

30 November 2017

A Parkhurst
Headteacher
Crowmoor Primary School and Nursery
Crowmere Road
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
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Dear Mr Parkhurst

Short inspection of Crowmoor Primary School and Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 15 November 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As numbers of pupils increase, you, your staff and governors are focused on securing the school's continuing success. Since the last inspection, there has been a considerable changeover of staff, which you and your governors have managed well. The roles of the new deputy headteacher and middle leaders have been developed well and, as a cohesive team, you ensure that pupils at Crowmoor Primary School achieve well.

Teaching staff know the pupils extremely well and provide interesting, relevant learning experiences that enable pupils to make good progress. The majority of staff who responded to the staff survey state that they enjoy working at the school and are proud to be a part of it.

Governors provide a good balance of both support and challenge for you and leaders. Your new chair and vice-chair of governors' view of the school's effectiveness, like yours, is accurate and incisive. They are not only involved in strategic planning for improvement, but also in the daily life of the school. They support, for example, further development of talk in the early years as it has had such a positive effect on the outcomes of your youngest pupils. They rarely miss a meeting or an opportunity to be in the school with the pupils. They hold you firmly to account.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and were keen to tell me that about the experiences that made school enjoyable for them. Relationships between pupils and staff are supportive and respectful. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. As a

result, pupils make good progress in their learning. Most parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about the school, although a few felt communication with school could be improved.

You acknowledge the need to develop a local curriculum for your pupils. One example of this is the school focus, supported by sports premium, on swimming. The school's proximity to the River Severn has made the teaching of swimming an important life skill for your pupils. When pupils entered Year 3, only a small number were able to swim. The 10-hour per year training programme means that all pupils from that Year 3 class left school able to swim.

You recognise that some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not attend school regularly enough. We discussed the need to continue the drive by governors, leaders and staff to improve attendance.

Last year, pupils did not achieve well in key stage 2 national assessments, and outcomes in mathematics and reading were not particularly strong. Current pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are at present making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Children are making rapid progress in the early years as well as in phonics in Year 1. This has resulted in improved results in national assessment tests in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2. You are aware that at present, curriculum planning in English and mathematics ensures coverage of the national curriculum, but does not ensure that pupils are required to work at a great enough depth to make more rapid progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure a positive safeguarding culture across the school and that arrangements for keeping pupils safe are fit for purpose. Leaders and administrative staff ensure that checks undertaken on staff, visitors and recruitment are stringent and secure.

All staff engage in frequent training to keep their skills and understanding of how to keep pupils safe up to date. They have clear knowledge of the school's policies and procedures around safeguarding. Leaders and administrative staff keep a detailed record of the training of staff. This includes understanding of the 'Prevent' duty to protect pupils from the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

Pupils told me that they are well looked after in school. They say that bullying rarely happens but know that there is always a trusted adult they can talk to if they have any concerns. Nearly all parents who completed the online questionnaire stated that their children are happy and safe in school.

Inspection findings

- In the nursery and Reception, adults plan lively and creative learning experiences. The outdoor learning environment is well-planned and full of opportunities to extend mark making and talk, for example. Nearly every moment

of the day is devoted to purposeful and timely interaction between children. Improving children's communication and language has been a recent priority. Staff model speaking and listening skills effectively. As a result, children make strong progress from their starting points.

- Achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below the national average in 2017. However, this was an improving picture from 2016. This is the result of the high expectations of staff and the effective interventions put into place as soon as any gaps in learning are identified.
- In Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with national averages. This indicates that pupils make good or better progress from their starting points. Staff plan learning activities carefully using a variety of approaches and resources to meet the individual needs of pupils.
- You know your disadvantaged pupils well, and during the inspection clear evidence was available to show the levels of support that staff give to them. These pupils are currently making good progress, and leaders are working successfully to raise their attainment further. The school has begun to receive, through a locally funded project, significant support from a national leader of education and a specialist leader of education. This includes a pupil premium review as part of a local project to help disadvantaged pupils catch up with other pupils.
- Work in books shows that pupils, including the most disadvantaged, are making progress from their starting points. However, we agreed that, on occasions, teachers' planning is too broad and lacks the precision for deeper learning to take place. As a result, although pupils are making progress from their starting points, this is not always at the rate required for them to demonstrate that they are working at, or above, the level expected for their age.
- The school has a high level of pupil mobility in comparison with other schools nationally and this has an effect on standards achieved by pupils in statutory tests. School leaders were able to demonstrate that most pupils from their starting points are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and maths.
- Pupils' presentation in their books is sometimes untidy, particularly in their writing and mathematics books. Teachers do not always insist that pupils present their work neatly and accurately. As a result, the presentation of pupils' work, including their handwriting, is inconsistent across the school. Writing on display is of a much higher standard than that in their books. It has clearly been drafted and edited well, ready for display.
- Overall, pupils' attendance has been broadly in line with the national average. However, in 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who were regularly absent from school was above the levels found nationally. Leaders and governors know their families well and continue to work hard to reduce absence rates for these pupils. A wide range of strategies have been put in place, including the engagement of external agencies. Attendance is slowly improving. However, absence levels for this group of pupils remain above the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders' and teachers' actions continue to help disadvantaged pupils catch up with others by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics
- pupils have opportunities to improve more rapidly and develop a greater depth of learning in reading and mathematics
- ensure that all adults have consistently high expectations of pupils' presentation and accuracy in work books
- attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils continue to rise so that they are at least in line with national averages.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Shropshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Max Vlahakis
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, and your leadership team and with the improvement officer for the school. I spoke with parents at the end of the school day and I met with a group of pupils. I met with two members of the governing body. We visited classrooms together and I looked at a range of pupils' work. We discussed the progress of different groups of pupils and the school's plans for improvement. I considered the responses of parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the staff survey. I scrutinised evidence from a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, information regarding procedures for safeguarding and monitoring behaviour, information on how the pupil premium is spent, analysis of attendance and a number of policy documents, including those for safeguarding and behaviour. I checked the school's single central record to ensure that it met current safeguarding regulations. I examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, on the playground and at lunch time.