

The Craylands School

Craylands Lane, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0LP

Inspection dates 4–5 December 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching, though improving, does not yet ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils' results in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are too low.
- The most-able pupils are not always given work that is hard enough for them.
- Pupils are not always given opportunities for applying their knowledge and skills to interesting problems that would develop their thinking and understanding.

The school has the following strengths:

- The strong leadership and high expectations of the headteacher, other leaders and governors have improved the quality of teaching across the school.
- High-quality teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage gets children off to a good start in their education.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They have positive attitudes towards learning, behave well, feel safe and are kind and courteous towards each other.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed two assemblies, 14 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground at break and lunchtimes. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. They examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays, and heard groups of pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including lesson plans, plans for the school's future development, pupils' attendance records, records of how the pupil and sports premium funding are spent, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is monitored, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account, including those expressed in 34 responses to the online Parent View survey, in responses to the school's own survey of parental opinions, and in discussions with the inspectors at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at 22 returned questionnaires and discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Hamilton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is slightly lower than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent or carer in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces and one pupil in local authority care currently on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action and at school action plus is above average, and there are five pupils with statements of special educational needs. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, while others have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or other needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is lower than in most other schools.
- The school does not operate any alternative provision for pupils.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a Reception class provided for them.
- The mathematics and English leaders took up their posts in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities for applying their knowledge and skills to interesting problems
 - ensuring that all teachers set work for the more-able pupils that is hard enough.
- Improve pupils' results in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 through the use of more practical activities in mathematics lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too few pupils reach expected standards in mathematics by end of Key Stage 1.
- A large majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills at lower than expected levels for their age. They make good progress and leave the Reception Year well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 improved sharply in 2012 but this improvement was not sustained in 2013. Pupils' results in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 remain lower than in most other schools, while their results in writing and reading are in line with other schools' overall.
- Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are average. Pupils achieve slightly better results than those nationally in reading and mathematics. In English grammar, punctuation and spelling, pupils' achievement is better than that of their peers nationally.
- A greater proportion of the most-able pupils achieve results at the higher levels in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 when compared to most other schools. However, at Key Stage 2, results at the higher levels in reading and writing are lower than in most other schools. This is because the most-able pupils do not always work that is hard enough for them as they move through the school.
- Pupils made good progress during the majority of lessons seen during the inspection. Records show that all pupils are making reasonable or better progress. The rate of progress in the school has increased due to better teaching.
- The gap in progress between those pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding and other pupils is being closed successfully by the school. There is a gap in performance of about half a National Curriculum level at the end of Key Stage 2, but a narrowing gap in other years.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make reasonable progress from their starting points, similar to their peers. This is because their learning needs are met effectively.
- Pupils enjoy reading and like the way that reading is taught in school. Pupils are heard to read regularly and the books they choose are interesting and well matched to their needs and enthusiasms.
- The majority of parents and carers expressed positive views about the achievement and progress of their children.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement as it does not ensure that pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve as well as they should in mathematics. The most-able pupils do not always receive work that is hard enough for them.
- Teaching across most of the school has improved and is now more consistent. Much of the teaching as observed during the inspection is now good, with some that is outstanding. As a result, the pace of pupils' progress has increased. However, some weaker teaching remains.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils, though these are not evident in every classroom.
- The best teaching features good use of practical and stimulating activities that engage pupils and make their lessons relevant and interesting. Pupils are given good opportunities to apply their English and mathematical skills to other subjects. For example, one good Year 3 mathematics lesson enabled children to apply their understanding of measurement of objects found from ancient Egypt.
- The best teaching also features activities that enable pupils of different abilities to learn well,

including the most able. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 writing lesson, challenging questioning and the use of adventurous vocabulary, such as 'lustrous' and 'glistening', were used to promote writing of high quality.

- The weaker teaching suffers from lower expectations of pupils and a poorer use of time and resources. Opportunities are missed to develop pupils' learning and understanding through applying their knowledge and skills to interesting problems and practical activities, especially in weaker mathematics lessons. Pupils make slower progress in these lessons.
- Trained teaching assistants are used well to support the learning of pupils with particular needs, both in and out of lessons. Some pupils receive additional one-to-one or small-group support. This has contributed to the increasing rates of progress made by these pupils.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is of high quality. Resources and the indoor and outdoor classrooms are used very effectively to promote speaking and listening, reading and writing. Children are given exciting opportunities to explore materials, make discoveries and work together harmoniously and happily.
- Teachers' marking of work helps pupils make progress. Pupils receive clear advice about the strengths of their work and how they can improve it.
- Pupils interviewed by the inspectors spoke highly of the teaching they received. A typical statement was, 'It's really fun!'
- The majority of parents and carers reported that their children were taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils show positive attitudes towards learning. Their behaviour in lessons, in the playground, at lunchtime, and when travelling around the school is good. It has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Low-level disruption in lessons is uncommon. Pupils are kind and courteous to one another and empathise with each other well. The school promotes a strong sense of responsibility, and older pupils look after younger ones and those with particular needs very well.
- Occasionally pupils can become too noisy or take their attention away from learning during the minority of lessons where teachers' expectations are too low or activities have not been well planned. This is why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. The school uses initiatives such as an anti-bullying week to ensure that pupils understand why bullying and extreme behaviour such as racism are not acceptable. Pupils feel safe and well looked after.
- The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manages it well. Pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils who talked to the inspectors felt there was little if any bullying in the school and that any poor behaviour was well managed. The few incidents of poor behaviour are monitored carefully and responded to effectively.
- Attendance, including that of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding, is higher than that found in most other schools. This is because of the school's high expectations and its successful work with parents, carers and families.
- The majority of parents and carers thought that behaviour in the school was well managed and a large majority believed that their children were well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors have high aspirations for the school. These are shown through the rigorous checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and the insistence on improvements to both. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved over time. However, leaders have not yet secured

enough good teaching across the school to ensure all groups of pupils, including the most able, achieve as well as they should. This is why leadership and management are not outstanding.

- The school's evaluation of its strengths and priorities for development is accurate, and the priorities set for improvement match the needs of the school. Actions designed to bring about improvement are identified with precision and the timetable set for improvements reflects the headteacher's high expectations.
 - The capacity of the school leadership team to bring about improvements has increased through well-judged appointments of new capable leaders of English and mathematics, both of whom have high ambitions for their subjects and understand what needs to be improved.
 - Performance management is rigorous and informed by regular and thorough scrutiny of planning, lessons and pupils' work. Teachers are set targets that clearly relate to school priorities and their own training needs. Decisions about possible pay awards to staff are explicitly linked to consideration of teachers' success in helping their pupils meet their targets.
 - Pupils learn a broad range of subjects, many of which are organised through engaging topics such as 'the world we live in'. For example, strong international links have been made with a school in Kenya. The school also involves pupils in local initiatives, such as the Dartford Legacy Project, and has achieved the Healthy Schools Award.
 - There are very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, such as the contribution of the school choir to sing at a national singing event held at the Royal Albert Hall on behalf of cancer charities. Pupils are given very good opportunities to reflect on ethical issues in the subjects that they learn and in the news, and pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong as a result. For example, an impressive assembly encouraged pupils to empathise with victims of typhoon Haiyan. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and the school actively works against discrimination.
 - Pupils' engagement in sports and physical education is enhanced through a wide range of clubs, such as gymnastics, dance, judo, netball and cross-country. The school is part of the Olympic Legacy Project. Sports premium funding is used to purchase sports equipment and give teachers training to develop their skills in this area.
 - Pupil premium funding is spent on effective one-to-one and small-group tuition led by trained teaching assistants, specific mathematics programmes and various initiatives to support the engagement and well-being of eligible pupils. These measures contribute to the increasingly fast progress made by this group of pupils.
 - The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
 - The local authority has offered considerable support to the school. It has given training to teachers and governors and checked the quality of pupils' work. The local authority has also helped monitor the quality of teaching in specific subjects, such as phonics (the sounds letters make), and the advice offered by the local authority has contributed to the improvements in teaching now found in the school.
 - The school's survey of parental views, together with the opinions offered by parents and carers directly to inspectors and through the online Parent View survey, show that the majority of parents and carers consider the school to be well led.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a developing understanding of their role and the need to challenge the school where necessary. They have become increasingly able to offer such challenge through training, including training about how to understand pupil performance information and how it compares with schools nationally. Governors set the headteacher's performance management targets that reflect the key priorities of the school. They monitor the quality of teaching and of pupils' work and scrutinize school finances carefully, including the use and impact of pupil and sports premium funding. Governors understand what they need to do to ensure that leaders drive school improvement effectively.
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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	132764
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	429530

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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Lees
Headteacher	Anna Pattenden
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 May 2012
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