

Crofton Junior School

Towncourt Lane, Orpington, BR5 1EL

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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.

- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points.
- Levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 are significantly higher than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A drive to improve the teaching of mathematics has been exceptionally successful so that pupils make excellent progress and attain very high levels in this subject.
- The gap in writing attainment between pupils eligible to benefit from pupil premium funding and other pupils nationally closed completely in 2013.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe and secure. They are considerate and respectful towards adults and each other and are keen to do their best. Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View consider pupils to be well behaved.
- The recently appointed executive headteacher has quickly established an excellent working relationship with the head of school and other members of staff, so that no time has been lost in the school's well-focused drive to improve.
- Governors are fully involved in the school's development and have worked closely with leaders to oversee the school's smooth transition to academy status and secure improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum is enriched with many memorable events and activities so that pupils are interested in learning. Specialist teaching groups, known as 'academies', enable pupils to explore wider curriculum opportunities in, for example, art, music and sport and to deepen their understanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to raise all pupils' achievement to the highest levels.
- Pupils' progress in reading is less rapid than in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who are eligible to receive support from pupil premium funding achieve slightly less well in reading and mathematics than their peers nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons or part-lessons, including three lesson observations completed jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, the director of the board, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents, carers and pupils.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work and heard pupils from different year groups read.
- Inspectors took account of 71 responses to the online Parent View survey, emails from parents and carers, and 45 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a range of documents and policies, including the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records, safeguarding documents and a sample of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Teresa Kiely

Additional Inspector

Peter White

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Rudman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Crofton Junior School is larger than the average size primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium in this school is below the national average. Pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, as a result children are looked after by the local authority and other groups.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Crofton Junior School converted to academy status in September 2011. When its predecessor school, Crofton Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall. Crofton Infant School, which shares the same site as the junior school, joined the academy in September 2012. The executive headteacher oversees the academy, with heads of school in post at the infant school and the junior school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate pupils' progress and achievement by ensuring that:
 - pupils have regular opportunities to use phonics skills during reading activities
 - reading activities are sufficiently challenging to extend and deepen more-able pupils' reading skills
 - teaching is more sharply matched to the needs of those pupils who are in receipt of the pupil premium funding and enables them to learn to the very best of their ability and achieve as well as their peers in reading and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' skills and levels of understanding when they join Year 3 are well above average and they are well prepared to build on previous learning. Pupils make good progress in reading and writing and outstanding progress in mathematics as they move through the school. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2013 was significantly higher than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' rapid progress in mathematics is indicative of the school's success in improving mathematics teaching. Sharply focused teaching provided by specialist teachers for more-able pupils and for those pupils who need extra help has accelerated the progress made by pupils of all abilities. As a result, attainment in mathematics has been substantially higher than the national average for the past two years, including the proportion of pupils attaining the highest levels.
- Pupils achieve well in writing because teachers have very confident subject knowledge and they have an accurate understanding of pupils' different needs. Writing activities are interesting and purposeful and pupils are regularly shown how to further improve their work.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils in the school. Close liaison with staff in the infant school means that pupils who need extra help are identified quickly and no learning time is lost when they join Year 3.
- Pupils make less rapid progress in reading than in writing and mathematics. Reading has rightly been identified by the school as a priority for further improvement and suitable plans are in place to accelerate pupils' progress. For example, recent training for teachers has included guidance about how to teach phonics skills (the link between letters and the sounds they make) more effectively so that pupils at the earlier stages in reading can read unfamiliar words.
- More-able pupils achieve well because work is usually matched accurately to their needs and is appropriately challenging, particularly in mathematics. However, occasionally reading activities are not challenging enough to extend and deepen their deduction and inference skills and so enable them to attain the highest levels.
- Although equal opportunities for all groups are well promoted, pupils who are eligible for support provided by pupil premium funding achieve slightly less well in mathematics and reading than their peers nationally. In 2012 and 2013, for example, there was a gap of seven months between their attainment in mathematics and reading and the national average. However, teachers' heightened awareness of pupils' needs in the past year means that the gap closed completely in writing in 2013.
- The school is determined to repeat the success seen in writing, reading and mathematics and appropriate improvement plans are already in place and actions being taken. For example, a specialist teacher has been appointed to work with individual pupils of differing abilities who are not yet reaching their full potential in reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good in English and mathematics and some is outstanding, so that pupils achieve well. Effective teamwork ensures that subject expertise is shared across the school and there is a positive learning ethos in the school. Teachers support each other well and are keen to improve their practice further. They have high aspirations for themselves, as well as for their pupils.
- Developments in the teaching of mathematics have been highly successful in lifting pupils' achievement to the highest levels. For example, during the inspection teachers' confident mathematical knowledge meant that appropriately challenging work was provided for pupils of all abilities in a Year 6 lesson. As a result, they made rapid progress in their understanding of

how to measure and calculate angles, with new learning building strongly on pupils' prior knowledge.

- Pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes and in different subjects, so that writing tasks are stimulating and meaningful. Training for teachers has ensured that they have a good understanding of how to move pupils to the next level in their learning. For example, during the inspection a small group of more-able pupils made excellent progress when exploring the features of diary writing because the teacher used searching questions very effectively to explore and deepen their understanding and enhance their vocabulary.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are responsive to the needs of pupils. They work flexibly to support pupils of differing abilities, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, so that pupils of all abilities are actively involved and well included throughout lessons.
- The school's recent focus on improving the teaching of reading, including opportunities for teachers to work alongside colleagues in the infant school, is successfully increasing teachers' subject knowledge. However, in a few lessons the tasks set for pupils during reading sessions are not sufficiently challenging to extend more-able pupils' reading skills and opportunities are missed for pupils to practise and strengthen their knowledge and use of phonics.
- School procedures for checking how well individual pupils are progressing have been tightened up so that teachers are much clearer about which pupils need extra help. However, in a few lessons, activities are not matched sharply enough to the needs of those pupils eligible for support from pupil premium funding, so that the work set is too easy or too hard and their progress slows slightly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' mature learning skills, their enjoyment of school and their desire to do well are key features of the very successful learning in Crofton Junior School. Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well in lessons, during playtimes and when moving around school. They are punctual, attend school regularly and are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to play an active part in the life of the school and take on responsibilities with enthusiasm. For example, members of the school council regularly meet to consider ideas collected from their classmates and are proud of the part they played in the recent purchase of laptops.
- Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in school. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and some of the different forms it can take. They know why it can be harmful and understand the role they can play in helping themselves to keep safe. For example, they know that it is unwise to give out personal information over the internet because the school provides regular reminders about e-safety.
- Pupils are confident that adults will respond promptly and seriously to any concerns that may arise. This view is reflected in the quality of the school's procedures, including school records, which are meticulously maintained and show that any incidents of poor behaviour are carefully recorded and followed up appropriately. Pupils told inspectors that they feel extremely safe in school, a view endorsed by most parents and carers who responded to Parent View.
- Teaching assistants who provide individual support for pupils who find it more difficult to behave well are particularly effective because they know the pupils very well and are confident about their role. As a result, these pupils feel valued and are well included in lessons.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because occasionally a few pupils lose concentration and become restless when activities in lessons are not matched sharply enough to their abilities.

The leadership and management are good

- The recently appointed executive headteacher has worked closely and sensitively with leaders and staff and has very quickly established a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and development needs. She has been very effectively supported by the head of school, whose accurate and detailed knowledge of the school has made an important contribution to bringing the two schools together and identifying the next steps in the academy's development.
- Professional development is given a high priority by the school and closely aligned with the management of teachers' performance. For example, all leaders have attended Ofsted training so that their observations and assessments of the quality of teaching are well focused and accurate. There is no sense of complacency and a strong sense that the whole school shares in leaders' drive to become an outstanding school.
- Subject leaders play an active and effective role in school improvement. For example, the leader with responsibility for reading is very clear about the steps the school needs to take to improve pupils' achievement in reading and has already made a successful start in improving aspects of teaching.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and brought to life by many activities and events which make learning enjoyable and memorable. During the inspection, pupils spoke with enthusiasm about specialist lessons called 'academies', which provide additional opportunities to extend learning for those pupils who demonstrate flair in a particular subject such as music, art or sport.
- Sports funding is allocated appropriately to increase pupils' participation in sport and to develop teachers' expertise. A teacher has been given responsibility for overseeing the use of sports funding with a focus on developing pupils' sports skills. Specialist sports coaches are working alongside teachers to increase their confidence in the teaching of sport and to increase the range of sports taught. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy sport and relish the wide range of sports available in the school.
- The curriculum supports the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, regularly enabling them to reflect on social and moral issues. For example, one pupil told inspectors that he particularly liked 'philosophy for children' sessions because 'you can listen to the views of others and sometimes change your mind about things'.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because achievement in reading is not yet as strong as in other subjects and a small gap remains between the achievement of those pupils eligible for pupil premium support and their peers in reading and mathematics. The school has already identified these aspects as priorities for development and appropriate action plans are in place.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has worked closely and effectively with senior leaders to ensure the school's smooth transition to academy status. Governors have made a number of very successful appointments to the leadership team, including the appointment of the executive headteacher and the head of school. They have a clear and accurate view of pupils' achievement in relation to schools nationally, including the achievement of different groups and aspects which need further improvement, and are well informed about planned improvements. They know, for example, how pupil premium funding is used and are aware of the variations in the performance of eligible pupils. Governors regularly have challenging discussions with school leaders to check the school's performance and to ensure that improvements are on track. Governors know how performance management procedures are linked to teachers' salary progression and how they are used to recognise and support teachers' practice. They are well informed about the use of sports funding and meetings are scheduled to check that its use is successful. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet statutory requirements.

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	137683
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	425627

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	705
Appropriate authority	The proprietor
Chair	Diane Moss (director of board)
Headteacher	Andrea Carter (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01689 821716
Fax number	01689 896506
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