

# Crescent Primary School

Booth Crescent, Mansfield, NG19 7LF

**Inspection dates** 29–30 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 achieve well because of good teaching and their own excellent attitudes to their work.
- Teaching is generally well planned and effective. Staff work hard to improve achievement and to enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their knowledge of safety issues is excellent and they say they feel very safe in school. Staff take very good care of the pupils, who get along extremely well together.
- Topics are carefully linked to bring learning to life. The wide variety of activities and teaching methods keeps the pupils interested in their learning.
- The headteacher's exemplary leadership ensures that both teaching and achievement are good. He has created a united and committed staff who all have the pupils' interests at heart. Staff love working in the school, are proud of it and feel well supported.
- The school's leaders have a very accurate awareness of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The Chair of the Governing Body is very committed to the school and governors are always willing to try new ways of making themselves even more effective.
- Parents are very supportive and think highly of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in some aspects of writing is not as high as it could be, especially for boys.
- The teaching of mental mathematics is not organised as well as other aspects, and does not always challenge the most able pupils. Pupils do not always get enough chance to apply their mathematical skills to real-life situations.
- Marking does not always make clear to pupils how they can improve their work.
- The outside accommodation in the Early Years Foundation Stage is quite shabby and does not extend the indoor learning environment effectively.

## Information about this inspection

- Twenty-four lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Two joint observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, various members of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work in different year groups, examined records of pupils' progress and read the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. A range of other documentation was examined, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a member of the local authority's advisory staff.
- The views of staff were sought and 48 responded to a written questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at the 178 responses from parents on Parent View, the government's website for parents' views about their children's school.

## Inspection team

Peter Sudworth, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Vreta Bagilhole	Additional Inspector
Jane Johnson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- A high proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals or from families with a parent in the armed forces. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is double the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Seventy-eight pupils attend the Nursery part-time. Two of the 12 other classes contain mixed age groups, one in Key Stage 1 (Year 1/2) and one in Key Stage 2 (Year 5/6).
- The school manages its own breakfast club.

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

- Raise attainment in writing, especially for boys, by:
  - improving pupils' understanding of the rules and patterns governing spelling, and ensuring they take greater care when using words they have often spelled incorrectly in the past
  - improving the general quality of handwriting and encouraging pupils to write in a joined script to speed up their writing
  - providing regular opportunities for pupils to write independently and practise their punctuation and grammar in longer, high-quality pieces of work.
- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
  - carefully arranging the way mental mathematics skills are taught to different age groups
  - challenging able pupils more effectively in mental mathematics sessions
  - ensuring that pupils across the school have regular opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to real-life situations.
- Improve teaching by ensuring teachers' comments in their marking consistently make clear to pupils how they may improve their work.
- Improve the quality and use of the outdoor accommodation in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Children generally join the school with standards that are often well below those typically seen in this age group. Subsequently, however, they make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage, and in many areas of learning they are close to expected levels by the time they reach the end of their Reception Year. However, their skills in communication, language and literacy remain their weakest elements.
- Although attainment overall remains below average in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils continue to make good progress from their low starting points, particularly in reading, reflecting the successful drive to teach reading skills systematically across the school. Results for Year 1 pupils in the national phonics check increased last year. Progress in writing is not as rapid as it is in reading. There have been significant improvements in mathematics in the past two years but pupils' mental skills are not always sharp enough across the school.
- Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils build on their earlier good progress and by the end of Year 6 their overall attainment is broadly average. Pupils attain close to average results in reading and mathematics but writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling are comparatively weak. Handwriting is not as good as it should be because too many pupils do not write in a joined script, slowing down their writing speed. Notably, boys tend to do less well in writing than girls.
- Teachers' good support for able pupils is shown in the most recent results. The percentage of pupils who reached the highest level (Level 6) in mathematics was greater than the national average. However, in mental sessions in mathematics, able pupils too often do the same work as other pupils and are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make similar rates of progress to other pupils in the main, and their reading is also better than their writing.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium do as well as other pupils and sometimes better, and the gap has closed dramatically in the past two years. The most recent Year 6 results indicate that they attained more highly than other pupils in the school in both English and mathematics. The school has made good use of the funding to employ a 'reading recovery' teacher to offer additional support for pupils whose reading is weak, and pupils who take part in these sessions do well.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Staff have very good relationships with the pupils. The behaviour code is consistently applied, ensuring a good work ethic and very calm classrooms.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Lessons are researched and planned well. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, who are deployed effectively and are clear about their roles.
- Very effective use is made of large electronic screens so that lessons can be presented visually and maintain pupils' attention. Equally good use is made of computers to undertake certain tasks which motivate and interest the pupils. Staff consistently ensure that pupils are made aware of the key learning points for each lesson and help pupils understand what they must do to be successful. Pupils are adept in selecting challenges for themselves in the activities offered.

- There is a good pace to many lessons and time is used well. Some teaching is outstanding, and here, pupils always know how they are doing and how to get to the next level because teachers' marking gives them clear guidance on how to do so. In some classes, however, not enough written guidance is given to pupils to help them improve.
- The teaching of reading is good and teachers use their subject knowledge to give pupils good tips. In one lesson, for example, the teacher demonstrated to the pupils how the sound 'ow' is likely to be at the end of a word.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The wide range of activities support children's social development and prepare them well for later learning. However, the unappealing outdoor accommodation is in need of urgent refurbishment so it can extend children's learning.
- Staff do not always show high enough expectations of the quality of pupils' handwriting and the use of joined script. Consequently pupils' work can be untidy in appearance and the speed at which they write is also slowed. There is some inconsistency in the opportunities pupils are given to work on extended writing on their own, so they may develop the stamina to write consistently well at length.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils display excellent attitudes to work, love school and attend very regularly. They are extremely well behaved, courteous and polite and get along very well together, including in the breakfast club. They say that no-one ever gets bullied. One said, 'You never feel lonely.'
- Pupils are most enthusiastic about all school activities and many take part in the extra activities out of school hours. They eagerly engage in further work at home from the school's 'learning platform' which they access by using computers. Several also attend the homework club and reading clubs after school hours.
- In class, pupils are attentive and listen to their teachers and to the comments from others very respectfully. They are eager to work and begin activities quickly and without fuss. Around school pupils are mindful of others and move around the large site very sensibly.
- Pupils have a very good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. Pupils feel safe and state that the headteacher takes any problems seriously. They have confidence in the school. They say that this school tries to help you as much as it can.
- Groups of pupils organise special theme days such as 'Red Nose Day' to raise funds for others. They undertake any responsibilities that they are given most conscientiously. The vast majority of the large proportion of parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that behaviour is good, and all agree that their children feel safe at school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher is hardworking and well organised and provides exemplary leadership which has improved the quality of teaching and increased rates of progress over time.
- Staff are united and work very well as a team. The headteacher receives very good support from

senior staff and other staff with leadership responsibilities. Teachers' high expectations of how pupils should behave and achieve are apparent throughout the school.

- The school's monitoring systems are used rigorously to identify its strengths and its areas for development. Consequently self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and reflected in the well-written school improvement plan, which has a very clear focus on raising attainment further.
- Appraisal arrangements for teachers are well organised and linked to any proposed salary increases and to the national teaching standards. Individual teachers' targets are written in ways that clearly set out how success will be measured. However, the system is not yet extended fully to teaching assistants.
- Pupil premium funding is spent wisely and this has helped to bring success and increased rates of progress for eligible pupils. New government funding for physical education and sport has not yet arrived but the school plans to spend it on specialist coaches who will work with pupils and also work alongside teachers so that their skills are raised in teaching physical education.
- The curriculum provides a good balance of activities and is extended by an interesting range of after-school activities, including sport. The school recognises that the improvements made in writing and mathematics have not yet gone far enough. Monitoring of work has picked up weaknesses in presentation, spelling and handwriting and the lack of consistent opportunities for pupils to develop their mental skills or apply mathematics skills to real-life situations in all classes. The plans to improve these aspects have not yet been fully implemented.
- The breakfast club is well managed and offers pupils a healthy choice of food.
- The local authority has no major concerns about the school but keeps a 'watching brief', inviting the headteacher to termly headteacher meetings and other important events. The school also links in well with other local schools for training events.
- The school has very good links with its parents and they are highly appreciative of what the school does for their children.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are keen to undertake training to increase their skills. Their increasingly direct involvement in the construction of the development plan and the monitoring of its implementation has meant they are becoming more effective and their visits to school more purposeful.
  - Governors carefully monitor school finances, including the pupil premium. They have a good knowledge of how this funding is used and carefully check on its impact on pupils.
  - Safeguarding procedures fully meet current national requirements and governors actively ensure that equal opportunities are promoted effectively with no discrimination.
  - Governors have been trained in the use of data and are now more familiar with the way the school tracks pupils' progress. As a result they can ask pertinent questions about individual pupils' progress and have a better understanding of how well results compare with other schools.
  - They are aware of staff appraisal arrangements and have ensured these are directly linked to any changes in teachers' pay and promotion.

## 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>	132243
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	429398

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	342
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Shaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vic Wilkinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 March 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01623 468558
<b>Fax number</b>	01623 468885
<b>Email address</b>	office@cresecent.notts.sch.uk



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