

Cromer Junior School

Norwich Road, Cromer, Norfolk, NR27 0EX

Inspection dates 14–15 March 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make rapid progress in all year groups. Lessons are interesting and capture pupils' imagination, so they enjoy their learning.
- Teaching is typically at least good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils are always required to think carefully about their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They love coming to school and are confident that they are safe in school. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well.
- Leaders and managers have focused sharply and effectively on improving teaching and learning.
- Teachers' marking and feedback are consistently good so pupils know exactly how to improve their work.
- The specialist resource base is outstanding. Teaching for autistic pupils is excellent and they make outstanding progress.
- Governors work closely with the school's leaders, supporting and challenging them well. Additional funds are used wisely to help individual pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils have few opportunities to use the skills they learn in mathematics in other subjects.
- The extra help given to pupils supported by the pupil premium has not yet had sufficient impact on their attainment levels.
- The amount of outstanding teaching is increasing, but there is not yet enough to support exceptional progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons, including in the specialist resource base. Four of these lessons were seen together with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also visited parts of other lessons to observe the teaching of reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' books in all year groups were examined with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the deputy headteacher, senior teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met a group of pupils formally, and spoke with pupils informally about their school throughout the inspection.
- Documents scrutinised during the inspection included school improvement plans, school self-evaluation, records of teaching, governing body meetings and local authority visits, behaviour documentation and safeguarding policies.
- The views of 34 parents expressed on the Parent View website were taken into account. Other parents' views were sought at the start of the school day.
- The responses to 22 staff questionnaires were considered.

Inspection team

Emily Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Cox

Additional Inspector

Piers Ranger

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families, is average.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The remaining few come from a range of minority ethnic groups but very few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress.
- The school has a specialist resource base for pupils who have special educational needs, which currently caters for two pupils with autism. This is funded by the local authority. Pupils attend the base for two terms, but remain registered at other primary schools in the county.
- The school has been led by the deputy headteacher since September 2012, when the headteacher became ill.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics so pupils reach higher levels of attainment by providing regular opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Close the gap in attainment in both English and mathematics between pupils who receive the pupil premium and their classmates, by monitoring the impact of pupil premium spending and changing the way the funding is spent if needed.
- Make more teaching outstanding by sharing the outstanding practice that already exists in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average when they join the school in Year 3. School data show that all pupils have made good progress during the past two years. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily over the last three-years, and the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach above-average standards in English and mathematics in the 2013 national tests.
- Pupils' progress is monitored rigorously, so any gaps in learning are quickly identified and help and guidance provided to get them back on track. Successful one-to-one and small-group teaching helps pupils catch up, and they are now learning at a faster rate throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they receive both in lessons and in small group work. They are encouraged to be independent in their learning, and progress information shows that they do as well in school as their classmates.
- Pupils who attend the specialist resource base make excellent progress in their learning. Their progress is reviewed daily in the unit and weekly with class teachers.
- In 2012 there was a dip in pupils' reading standards. The school responded by introducing a new approach to teaching reading and writing across a range of subjects, and as a result reading standards have accelerated in all year groups.
- Progress in mathematics, while good, is not as quick as in English because pupils do not have regular opportunities to practise and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Pupils of all ages are clear about what they are learning, and confidently share their ideas with each other. In all classes they devise their own 'steps for success' at the start of lessons, so they can evaluate their own progress and achievements in learning.
- All pupils who benefit from the pupil premium make similar progress to their classmates. Test results for these pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 show that they are three terms behind other pupils in English and in mathematics, although the school has good evidence to show that the gap between the attainment of these pupils and that of their classmates is beginning to close in all year groups. The funding is used to provide extra staff in smaller teaching groups and one-to-one support where needed.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good in all year groups, and much is outstanding. Where teaching is outstanding teachers make excellent use of time and make sure their explanations are short so pupils have more time to complete learning activities. One boy commented, 'If our teachers gave us any more information there would be nothing for us to think about.'
- Pupils in the specialist resource base benefit from outstanding teaching. They are taught in the base for English and mathematics and work is well matched to their differing abilities and needs. Pupils who attend the centre learn with their year group for subjects like physical education, and this helps them to develop social aspects of their learning.

- Mathematics in Year 5 and 6 is taught to boys and girls separately. The pupils enjoy this and it helps girls to become more confident in their mathematical abilities. Both boys and girls are now making faster progress in mathematics.
- Work is well matched to the different abilities of pupils. Teachers know the range of abilities in their class and carefully plan tasks to meet these needs.
- In lessons pupils develop 'skills for learning' such as resilience and resourcefulness. Teachers refer to these when presenting a new challenge, and pupils use the skills to show their determination to stick at a challenging activity and be successful.
- Teaching assistants provide skilled support for pupils while encouraging them to be independent learners. They lead small groups very well by asking good questions and encouraging pupils to think carefully for themselves.
- Marking is regular and provides excellent dialogue between teachers and pupils to improve work. This is especially the case in writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have excellent attitudes towards school and their learning. In class they concentrate hard and persevere to complete their tasks. They provide outstanding support for each other when working in pairs or small groups.
- Pupils show respect, courtesy and politeness for each other, adults and visitors in school. Relationships are positive and pupils are eager to talk enthusiastically about their work.
- Behaviour is excellent on the playground and around the school. Pupils move between lessons without fuss. They show independence in achieving high standards of behaviour.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that there is very little bullying in school. School records support their views. Pupils are confident that adults in school help them to resolve problems.
- Behaviour is outstanding in the specialist resource base. Staff make their expectations very clear to the pupils and the teaching of short appropriate tasks means that pupils enjoy their learning and behave well.
- Historically attendance has been low. As a result of decisive action led by the deputy headteacher to encourage good attendance, it has risen to above the national average this academic year. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
- The school teaches pupils how to be safe, especially when using the internet. Pupils sign up to a 'code of conduct' before every session involving using the internet in school. This keeps pupils focused on their online safety.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. The school council is very well organised and pupils have roles like chairperson, secretary and treasurer. Pupils who run the school shop are responsible for ordering stock and calculating profit. Pupils respond positively to these opportunities.

The leadership and management are good

- The members of the long established senior team work very effectively together and share the same ambition for the school and its pupils. This is why school improvement has continued in a period in which the school is being led by the deputy headteacher.
- Recently introduced systems for monitoring teachers' performance are effective. Clear targets are set that link in to school improvement planning. Areas for development are clearly linked to improving pupils' achievement. This process does not yet extend to giving teachers regular opportunities to learn from each other's best practice.
- Pupils are taught through a variety of interesting topics that are studied by the whole school. In these lessons pupils have the opportunity to use and improve their English skills. This has led to recent rapid improvements in their progress in reading and writing. At the moment pupils do not have the same opportunity to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well across different subjects, enabling pupils to understand traditions and lifestyles different from their own.
- Leaders have an accurate awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Together with the improvements that have been made, for example the recent increase in pupils' reading abilities, this means that the school has the capacity for further improvement.
- The systems for tracking pupils' progress are rigorous. They enable leaders to identify gaps in pupils' learning and arrange appropriate support that helps pupils to catch up.
- The manager of the specialist resource base provides excellent leadership. She has built strong relationships with staff in pupils' main schools to ensure that transition into and out of the unit is as free from stress as possible for pupils who have autism.
- The systems for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are good. The school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils and works well with outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils. The school ensures that there is an equal opportunity for all pupils and that discrimination in any form is not tolerated, so the school is a safe and harmonious place to be.
- Most parents are positive about the school. However, a small minority feel they could be better informed about their child's progress. Leaders and managers are considering ways to improve communication with parents.
- The school receives 'light touch' support from the local authority and receives one visit per year. This was temporarily increased to provide additional support for the deputy headteacher when he took over the leadership. This support has been of a good standard.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors hold senior leaders to account to ensure pupils receive a good education. They receive good information from school leaders, including subject leaders, about pupils' performance compared to national data. This gives them a clear understanding of the strengths of the school as well as the key areas for development. The Chair of the Governing Body is a regular visitor to the school and provides good support to the leadership team. The governing body is well informed by leaders about the performance of teachers and pupils. This enables governors to make good decisions about staffing, pay rises and the use of the pupil premium which are focused on raising pupils' achievement.

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	120802
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	403448

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Simpson
Headteacher	Steve Godson
Date of previous school inspection	11 September 2007
Telephone number	01263 512155
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Email address	office@cromer-jun.norfolk.sch.uk

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