

Crookham Church of England Aided Infant School

Gallyhill Road, Church Crookham, Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 6PU

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The very determined headteacher has successfully driven rapid improvement in the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement levels, attendance and behaviour and safety.
- The quality of teaching is good with regular examples of outstanding practice.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some excellent work is being successfully carried out to quickly build the speaking skills of children, which are below expected levels on entry to Reception.
- Pupils have a very positive approach to their learning. They are conscientious and work hard.
- Behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. This is because leaders at all levels, including the governors, are having a very positive effect on improving pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- A small number of pupil groups, for example, pupils from a forces background, do not make similar progress to their peers in some subjects and in some classes.
- There are missed opportunities in a minority of lessons for pupils to be further challenged to think even harder.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning and teaching in 15 lessons. This included visits to linking sounds and letters (phonics) and guided reading sessions.
- In addition visits were made to two other learning sessions aimed at supporting pupils who find an aspect of learning difficult.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at: information about pupils’ progress and attainment; the school’s development plan; subject action plans; governing body documentation; and policies and procedures, including those relating to health and safety and safeguarding of pupils.
- Pupils from Year 2 were heard reading.
- The 71 parental responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey, along with letters from two parents or carers, were taken into account by inspectors. The school’s most recent parent, staff and pupil surveys were also considered.
- Discussions were held with senior and other leaders, teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, two other governors, pupils, and a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Michael Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Banting

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a below average-sized infant school.
- Pupils come from a predominantly White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for those pupils eligible for free school meals, looked after children and pupils from service families, is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. An average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The main needs of these pupils relate to speech, language and communication difficulties.
- There has been a period of considerable staff turnover in recent times, much of it beyond the school's control.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all groups of pupils make good or better progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils' knowledge and understanding of what is being taught in lessons is checked upon and the learning redirected as necessary to ensure that work is set at the right level
 - maximising opportunities for all pupils to think hard in all lessons

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement is good. Pupils' work, lesson observations and progress data confirm this picture of good progress overall. In 2013 at the end of Year 2 pupils attained at well above average levels.
- There are examples of outstanding progress. For example, those pupils at the school action stage in Year 1 mathematics made exceptional progress last term as a result of good focused support in lessons from skilled learning support assistants.
- Progress in reading is consistently good or better and attainment in 2013 by the end of Year 2 was well above the national average.
- In 2013 attainment in mathematics was similarly well above average. Writing was the weaker subject mainly because the proportion of pupils attaining the higher grades was below average.
- The school carried out an in-depth analysis of writing. It has successfully introduced measures to further encourage pupils to write at length to improve their writing.
- Consequently, current high-attaining pupils are on track to meet the school's challenging target for the higher levels in writing.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for which the school receives additional funding, in 2013 at the end of Year 2 attained well. Overall their attainment was a term ahead of their peers'.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved over the past two years. The current data strongly suggest that this is going to continue.
- On entry to Reception, children have the expected levels of skills and knowledge overall. However, their communication and language skills are below expected levels. Consequently, in Reception, there is a highly successful focus on encouraging the children to speak and listen.
- The latest progress data show that the current children have made very strong progress in this area, and the gap between the children's levels and the national expectation are rapidly closing.
- Given their starting points and their overall attainment at the end of Year 2, pupils' achievement should be better than good. The school has rightly identified that there exist some gaps in the achievement of some pupil groups in some classes and in some subjects.
- For example, while the gender gap has been closed in writing and reading, in mathematics boys are progressing faster than girls.
- Similarly, pupils from an armed forces background do not progress as well overall as their peers. For example, last term they did not progress as well in reading and writing and the school has ensured that there are now more opportunities to improve their writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make overall progress in line with their peers. However, there are inconsistencies; for example, those pupils at school action plus in writing in Year 1 are making expected progress but their peers make better than expected progress. This is the same picture for those pupils at school action in reading.
- The very large majority of parents and carers who completed the online Ofsted Parent View survey believe their child makes good progress in their learning.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils benefit from good teaching overall. There is a high proportion of outstanding teaching. Teachers receive very useful feedback from senior leaders and hence teaching is improving.
- Pupils achieve well and have a real thirst for and enjoyment of learning. This results from a number of highly positive aspects seen in lessons.
- Very secure relationships exist in classrooms. Consequently, pupils willingly get involved in lessons and take risks and, if their answers are wrong, then they learn from them.
- The excellent work carried out to develop the pupils' awareness of what good learning is about is

paying dividends. Pupils display resilience and perseverance when presented with challenges.

- This was seen in a mathematics lesson for older pupils. When presented with problems associated with multiplication as repeated addition, the high-attaining pupils had to think hard when presented with more difficult problems. They persevered and worked the problems out.
- Their enjoyment is strong because teachers use the curriculum well to present work that, in the school's words, delivers 'irresistible' learning.
- Pupils learn well. The quality of adult-pupil interactions is very good and promotes good levels of thought by pupils. This is particularly noticeable in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children are encouraged to think carefully when making decisions.
- Learning is supported well by the good levels of marking and helpful feedback given to pupils. Clear messages on how they can improve their work are given to pupils.
- There is evidence of pupils responding to these comments. Commendably, teachers complete the assessment cycle by revisiting these targets and highlighting whether they have been met.
- Pupils are encouraged to think carefully by some good, focused questioning by teachers. This was witnessed in a Year 1 information and communication technology lesson where the pupils were programming a remote toy. 'My brain hurts' was one pupil's comment as the questioning built the challenge.
- On occasions chances are missed to further challenge the pupils to think more deeply. In one learning session the pupil correctly sounded out and spelt the word. However, the chance was missed at the end of the session to just present one more difficult challenge to reinforce their learning.
- On occasions, pupils' progress dips because the pupils are given insufficient opportunities during lessons to reflect on their learning, to indicate to teachers where they are finding the learning too difficult and allow the lesson to change direction as necessary.
- Pupils demonstrate good social development when working in pairs or small groups. This was seen in the external area in Reception where the children shared resources well.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers believe their child is taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Leaders have had an excellent effect on improving pupils' attitudes to learning.
- From Reception onwards pupils respond extremely well to challenges presented to them. They strongly support the messages promoted such as perseverance, 'have a go', and show resilience in tackling their learning.
- The pupils are self-challenging and want to do well. One boy, for example, moved to ensure that he was able to see how a certain word was spelt. He wanted to get it right.
- Another commendable aspect to their attitudes is seen in the way that pupils take pride in their work. Three pupils, when spoken to about their learning, were able to tell in detail about what they had learnt that morning in mathematics.
- In addition when asked to show the inspector a piece of work of which they were proud they willingly spoke about their writing, especially their Princess and the Prince story. Another commented excitedly that he was impressed by how much neater his handwriting had become.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. The pupils say that their lessons are not interrupted by behaviour issues; these are minor issues only and the adults deal well with them.
- There have been no exclusions.
- In recent times there has been an influx of pupils with complex special educational needs, mainly based around behavioural issues. Inspectors witnessed the great extent to which the school has gone to meet the individual pastoral needs of these pupils, including additional adult training. This is a very caring school.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is palpable. Pupils in an English lesson almost left their seats in their enthusiasm to suggest descriptive words associated with a film clip. One boy suggested,

'beautiful, blue, splashy water' to describe the waterfall.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe. They know about what bullying means and believe it is not an issue in the school. They are well aware of the dangers associated with the internet.
- Record-keeping regarding safety aspects is detailed and rigorously maintained. Risk assessments are comprehensive and signed off by senior managers and governors.
- Measures taken to check the suitability of adults working with children meet requirements. The safeguarding and child protection policies are reviewed regularly and the tracking of training needs associated with safeguarding is rigorous.
- All parents and carers agreed in the online survey that their children were safe, happy and that they would recommend the school to another parent or carer.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders and managers at all levels articulate a very strong vision of the school moving to outstanding. Staff questionnaires are overwhelmingly supportive of the headteacher and her senior leaders and they subscribe fully to the ambition for the school.
- Teamwork is very secure. 'Team Crookham' is not just an empty motto used around the school. With highly supportive adults it is not surprising that much has been achieved to improve pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Rapid improvement has been seen in improving teaching. Senior leaders use the new teaching standards, along with very effective appraisal and valuable feedback, to drive improvement.
- Consequently, pupils' outcomes are improving; attainment is very high in reading and mathematics and improving rapidly in writing; it is already above average.
- Changes to the curriculum mean it is now successful in inspiring pupils to learn. It provides excellent opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in all subjects.
- Leadership responsibilities have been well spread throughout the school. These subject leaders and managers use a very wide range of strategies to check the work of the school.
- Their consequently detailed evidence base leads to very accurate evaluation and the identification and setting of highly appropriate development priorities.
- The literacy leaders' book banding has helped ensure pupils are more confident in choosing their own reading books. Additionally, the focus throughout the school on 'talk for writing' is undoubtedly leading to more thoughtful writing and the use of richer vocabulary.
- In mathematics, there has been a highly successful focus on challenging the high-ability pupils. The school is on course to reach its target of 45% of Year 2 pupils attaining the higher levels.
- Other very positive changes reflect highly effective leadership: pupils' positive attitudes to learning, improving attendance, and changes in the work of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The additional funding for sport has been very well spent. Adult training by specialist coaches has taken place, and additional clubs and sports have been offered to pupils. The effect on their fitness was seen during the charity skipping competition.
- Very positive partnerships have been developed. Parents and carers receive good levels of information, and workshops and induction procedures are very effective in allowing them to support their children's learning.
- External partnerships for such a small school are impressive. Leaders, including the headteacher, attend meetings with local schools to extend their knowledge. Pupils benefit from chances to extend their sporting and mathematics experiences because of links with other schools.
- The local authority gives light support to the school, mainly in the area of checking the validity of the school's own judgements about its work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors use a very wide range of strategies to help check on the work of the school. In particular, 'class buddies' allow governors to visit regularly. These strategies provide valuable evidence and enable the governors to have a very secure knowledge of the school.

- Governors are very aware of who the pupils are that benefit from additional government funding. They have a very secure understanding of how these pupils are achieving and challenge the school over their progress.
- The setting of targets for teachers is well established across the school and appropriately linked to the school development plan and professional development needs. At their level the governors use challenging targets to successfully drive school improvement.
- Governors meet their statutory responsibilities, with special attention being paid to child protection, safeguarding and health and safety issues.

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	116403
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	431403

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Harborne
Headteacher	Emma Floyd
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2009
Telephone number	01252 615547
Email address	adminoffice@crookham-infhants.sch.uk

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