

The Croft Primary School

Churchill way, Painswick, Gloucestershire, GL6 6RQ

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2013

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.

- Pupils achieve well and the school successfully meets the needs of all pupils.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils make good progress to reach above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan lessons well and explain clearly to pupils what they will be learning in lessons.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils work very well with each other in lessons. They are very proud of the school and behaviour around the site is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school.
- Leaders know how well the school is performing and what needs to be done to improve. They check the progress of individual children thoroughly.
- The interesting range of activities offered by the school makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to enable even more pupils to reach the higher levels.
- The marking of pupils' work, the guidance on how they can improve and the opportunities they have to respond to teachers' comments are not consistent in all classes.
- Curriculum leaders for English and mathematics do not have enough opportunities to observe teaching in their subjects in order to identify ways of improving teachers' performance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or part lessons, attended an assembly and listened to groups of pupils read.
- One lesson observation was carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised the 42 responses to the online Parent View survey, along with letters sent to the inspector and comments from parents before and after school.
- Questionnaires completed by 12 staff were analysed.
- Meetings took place with staff, pupils, governors, and a local authority representative.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised pupils' books, records of pupils' progress, the school's checks on teaching and learning and its development plan, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Croft is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and pupils with a parent in the armed services) is well below average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- A very small number of pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- There is a pre-school and after school club on the school site which are registered independently and therefore inspected separately from the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so a greater proportion is outstanding in order to enable more pupils to reach the higher levels by:
 - using the outstanding teaching in the school to inspire and develop teachers where teaching is less strong
 - ensuring marking always includes next steps and pupils have more opportunities to review their own work and to respond to teachers' marking
 - making sure curriculum leaders for English and mathematics regularly observe teaching in their subjects to identify ways of improving teachers' performance so that pupils make even better progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start school with skills that meet those expected for their age. Lively teaching captures the children's imagination and inspires them to try hard. This means that they make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils continue to make good progress, so by the end of Key Stage 1 their attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2012 a much higher proportion of Year 1 pupils achieved the standard expected in the phonics (the sounds that letters make) check than in other schools.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their early reading skills because the teaching of phonics is effective. Older pupils have a wide range of books in school and enjoy reading. The best readers are fluent and read with expression. They are developing opinions about favourite types of books and authors. Less confident readers are well supported in small group and individual sessions.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well overall. Results of national tests have generally been above average in reading, writing and mathematics and both attainment and progress have improved over the last three years.
- School records, work in pupils' books and observations by the inspector show that pupils currently in the school are making good progress and are also on track to reach above average standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups and the few pupils new to learning English, make at least good progress. This is because their needs are closely identified and they receive good teaching with specific additional support from skilled teaching assistants.
- The small number of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium make similar progress to other pupils in the school because money is spent wisely on meeting their individual needs, support is given to help them in class and in small groups, and the effectiveness of this support is checked to make sure it works. These pupils are almost two terms behind their peers in English and mathematics but the gap in achievement between these pupils and other pupils in the school is closing.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good and at times it is outstanding. As a result, pupils make at least good progress in their learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Exciting topics which interest and challenge the children develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills well.
- Strengths of teaching are the clear routines in lessons and the positive relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they explain clearly to pupils what lessons are about, linking learning with what pupils have learnt previously. Work is carefully planned to match pupils' different abilities and pupils are challenged to think deeply thus enabling them to make good progress.
- Where teaching is strongest, pupils make excellent progress in understanding and applying new skills; for example, in a Year 5 English lesson pupils thoughtfully wrote poems about their early memories, they discussed each other's work and made sensitive suggestions for improvement. Skilful intervention by the teacher and high expectations of what the pupils could achieve moved pupils' learning on rapidly.
- When teaching is less strong, teachers do not move pupils on to new learning quickly enough to challenge them and sometimes teachers talk for too long. Consequently, not all pupils make the rapid progress of which they are capable.

- Books are marked regularly with positive comments. However, not all marking gives pointers for improvement or next steps and pupils are not given enough opportunities to respond to teachers' marking.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those new to learning English, are given precisely tailored support by their teachers and teaching assistants which helps them to make at least good progress.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding receive high quality additional support in class, in small groups and individually. This support effectively helps them with their learning and emotional and social development.
- Staff develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well with frequent reminders about how to work together, value differences and to be patient with others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour observed in lessons was good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are eager and keen to learn. They say they enjoy their lessons, especially the opportunity to work with other pupils. This has a positive effect on pupils' good achievement.
- Pupils behave well around the school, showing good manners and courtesy towards each other and adults.
- Behaviour is judged as good rather than outstanding. Occasionally, instances of silly behaviour arise in lessons when pupils are not fully involved in learning because they are not moved on to new learning quickly enough.
- Pupils enjoy a range of responsibilities in their classrooms and around the school, such as acting as 'happy helpers' to support other pupils at lunchtime and in the playground. Such roles teach them to act responsibly.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are safe and secure. They confidently learn to share equipment and to play happily together and independently.
- Pupils work well together and their social skills are encouraged by group work and helping each other in class.
- Pupils say, and their parents agree, that they feel safe and understand how to keep safe. Pupils say teachers and support staff have helped them to understand how to take care on the roads or when using the internet.
- Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying such as name-calling and cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is rare in school and is always sorted out quickly by the teachers.
- Attendance is average and improving because staff are vigilant in dealing with absence and because most pupils enjoy their lessons and want to be in school.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have correctly identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work closely with staff and governors to carry out appropriate action plans. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' learning has improved since the last inspection.
- Performance management procedures are very thorough. These are based on the improvement priorities identified for the school as well as specific areas for members of staff. The school uses a range of evidence including full lesson observations, learning walks, pupil progress data and pupils' views to ensure it has a comprehensive view of teaching in the school. Teachers are only paid more if they meet their targets, regularly teach well and their pupils make good progress. However, curriculum leaders for English and mathematics do not have enough opportunities for classroom observations in order to identify ways of improving teaching in their subjects.

- Leaders and managers carefully check the progress of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those eligible for pupil premium funding and those new to learning English. They use this information to monitor the impact of teaching and interventions and make changes to programmes if pupils are not making enough progress. This ensures the school promotes equality of opportunity.
 - The school offers a range of topics and activities which capture the pupils' interests well and the curriculum is enriched by visitors and visits, and a good range of sporting, musical and creative activities. Consequently, the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils well and makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - School staff and governors have worked hard to develop good links with parents. However, senior staff and governors acknowledge that they could do even more to enable parents to work in closer partnership with the school to explore how the school can improve further.
 - The local authority gives 'light-touch' support to the school, because it has confidence in the school's leadership and its ability to provide a quality education.
 - The governance of the school:
 - Governors know the strengths and areas for development in the school and how well the school compares with others and they appropriately challenge and support senior leaders. They have a good understanding of the information from tests and know that pupils are making good progress and achieving well when compared to pupils nationally. They have discussed and agreed how pupil premium funding should be spent and have reviewed the difference this has made to the progress of these pupils. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching in school. Performance management procedures are very thorough, matched to best practice and well understood by governors. Governors sign-off pay recommendations for staff and are involved in recruitment. They receive regular training and new governors have an induction programme to support them in their role. Governors ensure equal opportunities for all and that discrimination is not tolerated. All statutory duties are met including safeguarding.
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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	115568
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	401521

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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Liz Little
Headteacher	Ceris Towler
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 July 2010
Telephone number	01452812479
Fax number	01452812479
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