

# West Croft Junior School

Coronation Road, Bideford, EX39 3DE

## Inspection dates

11–12 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Too many pupils, including some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, do not achieve as well as they should. The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough.
- Teachers sometimes focus on activities rather than on how well different groups of pupils are learning. They do not always have high enough expectations of more-able pupils. The marking of work is not always clear enough to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- Pupils do not write as many longer pieces of work as they should. Teachers do not instil a sense of enjoyment in reading.
- Subject coordinators role in checking the quality of teaching is weak. Some of the senior leaders', managers' and governors' plans are not well enough established to have a significant impact on achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The improvements made, plans to improve, and the commitment of staff and the governing body, show that the school has the capacity to improve.
- There is a good range of out-of-school activities such as clubs and visits, which pupils greatly enjoy.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe and well supported. They attend school regularly. They have a very positive attitude towards learning and enjoy taking on responsibility.
- The school uses skilled support staff effectively to help pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in a large number of lessons.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 19 lessons, taught by 12 teachers. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff, pupils, and three governors. There was also a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also the responses made in 39 staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and scrutinised a variety of documentation, including data on pupils' current progress, the school improvement plan, records of monitoring visits by the local authority, the school's self-evaluation and records relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

John Laver, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephanie Thomas

Additional Inspector

Kevin Wright

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- An above average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which includes pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action, and at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, are both above average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes in the teaching staff.
- The school operates a breakfast club for pupils before the beginning of the school day.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that it is typically good by:
  - making lessons move faster and raising teachers' expectations of what more-able pupils can achieve, so that they make good progress in all lessons
  - making sure that when teachers plan lessons they focus on what pupils are to learn rather than on the activities they will do
  - providing more opportunities for teachers to share the good practice which is evident in some lessons
- Improve achievement in writing and mathematics, so that more pupils leave school working at a higher levels in these subjects, by:
  - improving the consistency and quality of marking, so that it relates more closely to pupils' targets and always gives pupils clear guidance about how to improve their work
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write on their own, and at length, in subjects other than English
  - giving subject coordinators more opportunities to check progress in writing and mathematics and ensuring they can give teachers guidance on how to build on improvement
- Raise attainment and improve progress in reading by:
  - helping parents to be more involved in supporting their children's reading
  - encouraging pupils to read for pleasure, by making more use of the school library and other teaching methods to increase pupils' skills and interest in reading

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils make rapid and sustained progress, including the more-able.
- Sometimes pupils do not achieve as well as they should in lessons, particularly the more-able, because the work is not demanding enough.
- S Progress in reading is not fast enough.. This is partly because, although teachers conduct guided reading sessions competently, there are few strategies to encourage reading for pleasure.
- Progress in writing is too variable because pupils do not learn to write independently, or at length, well enough.
- Pupils leave the school with broadly average standards of attainment. There has been a gradual upward trend since the previous inspection, although too few pupils reach Level 5. Recent progress in mathematics has been faster than that in English. Some previous gaps in attainment between different groups have narrowed because of the school's efforts to improve achievement for all groups of pupils.
- Many pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium, make progress in line with expectations for their age. Sometimes these pupils make better progress than other groups because of the skilled additional support they receive.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not promote consistently good achievement in lessons.
- Where pupils do not learn as well as they should, teachers talk for too long or set tasks that are not demanding enough, particularly for more-able pupils. Teachers' plans often focus on what pupils are going to do rather than what they are going to learn. Whilst the activities often keep pupils busy, the key things they are meant to understand are not obvious and exercises often meander.
- In too many lessons, the pace is slow or teachers' expectations are low. In some mathematics sessions, the tasks are repetitive or too easy for some of the pupils to make good progress.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Some of it is informative, showing pupils how to improve their work and getting them to respond to comments. However, marking frequently relies on general comments which give no real indication of how good the work actually is, how it relates to pupils' targets or how it can be improved.
- In the better lessons, teachers set out what pupils are to learn clearly, and engage their interest with a range of activities at the right level for them. Teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards imaginatively, particularly when demonstrating different approaches to solving problems.
- Teachers deploy teaching assistants very effectively, both in lessons and outside class, to assist individual pupils or small groups to make good progress.
- Pupils develop skills, knowledge and understanding best when teachers take account of pupils' prior learning and needs. This was observed in a mathematics lesson about calculating the areas of shapes. The teaching was well-paced and, crucially, less-able pupils were well supported whilst the more-able pupils had a challenging task which encouraged them to create their own problems and solutions.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Although a small minority of parents do not believe that the school manages behaviour well, the great majority of pupils believe behaviour is good and they feel safe in school. Only a small number of parents responded to the Parent View questionnaire, but the school's own surveys produced a much larger and more positive response. Inspectors judged behaviour and safety to be good.
- School records show that the few incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with effectively.
- Pupils recognise that bullying can take various forms, but do not believe that any of these are a particular issue, and feel that staff look after them well. Pupils get on well with each other, both in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils enjoy learning, both in lessons and in the many out-of-school activities. During the inspection pupils were observed enthusiastically practising the Christmas production.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility. They run their own school council, and older pupils act responsibly in other ways, for example as playground mediators and buddies.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- The breakfast club gives pupils an opportunity to make a healthy start to the day.

**The leadership and management require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because they do not yet ensure that there is enough good teaching or achievement.
- The headteacher and school leaders have a mostly accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, but they have an over-optimistic view of how much pupils' progress has improved since the previous inspection. The school uses external support, for example from the local authority, to promote better progress, and the success in addressing issues from the previous inspection shows that the school can improve further.
- Senior leaders check the quality of teaching regularly, although coordinators, whilst supporting colleagues in their subject areas, have limited opportunities to observe teaching and learning themselves.
- Performance management is carried out competently. Teachers' pay and career progression are linked to their accountability for pupils' progress, and where performance has been found wanting it has been a factor in the staff changes made since the previous inspection.
- Leaders make positive use of pupil premium funding, mainly by providing additional adult support for pupils who find it hard to learn well. As a result, some of these pupils, although not all, are now making good progress in lessons.
- Staff share in leaders' commitment to improvement, and the school's development plan focuses on the key areas for improvement, based on its mostly accurate evaluation of the school's performance.
- Leaders promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, pupils' writing on Anne Frank showed that the pupils had reflected on the issues she had to deal with.
- Pupils enjoy topics, such as the history of Bideford and local studies. This is having increasing impact in linking skills and concepts in literacy with history. Leaders recognise that developing more chances for pupils to write on their own and at length is an area for development.
- Safeguarding procedures and policies meet government requirements and adequate staff training is in place. Pupils understand how to stay safe.
- West Croft is a welcoming school, helping pupils who join the school later in the term to settle in well. This ensures that these pupils have equal opportunities and there is a notable lack of discrimination in the school. The school is also welcoming to parents and is working hard, with some success, to involve them more in their children's learning, especially through reading projects.

■ The school uses the facilities in other local schools well, for example to develop staff expertise and provide pupils with access to more resources.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The membership of the governing body has changed considerably since the previous inspection. Governors are now more active and better trained. They both support the school and hold it to account, managing the performance of senior staff so that it is linked to pupils' progress and challenging leaders in areas such as the curriculum and achievement. Governors, through their regular visits to school and their growing expertise, have helped to reduce some of the differences in the quality of teaching. They monitor key aspects such as financial management, the use of pupil premium funding and safeguarding procedures well. Governors have managed the process by which issues from the previous inspection have been addressed well although, they have an over-optimistic view of how much pupils' progress has improved.
-

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113132
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	401343

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	326
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Duncan Loveless
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Brierley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01237 473548
<b>Fax number</b>	01237 423440
<b>Email address</b>	admin@westcroft.devon.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

