

Crawford Village Primary School

Crawford Village, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 9QP

Inspection dates

14 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching over time has not been consistently good. Work planned for pupils is sometimes too easy or too hard and this slows progress, especially for the most able pupils.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work. Teachers do not always make the best use of support staff throughout the whole lesson to help pupils to learn.
- Too few pupils are making consistently good progress. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 are well below average.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise and extend their skills in writing, or to use their skills and knowledge in mathematics to solve problems.
- The school's effectiveness has declined since the last inspection owing to the instability caused by the many changes in headteacher and governors over a short period of time.
- Not enough has been done to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. Teachers have not been encouraged to use the information collected about pupils' ability levels to plan lessons and check that pupils are making fast enough progress.
- Plans to improve teaching and pupils' achievement do not help leaders judge whether pupils' progress is good enough.
- Governors do not sufficiently check on the quality of the school's work, particularly the quality of teaching and the achievement of all pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The temporary headteacher has high expectations and a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve. The achievement of pupils is rising owing to the success of efforts to improve teaching.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning and feel safe.
- Staff know pupils very well and have caring relationships with them. Parents are supportive and feel appreciated.
- The school is working well with other schools and the local authority to improve teaching and the achievement of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 7 lessons or parts of lessons, including a joint observation with the temporary headteacher. They also checked closely on pupils' work in lessons, in books and on display around school. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and listened to them read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the temporary headteacher and teachers in school. Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority and school governors.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, including the school improvement plan, the school's checks on how well it is doing and pupil progress data. Inspectors also checked documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, records of the attendance and behaviour of pupils and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to some parents and other family members who were dropping their children off at school. They also took account of the views of staff through 6 voluntary questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Pamela Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- More pupils than seen nationally are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority, and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have 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 broadly average.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes in the morning and two in the afternoon.
- There have been significant changes in senior leadership and governors since the last inspection. The school has not had its own headteacher since then and has been led by different headteachers released by their own schools to work in Crawford Village Primary School on a part-time basis. The school is currently led on a part-time basis by a headteacher who runs Westhead Lathom St James's C of E Primary School in Ormskirk.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan work that is set at the right level of difficulty and challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able
 - making sure that marking provides clear and helpful guidance to pupils, particularly in writing, on how to improve their work and that pupils are given opportunities to respond to teachers' advice
 - ensuring that support staff are used consistently well throughout lessons to help pupils learn as well as they should
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills and to use the mathematical skills they have already to solve problems.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - resolving, as a matter of urgency, the current uncertainty surrounding the appointment of the school's own headteacher
 - ensuring that teachers are held to account for pupils making at least good, rather than expected progress
 - ensuring that teachers are more closely involved with senior leaders in checking on the progress of pupils in order that they can plan lessons more suited to pupils' needs
 - ensuring that plans for improvement are a help to leaders and staff in determining whether their actions to improve teaching and pupils' achievement are successful in the time they have allotted.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because their progress from their different starting points is still too variable year on year across school.
- Children generally start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typically expected for their age, although with the very small numbers in this school this can vary considerably. However, most children make good progress from their different starting points, particularly in their communication skills and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Following a dip in 2012, standards rose in KS1 in 2013 to broadly average overall. There was an increase in reading to above average, but not enough pupils reached the higher levels in mathematics and particularly in writing. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working well.
- In Year 6, standards rose overall in 2013, but they were still well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and have been for the last three years. Not enough pupils made expected or better than expected progress in reading or writing and in mathematics in particular. Too few pupils reached the higher levels. Teachers are having to spend too long helping pupils catch up on learning that they have not acquired in previous years.
- The work of current pupils in school and school checks on how well they are learning, show that pupils are now making better progress than in the past and standards are beginning to rise. However, teaching needs to improve considerably to ensure that all pupils are making at least good progress throughout school.
- Standards in reading are better than those in writing and mathematics because reading is more skilfully taught and pupils get good quality extra help from skilled support staff. In the 2013 Year 1 check on reading, pupils attained lower than pupils nationally, but the numbers in this year group were very small so this does not give a clear picture of how well the school is doing. Key Stage 1 pupils have a good grasp of the sounds that letters make. Pupils' love of reading is clearly evident across school and pupils were eager to tell inspectors about their favourite books and authors such as Geoff Kinney and Jacqueline Wilson.
- Pupils' ability to spell and use punctuation accurately is improving. However, they do not have enough opportunities to use and improve their writing skills to be fluent and confident writers. The written work of the most able pupils lacks the content and structure you would expect for their ability.
- In mathematics, improvements are evident in pupils' basic number work owing to the increased focus on this area in school. However, the most able pupils, in particular, are not given enough opportunities to apply mathematical skills and knowledge to solve problems and this slows their progress.
- Pupils enjoy learning how to use information and communication technology (ICT) resources to support their work and this helps their progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs sometimes make better progress than others in school due to the well-targeted additional support they receive.
- School data and current work seen by inspectors' show that the progress of pupils supported by the extra pupil premium funding, including those entitled to free school meals, is improving in reading, writing and mathematics in a similar manner to other pupils in school. In Year 6 in 2013, there were too few pupils supported by this extra funding to draw statistically significant conclusions about the attainment and progress of these pupils in relation to others in school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough has been good or better over time. The quality of teaching is still not yet good enough to make up the lost ground in pupils' learning so that all pupils achieve well throughout school.
- Teachers do not take enough account of the school's system for tracking pupils' progress or their

own assessments when planning work to ensure that it is sufficiently challenging for pupils of different abilities and different age groups within their class. This is hindering the progress made by all pupils.

- When marking work, teachers do not consistently make it crystal clear to pupils precisely what they need to do to improve, nor do they give them enough opportunities to show that they can follow the advice given.
- Skilled support staff provide some effective support to individuals and groups of pupils. However, teachers do not always ensure that they use them fully throughout the whole lesson to support pupils' learning. This is particularly the case when the teacher is talking to pupils about their learning or what they will be doing next.
- Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well as individuals and go out of their way to ensure that relationships are positive and build mutual respect. A typical pupil comment was, 'People in this school care for you.'
- When pupils' learning is good, teachers motivate pupils well and make regular checks on how well they are learning to move them on quickly to harder work, such as was seen in a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson. Pupils displayed great interest in using their knowledge about co-ordinates to move shapes from one place to another. The teacher used her good subject knowledge to question pupils and extend their thinking.
- Teachers generally have high expectations of the way pupils present their work and the work in books reflects that pupils are motivated to do so.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy school, want to learn and are eager to get to lessons on time. Following a dip in 2013, current attendance is broadly average and for some pupils, above average.
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff, and are very welcoming and respectful to staff and visitors alike. A typical pupil's comment was, 'You should come to this school because adults are kind and help a lot.'
- Pupils get on well together in class and during break times they play harmoniously. Pupils enjoy using the extra playtime equipment installed to stop them getting bored, such as the school council's idea for new goal posts.
- The older pupils love the jobs they are given such as organising the healthy snacks for younger pupils. Pupils from KS1 and Reception eat their snack together to promote social skills and a sense of belonging.
- Pupils are keen to join in the many clubs and after-school activities provided, such as water polo or free brass instrument tuition provided by school staff themselves.
- Behaviour is at its best when teaching is good. However, when teaching is not demanding enough of them, some pupils lose interest and begin chatting. This slows the progress pupils make.
- Pupils show respect for other cultures and faiths and understand the rights of people to hold different beliefs.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and understand about staying safe and healthy. A typical pupil comment was, 'You feel really safe and loved.' Older pupils know a lot about staying safe on the internet.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They say it doesn't happen much, but are confident staff deal with it properly.
- Parents' responses in the 'Parent View' and conversations with inspectors all show that parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour and safety in school. A typical parent comment was, 'My child is definitely very safe in school.'

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement, because the continual changes in senior leaders and governors since the last inspection, have led to a period of instability and delays in tackling the weaknesses in the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- The previous acting headteacher had worked closely with the current post holder to ensure that the best is made of the improvements made to the school, particularly over the last twelve months.
- The current temporary headteacher demonstrates a clear understanding of the improvements that need to be made and a steely determination to steer the school in the right direction. She has been working well with the staff, governors and the local authority to stabilise the school and improve teaching and learning. Although the school's plans for improvement identify where weaknesses are, they do not make clear how leaders are going to judge whether actions have resulted in improved progress for pupils in the time allocated.
- Underperformance in teaching is being tackled successfully. Links with other schools have enabled staff to share and improve their practice. Support has been sought from the local authority 'Monitoring and Intervention Team' who have worked very well alongside staff in improving their planning for different abilities and the ways they assess pupils' learning. Teachers have responded well to this support and their practice in these areas is improving.
- The progress of pupils is closely tracked, reflecting the commitment to giving every pupil an equal opportunity to learn. However, teachers are not yet fully involved in using this information to move pupils on quickly in their learning.
- The range of subjects is effectively planned and the curriculum gives enough focus on English and mathematics. It is enriched by, for example, activities as swimming for all pupils in Key Stage 2 and a wide range of after-school clubs such as cookery, gardening and dance.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Good links exist with parents and the local community. A typical parent comment was, 'This is a very friendly and caring school.'
- Strong links exist with the local high school to develop music and sport. Good use has been made of additional sport funding to improve the quality of sports coaching with the involvement of a specialist PE teacher from the local sports partnership and improvements in the range of sports for pupils to try.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement. Most of the governors are relatively new to role but are eager and utterly determined to improve the quality of the school's work and the achievement of all the pupils. They monitor the school's budget appropriately and have successfully ensured that extra funding is used well for the benefit of those pupils who are eligible and that safeguarding meets requirements. However, they are not yet fully involved in school improvement planning. They ensure that the progress of pupils is linked to teachers' pay rewards but they have not taken that further to check that teachers are held to account for pupils making good rather than expected progress.
 - Governors are currently working closely with the local authority in reviewing a number of options as to how the school will be led and managed in the future. This decision needs to be made with some urgency to ensure that no time is wasted in driving the school forward.
 - Governors are keen to access further training and welcome an external review of their practice to help them improve.

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	119224
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	440836

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Wilson
Headteacher	Alison Albion
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2012
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