

Crowcroft Park Primary School

Northmoor Road, Longsight, Manchester, M12 5SY

Inspection dates 20–21 May 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

- Although pupils make average progress, not enough make good progress.
- Teaching requires improvement. It is variable and not good enough to raise standards consistently, over time.
- Work is not planned carefully enough, particularly for the most able pupils, to ensure that they all achieve as well as they can.
- Teachers' marking is not consistently helpful in telling pupils how to improve their work.
- When leaders evaluate teaching, they do not focus enough on how well all groups of pupils are learning to be sure that the judgements they make are accurate.
- Leaders at all levels do not check whether the actions they are taking are leading to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement often enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are making important changes that are improving the school, such as in reading.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well.
- The pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The pupils feel safe and secure in school and trust the staff to care for them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors watched 16 lessons, one of which was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors spoke with many pupils during learning and playing, watched an assembly and listened to several Year 1 pupils reading. They also watched pupils being supported individually and in small groups by teaching assistants.
- One inspector met formally with a group of pupils to find out what they think about their school. The lead inspector spoke with several parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including information about the standards and progress of the pupils, the school's improvement planning, samples of pupils' work, and policies to keep them safe.
- There were not enough parental responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for them to be registered so the inspectors took into account the 61 parental responses to the school's questionnaire, sent out in January 2014. The inspectors also took into account the five responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephen Helm	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of average size, compared to other primary schools.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium is well-above average. (The pupil premium funding is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those children that are looked after by the local authority).
- In some year groups an above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times different to those expected.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is part of the Longsight and Ardwick Cluster, which consists of nine primary schools. The schools work together to drive improvements in the quality of teaching and leadership, including through shared training events.
- There have been considerable changes in staffing in recent years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to quicken progress as quickly as possible, by making sure that:
 - information about the levels at which pupils work, particularly for the most able, is used carefully to plan work that challenges pupils so that they achieve as well as they can
 - marking regularly tells pupils what to do next and teachers check that pupils respond to the advice given so that they make further progress.
- Increase the impact made by leaders and managers at all levels by ensuring that:
 - observations of teaching focus in detail on how effectively all groups of pupils are learning, to make sure that the judgements made are accurate
 - leaders check regularly the impact of all of the improvements that they are making on the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress so that they can make any adjustments needed, promptly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make average progress, rather than good progress. This reflects the variable quality of teaching throughout the school.
- Standards are on track to rise this year by the end of Year 6 to broadly average. They have risen in writing and mathematics, and especially in reading.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 are variable. They fell in 2013 and were well-below average. They remain so but they are starting to rise in Years 1 and 2 as the school's new ways of teaching reading, writing and mathematics embed and extra support is provided to secure pupils' skills.
- In some year groups, results can be skewed by the make-up of cohorts, including any pupils who join the school late into Key Stage 2.
- The school knows that there are inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' progress in different subjects and year groups, with quicker progress in mathematics in, for example Years 5 and 6. Reading shows more consistent improvement.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively, particularly to help pupils to improve their reading skills, including through employing additional staff to do so and to train the teachers. Those entitled to the funding were between three and four terms behind other pupils at the school at the end of Year 6 last year in English and mathematics. The school is tackling the gap and its data points to the good progress this year of those pupils supported by the funding.
- Most groups of pupils achieve similarly, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Support ensures that these groups of pupils receive regular extra help for their particular needs so that they are developing more secure skills, such as in counting and using different ways of adding up numbers.
- Not enough of the most able pupils reach the higher levels. This is because work does not consistently ensure that they develop the skills and knowledge to do this. However, pupils, whatever their ability, are keen to learn and most try hard in all learning.
- Children join the Nursery with levels of skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age, especially in language, number and some aspects of personal and social education. They make quick progress in all areas of learning and development because the wide range of activities, indoors and outdoors, makes them curious to learn more and to find out for themselves. Teaching ensures that they speak and listen a great deal throughout the day as they learn and discover.
- In Nursery and Reception, phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well. Most children can blend sounds together accurately and many do so increasingly confidently.
- The children's good progress in phonics continues into Year 1. Standards in the Year 1 phonics test are a little below the national average and improving, because pupils are taught regularly, and practise in other lessons, how to pronounce sounds accurately. Pupils who struggle to identify words are given extra support and more practise, to secure their skills.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable and over time, results in pupils' average, rather than good, progress. There is some good teaching and some outstanding practice in marking which help pupils make good progress in some classes, but it is not shared across the school.
- Work is occasionally too hard and more often, too easy. It often does not demand enough of the most able pupils in order to ensure that they reach the higher levels of which they are capable.
- Marking is regular but similarly too variable in the quality, of advice it gives and in making sure that any advice given is taken.
- Learning is encouraged by the good relationships between the staff and pupils, resulting in a

happy environment for learning.

- The pupils get through a lot of work. They present it neatly.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the wide range of very interesting resources encourage the children to be inquisitive and really enjoy their learning. The discovery of a spider in a music box led them to question why the spider was there, where other spiders might live, and to a hunt for more spiders. They found this fascinating and learned a great deal.
- The school focuses mainly on teaching literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards as quickly as possible. Pupils also have many chances to practise and improve their literacy skills in other subjects, including lots of different ways to practise their writing skills. This is an aspect that the school is starting to build-up in numeracy.
- The new library, and the facility for the children to borrow books before and after school with their parents, is encouraging them to read more.
- Teaching in mathematics is enabling the pupils to practise the skills they have learned, in solving a range of problems. This also reinforces what they have learnt and is producing quicker progress in Years 5 and 6. Questioning is helpful in some mathematics lessons in encouraging pupils to question what they are doing and why.
- Good practice was seen in the support provided for pupils who find some learning hard. In Year 3, carefully considered resources and step-by-step learning helped the pupils to become more confident in using numbers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in learning and playing, from the Nursery onwards. This is because the school has high expectations of both their behaviour and attitudes to learning and how they treat others.
- Pupils and their parents say that behaviour is good. A few pupils find it difficult to always behave as the school expects but the staff manage them well and learning is not affected.
- The pupils settle to learning as soon as the lesson starts. They are attentive and want to learn. Even if they are not progressing as quickly as they could, they continue to pay attention. They take pride in their work and present it well.
- Throughout the school, the pupils get on well together, both in working and playing. From Nursery, they share, and show consideration to all pupils. They know that we are all equal and must treat each other fairly, and their attitudes to each other reflect that.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities to act as leaders and as buddies and to show responsibility in their classes. Older pupils support the younger ones, including on the field, where peer mediators are the pupils' first port of call with any worries. These roles help to promote pupils' good personal, social, moral and cultural understanding, which is reinforced in lessons and daily routines.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. They know how to keep safe both at home and school through their awareness of potential dangers such as talking to strangers and using the internet safely.
- There is little bullying and the pupils say that the peer mediators are their first port of call if they have a problem. They know the staff will respond to any concerns they have.
- Pupils' attendance is average and improving quickly, because the school makes sure that pupils and parents understand how important it is in learning well.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers are not making sure that teaching is consistently good in order to quicken pupils' progress. Checks on the quality of teaching and the impact of the school's improvements on the rate of pupils' progress are not always sufficiently detailed or regular to enable leaders to make any adjustments needed, promptly.
- However, the headteacher and deputy headteacher know where improvements are needed and

provide strong and supportive leadership to the staff in putting into place new strategies. Other leaders, including middle leaders, are responsible for the progress that pupils make in their areas, and, in turn, they ensure that class teachers are taking actions to quicken pupils' progress.

- Good appointments have been made to raise standards. The reading manager has overhauled the teaching of reading and the range of support. To raise standards in mathematics, a specialist mathematics teacher is providing more training for the staff, including in how to help the most able achieve their potential. The impact is starting to come through although it is patchy.
- Although the school judges all teaching to be good or better, this does not match-up with its own data about the rates of progress that the pupils make and pupils' work over time. Records of observations do not always focus enough on how well pupils learn.
- The school sets appropriate performance targets to enable teachers to strengthen their teaching and leadership skills and to raise standards. They match the school's priorities for improvement. The senior leadership team ensures that most targets are measurable and achievable. The staff say that the training provided to help them improve their teaching is very helpful.
- The school increasingly incorporates literacy, in particular, into other learning to ensure that the pupils practise what they have learned as often as possible. Pupils' learning is broad and includes scientific, musical and creative opportunities as well as chances to develop their personal skills. However, the most able pupils do not always have the same chances of achieving success as other pupils because overall their work is less helpful in enabling them to reach higher levels. From the Nursery, pupils enjoy learning and the school works productively to make sure that the pupils have lots of new experiences to broaden their world, such as visiting a theatre and eating in a restaurant. After-school activities also enable the pupils to gain new skills and to enjoy activities such as art and sport.
- Primary sports funding has been allocated carefully to ensure, for example, that staff have the skills they need in teaching sporting activities and that there is a broader range, to appeal to a greater proportion of pupils. Although much of this will come into operation in September 2014, already, more pupils are participating in events.
- The school values the support of the parents and their interest and involvement in its work. It offers a range of workshops to help parents support their children's learning and keeps them informed about new ways of learning. They are made most welcome in the school and support all aspects of its work.
- The local authority carried out a review of the school's performance in November 2013 and identified areas for improvement, which the school is tackling. It will offer any support needed.
- The school's link with the local cluster of schools adds further opportunities for teachers, leaders and governors to share and develop their practices.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors ask a comprehensive range of questions about the school's performance, based on the detailed information provided by the headteacher and through their own independent information. It extends to staffing issues, in their determination to ensure that the pupils have settled teaching. The governors take opportunities to speak with leaders and question them about their roles and impact.
 - The governors link with classes and carry out a range of activities, such as being involved in discussions about the playground, and the behaviour review.
 - They know about the uses of pupil premium funding and its impact on progress and performance-management processes.
 - The governors have regular training, including on what national data says about the school's performance.
 - The Chair of the Governing Body constantly looks to improve the effectiveness of its work, including bringing together several committees and to increase their questioning about the impact of the school's work on pupils' achievement.

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	105413
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	444094

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanne Richards
Headteacher	Lizzie Wray
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2010
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