

Croxteth Community Primary School

Moss Way, Liverpool, Merseyside L11 0BP

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- School leaders, including governors, have failed to halt the decline in the quality of teaching across the school. As a result, outcomes for all groups of pupils are too low in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is not good enough, particularly in key stage 2. Some teachers do not follow the school's behaviour policy and, on too many occasions, teaching is disrupted by a minority of pupils who have extremely poor attitudes to learning.
- The checks that leaders make on teaching, learning and assessment are not robust. Weaknesses are not challenged effectively. The pupils' work that inspectors saw, in all key stages, was of poor quality.
- Pupils do not make adequate progress in reading. The teaching of phonics is weak and prevents many pupils from developing the skills and knowledge required to become successful, independent readers.
- Pupils make slow progress in writing. They do not get enough opportunities to write at length in English lessons or in other curriculum areas.
- When planning work in mathematics, teachers fail to take account of what pupils can already do. This results in pupils spending too much time completing work that does not help them to move on in their learning.
- Attendance rates are well below the national average, and too many pupils are persistently absent from school.
- School leaders have not ensured that additional funding which the school receives to support disadvantaged pupils has been used effectively to raise the achievement of this group.
- The school's curriculum is weak, poorly planned and does not prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. By the end of key stage 2, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children do not make enough progress in the early years. Teaching does not prepare children adequately for life in Year 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are not supported well enough to make strong progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher understands what needs to be done at the school and has taken decisive action to start to bring about improvement.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all subject areas
 - governors hold leaders to account more effectively for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement
 - the curriculum is used to develop pupils' knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects and prepares them well for the next stage of their education and life in modern Britain
 - effective support is provided for all pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - pupil premium funding is used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school, including the early years, so that pupils' outcomes improve rapidly, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment information to provide pupils with tasks that challenge them and build on previous learning in mathematics
 - have the knowledge and skills required to teach phonics, and other aspects of reading such as comprehension and inference, effectively
 - provide opportunities for pupils to regularly write extended pieces of work in English and across the curriculum.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - ensuring that adults have higher expectations of how well pupils should behave in class
 - ensuring that all members of staff follow the school's behaviour policy
 - improving attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- Improve provision in the early years, and increase the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development, by:
 - ensuring that leaders maintain an accurate overview of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - providing appropriate training and support for teachers and other adults.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not done enough to challenge weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment. In too many classes pupils do not make enough progress, due to weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Standards at the end of early years and key stage 1 have been well below the national average for the past two years. Attainment at the end of key stage 2 was significantly below the national average in 2017.
- Leaders have not taken effective action to secure good behaviour. Although there is a behaviour policy this is not applied consistently by all members of staff. In some classes, pupils understand what is expected of them and behave well. However, in other classes, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6, some pupils regularly show disregard for adults and their peers. This behaviour is often not dealt with appropriately and causes major disruption to other pupils' learning.
- The school's curriculum is unbalanced and poorly taught. Pupils do not get the opportunity to study a broad range of subjects to a good depth. The work that inspectors saw in pupils' books, in subjects such as science, geography and history, was of poor quality and there was little evidence of any meaningful learning taking place.
- Pupils do not learn enough about different religions or cultures. They have a limited understanding of democracy and they have only a basic understanding of British values and life outside of their immediate experience. By the time they leave school, most pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education or life in modern Britain.
- Some parents expressed concerns about the current leadership at the school, on Parent View and during discussions with inspectors. Their main issues related to pupils' behaviour, staff absence, temporary teaching arrangements and slow responses to complaints. However, other parents welcome the changes brought in by the new headteacher.
- The school's strategy for supporting disadvantaged pupils, through the pupil premium funding, is not effective. Leaders have not done enough to ensure that support is focused on individual needs. Too much of the funding has been used to increase staffing levels without ensuring that it is the most vulnerable pupils who benefit from these arrangements. As a result, the gap between disadvantaged pupils at the school and other pupils nationally is not diminishing. The headteacher is aware of these shortcomings and has detailed plans in place to improve the support provided for these pupils.
- Sport funding has been used to extend the range of physical activity on offer to pupils. A number of sports clubs are now available, including football and gymnastics. The school has also used the funding to employ sports coaches, who lead physical education lessons. The school also occasionally participates in sports events with local schools.
- The additional funding that the school receives to support pupils who have SEN and/or

disabilities is not being used effectively. Many of the pupils on the school's special educational needs register do not currently receive any additional support, and some parents are not aware of the fact that their children have been identified as having additional needs. A new coordinator has recently taken up this role and is taking strong action to address these weaknesses. Nonetheless, weaknesses in the leadership team over time mean that these pupils are currently making inadequate progress.

- The local authority has only recently become aware of the major weaknesses at the school. It has provided some additional support for school leaders but this has been too recent to have had any significant impact.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Numerous changes to the governing body over the past two years have contributed to governors' failure to address the decline in the quality of education at the school. Governors' knowledge of the problems facing the school has not been precise enough. As a result, they have not been able to support or challenge school leaders or prevent the deterioration in teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Minutes from governing body meetings show that governors have questioned senior leaders about the decline in pupils' achievement. However, these challenges have not led to sufficient action for improvement in the face of low standards and inadequate teaching.
- Governors have failed to hold school leaders to account for how additional funding has been used to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. They have also failed to ensure that the additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has been used effectively.
- Governors have not ensured that appraisal systems have been used effectively to improve the performance of teachers. They have relied too heavily on information provided by the headteacher and, consequently, weak teaching has not been challenged effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that pupils are looked after well and that safeguarding processes are rigorous. Appropriate checks are made on all adults who work in the school. Records are detailed and kept securely. Any concerns that are reported to senior staff are followed up thoroughly and promptly. Leaders ensure that staff are up to date with the latest training and guidance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching varies considerably across the school. It is weak in too many classes. There is not enough effective teaching to help pupils to make the progress that they need to reach or exceed expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6.

- By the end of key stage 2, many pupils cannot read, write or apply mathematics as well as they should. The progress that pupils make in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in the wider curriculum is also weak. This means that they are not well prepared for the next stage of their education when they start at secondary school.
- When planning lessons, teachers fail to take into account what pupils can already do. This frequently results in work being too easy or too hard for many pupils, particularly in mathematics. As a result, pupils do not develop their knowledge, understanding or skills as well or as quickly as they should in this subject.
- There has been a recent focus on developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics. This has led to some improvements, and the work seen in books this term is generally of better quality than before. However, for many pupils the gaps that exist in their basic knowledge of number are preventing them from making strong progress in this key subject.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. The work seen in books shows that pupils spend too much time covering work that provides little or no challenge. For example, inspectors saw a number of examples of pupils' merely copying work from the board, which had little or no impact on their learning.
- Pupils have few opportunities to write at length in order to build up their writing stamina. When there are opportunities, for example to write about a science investigation, teachers often accept work of poor quality without challenge. Consequently, pupils' written work in most classes shows little sign of improvement over time.
- The teaching of phonics is weak and this prevents many pupils from developing into successful readers who can access age-appropriate texts by the time they leave key stage 1. Pupils in key stage 2 do not read regularly enough, in school or at home. They do not develop a love of, or interest in, reading. Pupils who met with inspectors had limited knowledge about children's authors.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not receiving sufficient academic support to help them to overcome the barriers to learning that they face. Leaders do not check on or evaluate pupils' progress frequently enough. Consequently, most of these pupils make inadequate progress from their various starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not encourage them to aim high and produce the very best work of which they are capable. As a result, many pupils have poor attitudes to learning, make slow progress and show little pride in their work.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school, although some expressed concern about poor behaviour in lessons. Pupils said that there is bullying from time to time in

school but that adults are good at sorting problems out. Pupils also said that they would be able to talk to someone if they felt concerned about anything.

- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision, off site, benefit from support which motivates them to improve their behaviour. School leaders keep a close check on pupils' attendance and progress. They work with the centre to support the reintegration of these pupils back into school.
- Pupils showed a broad understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. They understood the importance of not disclosing personal information while online. They were also able to say how they would respond if they were concerned about online bullying or came across any inappropriate material when using the internet.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning. The narrow curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to make progress in these areas. For example, there is very little evidence of pupils learning about different faiths or cultures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Too often, pupils do not behave well in lessons or work to the best of their ability. Inspectors also witnessed poor behaviour in an assembly. A small number of pupils, mainly boys in Year 5 and Year 6, are regularly excluded from school because of their poor behaviour.
- Attendance is low across the school and too many pupils are persistently absent. Leaders know that the levels of absenteeism are too high and have implemented plans to improve rates of attendance. However, this year's attendance figures have declined further from 2017, when they were well below the national average.
- Many pupils do behave well. They try hard in lessons and show caring attitudes towards each other, staff and visitors. They play together well during the lunch break and at playtimes. These pupils are frustrated when others disrupt lessons. One pupil said, 'Those children take lots of minutes off our education.'
- The behaviour that inspectors saw during breaktimes was better than that seen in lessons. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility as play leaders. Inspectors saw these pupils successfully organising games and supervising younger pupils during the lunch break.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils do not make sufficient progress across the school from their various starting points. In 2017, attainment at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2 was well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress that current pupils are making shows little sign of improvement. Gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge, coupled with weak teaching and poor attitudes to learning, mean that most pupils are not developing into successful learners.
- Pupils make inadequate progress in reading. The proportion of pupils who reached the

expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2017 was significantly below the national average, and around one quarter of the Year 2 class failed to reach this level. Attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 was well below the national average in 2017.

- Pupils' writing skills are not developed well in English or across the curriculum. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are often repeated and inspectors saw few examples of pupils writing extended pieces of work.
- Outcomes in mathematics are low across the school. Pupils are now being given more opportunities to use and apply mathematics but gaps in their basic knowledge of number remain and are preventing many pupils from making strong progress in their learning.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are well below those of other pupils nationally and show little sign of improvement. Funding has not been used effectively to provide specific, targeted support for these pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not achieve well. The school was able to provide evidence that pupils who receive support for social and emotional difficulties make good progress in developing more positive behaviour. However, there was little evidence show that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making progress in reading, writing or mathematics.
- The most able pupils are not supported to reach the higher standards in reading, writing or mathematics. Teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve are too low. The work that teachers set too often contains little in the way of challenge for pupils of higher ability.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Children start at the school with skills and abilities which are generally below, and sometimes well below, those typical for their age. However, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good enough to address weaknesses and help children to make the progress required to help them to catch up quickly. As a result, by the time they leave the Reception Year, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is well below the national average.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together. Weekly meetings are held to discuss children and plan learning activities. However, there is a lack of precision in the assessments that are made of children's progress. This means that the learning activities provided are not carefully structured to meet children's needs and move them on quickly in their learning.
- School leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment in the early years. The quality of support that leaders provide for staff is not sufficient to meet their needs and support their development. For example, teachers lack the knowledge and expertise to teach phonics effectively because leaders have not provided enough training or made regular checks on how well this key aspect of early reading is being taught.
- Staff work hard to ensure that there is a wide variety of enjoyable activities for children to engage with during each school day. However, the activities that are provided often

lack challenge or clear purpose. This results in children often flitting from one activity to another rather than learning to focus and concentrate on developing key skills and knowledge.

- Children enjoy working and playing together. They behave well in the early years classes and develop good friendships. Children quickly learn school routines which help them to settle into school life.
- Parents spoken to were extremely positive about the early years staff. They said that their children enjoy attending school and were being well supported by staff.
- Staff ensure that all statutory welfare and safeguarding requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	104612
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10045148

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Campbell
Headteacher	Emma Hunter
Telephone number	0151 5463140
Website	www.croxtethprimary.co.uk
Email address	croxtethp-ao@croxteth-pri.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 November 2013

Information about this school

- Croxteth Community Primary School is a larger-than-the-average-sized primary school with an on-site nursery.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- A small number of pupils in key stage 2 are currently being educated off site in the Blessed Sacrament Assessment Centre, commissioned by Liverpool local authority. This centre provides temporary places for pupils who are experiencing difficulties managing their behaviour.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2017. The deputy headteacher retired in February 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment across a range of subjects and age groups. Some of the observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of pupils' written work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including minutes of governing body meetings, development plans, improvement plans, attendance and behaviour data, safeguarding documents and the school's review of its own performance.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also spoke with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 about reading, behaviour and learning.
- Inspectors spoke with parents in the playground before school. They also took account of the 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Aleksandra Hartshorne	Ofsted Inspector
Tina Cleugh	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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