

The Craylands School

Craylands Lane, Swanscombe, Kent DA10 0LP

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders have successfully addressed the issues identified at the previous inspection. They have created a culture where staff have high aspirations for pupils.
- There are effective procedures in place to ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve.
- Staff are well trained and performance management is effective. Teachers give pupils challenging work that stretches them to achieve their best.
- Regular checks on pupils' progress in Year 1 to Year 6 ensure that there are swift actions to help any pupil identified as falling behind.
- Middle leaders are effective. They are ambitious and have a good impact on the progress pupils make.
- The governing body ensures that senior leaders are effectively held to account. Governors question leaders closely about the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching.
- Parents are strongly supportive. They consider that their children feel safe and secure and do well at the school.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress. By the end of Year 6 they leave school well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given a high priority. There is a strong emphasis on promoting British values.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well both around the school and in lessons. They show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils say they feel well cared for and treat each other with respect.
- Good-quality teaching ensures that children in the early years make good progress in reading and writing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Disadvantaged pupils have not made rapid enough progress to close the attainment gap between themselves and other pupils in the school and nationally, particularly in writing.
- Learning in the early years is not as strong as it could be because leaders do not effectively check children's progress. This is particularly the case with progress in number, especially for the most able.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders in the early years have a greater impact on children's learning by:
 - effectively checking children's progress, particularly those who are most able in number.
- Make sure that disadvantaged pupils make more accelerated progress in order to close the attainment gap between them and other pupils in the school and nationally, particularly in writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and the senior management team are ambitious for the school. They have worked hard to make significant improvements since the time of the last inspection. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas still left to develop. Staff have high aspirations and the quality of teaching is good. Pupils make good progress and this has led to improving outcomes.
- The school has implemented an effective method to ensure that teaching continues to improve. Rigorous performance management by senior leaders ensures that staff are set challenging targets. These targets are then closely monitored by leaders who frequently visit lessons and check work in books. Useful training provides staff with clear guidance.
- Middle leaders have a good impact on outcomes for pupils. This is because senior leaders have effectively supported them in their roles. They are well trained: for example, some middle leaders conduct additional research into areas linked to responsibilities.
- The school's curriculum is well planned, ensuring that pupils develop a good understanding of a range of subjects. One example of this was seen in Year 1, where pupils demonstrated their global awareness by identifying the food found in different countries. Extra-curricular activities have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is carefully developed. Pupils are frequently encouraged to talk about their ideas and views. Residential trips ensure that pupils learn to cooperate well together. Pupils learn to explore the difference between right from wrong. They have a good awareness of the beliefs of others.
- Pupils show a fascination with how living things develop: for example, they watched closely the daily progress of some stick insect eggs. Pupils develop their cultural awareness well. Musical talent is encouraged and some pupils enjoyed signing at the Royal Albert Hall at Christmas.
- British values are promoted well. Pupils know about concepts such as democracy and the rule of law. All understand the importance of being tolerant and showing respect to others. Pupils understand about discrimination and say that no group is discriminated against in the school.
- The school has made effective use of the primary school physical education and sports funding. Pupils experience a wide range of different sports and activities, such as dance and gymnastics. Pupils know about the different sports on offer and the impact that playing sport has on keeping them fit and healthy.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively. The attendance of eligible pupils is regularly tracked and their progress is carefully reviewed. However, leaders have not yet ensured that the pace of progress by disadvantaged pupils is rapid enough to close attainment gaps, particularly in writing.
- Parents are happy with the school. They say their children are well supported. Several parents who were spoken to had moved their children to the school because they were so impressed with the staff and care offered.
- The local authority recognises the many positive changes made by the school since the last inspection. It has supported the school through visits to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors understand the school well and hold it to account effectively. They know about the quality of teaching and visit classrooms on a regular basis. Governing body minutes are detailed and show that questions are frequently asked regarding the progress and outcomes of pupils.
 - Governors use a range of information to enable them to accurately judge how well the school is doing. They have undertaken training to help them understand how the school is performing when compared against other schools. They make good use of the headteacher's reports which clearly set out the areas the school needs to improve next.
 - Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's finances and carefully monitor the impact of additional funding. They carry out their statutory duties well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school works well with parents and a range of outside agencies to ensure that all pupils are kept safe. Staff training is fully up to date and records are meticulous.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now consistently good.
- Teachers have high expectations and set pupils challenging work. Pupils know how to improve their work as a result of useful teacher feedback. Because teaching is effective most pupils in the school make good, but not outstanding, progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has focused on improving pupils' writing skills. Pupils report that teachers always encourage them to 'have a go'. Pupils realise that often the first attempt at writing a story can be improved and books show how pupils have strived to improve their work. An example of this was seen in Year 2 where pupils thought carefully how to improve the vocabulary in their accounts of a trip to an aquarium. By the time pupils enter Year 6, they have become thoughtful writers and can consider different viewpoints and write in a range of styles and genres.
- Pupils develop a love of reading both fiction and non-fiction books. They read often at school and home—school reading records show that parents regularly listen to reading at home. Pupils develop effective comprehension skills and respond thoughtfully to the plots in books. The library areas in each classroom are used well. For example, in Year 4, pupils have rearranged the books so that those they most enjoy are easiest to access.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils have a range of useful resources in order to understand concepts to help them learn. Pupils are adept at solving problems, as demonstrated by pupils in Year 6 solving a complicated problem regarding a school trip.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and demonstrate an awareness of where each pupil is in their learning. They are very sensitive to the specific needs of pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- Pupils say that they find homework useful as it develops their research skills. They particularly enjoyed the topic investigating chocolate. Teachers are explicit about what pupils need to do to ensure that work done at home effectively supports work in the classroom.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, consider that their children are making good progress. They like the information they receive about their children through the regular parents' evenings and annual pupils' progress reports. Parents are very positive about the school. The comment by one parent expressed the views of many when they said, 'Staff are happy to help and my children love the school.'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and proudly showed their books to inspectors. They have a clear understanding of where they have done well in their learning, and why. Pupils' emotional well-being is effectively developed. They are well supported by dedicated staff as well as outside agencies when appropriate. Pupils are very aware of each other's needs. They show very caring attitudes towards those who have additional needs.
- Pupils learn how to eat healthily and to keep themselves fit. For example, pupils said they liked eating fresh fruit and walking regularly.
- Parents are confident that their children are safe and happy at this school. They praise the way that leaders make sure that pupils' welfare is the priority.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know how to keep themselves safe when outside school and understand about the dangers of electricity and how to safely cross the road. Pupils know about the dangers of strangers. They have learned not to talk to strangers either in the street or online. All pupils have effective e-safety training and are well aware that they need to tell an adult if they have any concerns when online.
- Pupils enjoy taking on positions of responsibility in the school. The school council is proud of its achievements. For example, it started the 'friendship stop' in the school playground for those who may not have anyone to play with.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying. Pupils and parents agree that bullying is rare and that it is appropriately dealt with by staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Around the school pupils conduct themselves well and show respect for others. They pick up litter and take pride in the school environment.
- In lessons, pupils behave well and listen respectfully to the teacher. Pupils who responded to the survey reported that in most lessons the behaviour of others does not impact on their learning.
- Each morning pupils are keen to get learning off to a good start. For example, in Year 6 some pupils come in early to practise their skills in English and mathematics.
- Attendance is in line with national averages and is steadily improving. This is due to the work of the pupil and parent support team which quickly contacts the parents of any pupil whose attendance is beginning to cause concern.
- There have been no fixed-term exclusions this year.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Improvements in teaching have ensured that pupils now make better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. Outcomes have improved and in 2015 pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 attained in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make consistently good progress. In some cases they make better progress than their classmates. Good progress is due to the effective support from teachers, learning support assistants and appropriate external agencies who all work effectively together. Many parents reported that they are very pleased with the support that their child has received.
- The most able make similar and sometimes better progress than their classmates. The proportions who reached the higher levels in the 2015 Key Stage 2 tests were above the national average in reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In 2015, all Year 6 disadvantaged pupils made at least expected progress from their starting points. However, their attainment was low when compared with other pupils nationally and other pupils in the school. For those pupils currently in the school, leaders have ensured that each pupil receives a carefully tailored programme of support. The impact of this support is that the wide attainment gaps are beginning to close. However, pupils still have a way to go to fully close the attainment gaps, particularly in writing.
- In 2015, the attainment of pupils in the phonics (the use of letters and sounds in reading) reading check was below the national average. Leaders acted rapidly to improve the situation and ensured that staff improved their subject knowledge through additional training. As a result, progress in phonics is now good.
- Pupils make good progress in writing; it is often their favourite subject. As one pupil said, 'Writing helps develop my imagination.' As pupils move through the school, they are taught how to plan their writing effectively so that by Year 6 pupils can write confidently across a range of subjects.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. In 2015, nearly half of Year 6 pupils made better than expected progress. Pupils are very secure in their basic skills and use these skills well to solve problems.
- Pupils leave school soundly prepared for their next stage of education. There are good links with the follow-on schools. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were writing letters to Year 7 grammar school pupils. Although some pupils reported that they had a few concerns about transition to secondary school, they were positive that the school had done everything it could to ease their fears.

Early years provision

is good

- The children in early years are happy and confident. They play well together and talk to adults and each other with ease.
- From their different starting points all groups of children make good progress. Results are improving and in 2015 the proportions reaching a good level of development were just under the national average. Improving results have ensured that children are soundly prepared for learning in Year 1.
- In common with the rest of the school, leaders and managers have acted swiftly to improve progress in phonics. Books show that children in the Reception class make good and sometimes exceptional progress in both reading and writing. This is because there is now a greater focus on developing phonics skills as

soon as children start school. Funding to support disadvantaged pupils is well used and they make similarly good progress as their classmates.

- Evidence of progress in the other areas of learning, such as number, is less clear. While leaders conduct some informal checks, they are not effective enough to ensure that all children, including the most able, are making the maximum progress that they can.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers, ably supported by teaching assistants, provide exciting activities and as a result children are keen to start every session.
- Children are polite and well behaved. They are very proud when they get a rainbow sticker because they have been 'extra specially good'. They know how to stay safe. They use play equipment carefully and act with consideration to others.
- Staff support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, children enjoyed learning about the customs associated with Chinese New Year.
- The school has good links with parents, who like the information they receive when their child starts school. Parents make effective contributions to their children's learning by using the 'wow' slips. Many parents were appreciative of the information about how phonics is taught at the school. Links with external providers are equally strong.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 132764 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10002364 |

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

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|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 207 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Richard Lees |
| Headteacher | Anna Pattenden |
| Telephone number | 01322 388230 |
| Website | www.craylands.kent.sch.uk |
| Email address | admin@craylands.kent.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 4–5 December 2013 |

Information about this school

- The Craylands School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years are taught in one full-time Reception class.
- A very large majority of the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government for those pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes, visiting 13 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors looked at work in books and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors considered the 38 responses to the online pupils' questionnaire. There were also informal discussions with pupils at break time regarding what it was like to be a pupil at this school.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- The views expressed by members of staff in both the 18 paper and seven online questionnaires were considered.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation and policies including the school improvement plan. Information about the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was considered along with documents about pupils' current attainment and progress. Documents checking the quality of teaching and learning, and records relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding, were also examined.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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