupils in Year 4 and 5 wrote letters, imagining they were Henry VIII and putting into practice what they had learned about how to use writing to persuade. They had previously been to see an exhibition of Tudor life: teachers try to provide pupils with experiences that spark their imagination.
- Teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their mathematical skills other than in mathematics lessons.
- Teaching assistants play important roles in pupils' learning. For example, they provide good support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs whether during class lessons or when small groups are taken to one side to follow particular programmes of work.
- Staff know each pupil and their circumstances very well so they are able to, for example, give a word of encouragement when most needed. These very good relationships are one reason why pupils do as they are asked and behave so well in lessons.
- Teachers collect a great deal of useful information about each pupil's learning. The way in which they use this has improved since the last inspection. In most instances, tasks are varied

according to what different pupils need to learn next. This means for example that the most-able pupils are given harder work and so make good progress.

- At certain times during some lessons, pupils do not learn quickly enough. This happens most often when pupils spend too long listening to the teacher rather than getting on with their own work.
- Some teachers' marking is very helpful because it informs pupils just how to improve their work. Too often comments congratulate pupils but do not give pointers for improvement. This suggests to pupils that, for example, their writing is as good as it could possibly be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- It is unusual for lessons to be disturbed by minor misbehaviour, such as fidgeting with equipment or calling out answers before being asked. Such incidents chiefly occur when teachers are less experienced or expert. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons where teaching is of the highest order.
- Pupils move around school sensibly and behave impeccably during assemblies.
- Parents report no concerns about behaviour and neither do staff.
- Any disagreements between pupils tend to occur when they are playing, particularly when football is involved. Pupils say that these are cases of 'friends falling out' and that adults help to sort things out. They are quite clear how they should behave, for example, 'no hitting and no gangs'.
- Records confirm that the few instances of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying including cyber-bullying. They know that they should tell an adult at once and are confident that matters will be dealt with thoroughly.
- A few pupils find it hard to control their own behaviour sometimes because of their particular special educational needs. Leaders and staff together decide how to help each pupil and deal with them in the manner that has been agreed. Behaviour then improves markedly.
- Pupils feel safe in school because adults take care of them and friends look out for each other. Older pupils act as 'Best Buds', looking after younger ones and setting excellent examples. Pupils are aware of the risks posed by darker nights, roads, drugs and strangers for example.
- Pupils are keen to get on with their learning. They work well together in pairs or small groups and usually try hard to produce the best work they can.
- Some of the girls are reluctant to discuss their ideas or play an active part in mathematics lessons. They think that boys are better at mathematics and so girls are less ready to answer questions. The girls feel embarrassed to answer in case they are not correct. Staff are trying different ways to encourage girls to 'have a go', such as having 'girls only' mathematics groups, and in the most recent national tests girls did better than previously.
- Pupils attend school very regularly and arrive in good time for the start of lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has got the staff working as a team that shares her high ambitions for the school and for every pupil. She leads by example, organising the arrangements for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and 'rolling up her sleeves' to teach lessons and show newer teachers how reading is taught here.
- Staff with leadership responsibilities have been helped to gain the skills and confidence needed, for example, to lead staff meetings about their subject. All teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors are expected to take the lead in improving some aspect of the school. This means for instance that pupils now have more productive ways of playing at lunchtime.

- The formal system for managing teachers' performance works very well. It has led to improvements in teaching, for example, by pinpointing the training needed by individuals. Additionally, teachers' responsibilities are now linked to their salaries so some are more involved in moving the school forward.
 - Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and are well aware that some but not enough is outstanding. They are seeking ways to enable all teachers to learn how those with most expertise get the very best out of their pupils.
 - The plan for improving the outdoor area for the Reception Year is not detailed enough. The list of intentions is not backed up by reasons why each has been chosen, timescales for their completion, who will take responsibility and the costs involved.
 - Often, individual arrangements are made in order to provide pupils with equal opportunities, for example, by making sure that a child has a certain member of staff to talk to when troubled. Special projects are arranged for groups such as those with autistic spectrum disorders or particular gifts or talents.
 - The curriculum emphasises English and mathematics but includes a wide range of other exciting and relevant courses, visits and clubs. There are links with schools in four other countries. Music abounds, from the steel band and choir to tuition in a variety of instruments.
 - Parents think highly of the school and have plenty of chances to get involved in school life or to learn how to help their child at home.
 - Local authority staff visit and keep a close eye on how well this good school is getting on. They respond readily when asked for additional support, for example, to advise on developments in the Reception Year.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well aware of how well the school is performing and the quality of teaching because they join staff to consider what did or did not go well the previous year and to look at information such as pupils' test results. They then help to decide future priorities and how the budget, including the pupil premium funding, is spent. The governors are very committed and support the school in many different ways. However, they are also prepared to ask probing questions, for example, about the practicalities of a visit abroad.
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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	105846
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	402990

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Ogden
Headteacher	Jane Norton
Date of previous school inspection	24 October 2007
Telephone number	01706 654573
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