

Inspection of Crosshall Infant School Academy

446 Great North Road, Eaton Ford, St Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 7GG

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Crosshall Infant School Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Crosshall Infant School Academy, all pupils are exposed to a rich set of experiences that go beyond the expected. Pupils work with adults who have the skills to make learning interesting and demanding. They value the different subjects taught and the knowledge they gain. In art, for example, this is illustrated well by the impressive artworks they produce during their time in school.

A shared vision for reading inspires pupils to learn to love books. Pupils benefit from access to a range of high-quality texts, including daily exposure to poetry. Pupils also talk about how books help them to learn about important social rules and to be accepting of others. This includes reading books that have key characters who live in other countries and have different cultures.

Pupils in the school are polite and welcoming. They understand how the 'Golden Rules' are the common values that make their community happy and safe. Pupils know the types of behaviour that are unkind or may be bullying. However, they do not think these are typical of the behaviour in school. Pupils are united in their agreement that staff are ready to help and sort out any poor conduct.

The Crosshall Nursery Wraparound Care and its year-round provision is valued by pupils and their parents.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have created and shared a powerful vision for the early education of its pupils. This means staff consider how every moment in school can be used to enhance and extend pupils' experiences. This starts from the minute children join Nursery.

The curriculum is designed with high expectations of pupils, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders' plans set out a wide range of knowledge and skills that pupils will gain by the end of Year 2. Teachers draw on a secure body of subject knowledge. They use this well to help pupils to succeed with the tasks they complete. Regular checks on learning identify what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve further. Where there are gaps in knowledge, teachers adapt lessons and provide additional support to help pupils to keep up. For pupils with SEND, support plans make effective use of expert professional advice where needed. As a result, all pupils are prepared well for their transition to junior school.

The early years settings, including the nursery, provide exceptional learning and play opportunities. All activities are explicitly planned to challenge and motivate the children. Skilled adults work alongside them, interacting to maximise the learning taking place. Adults model precise use of language. This supports children to

develop strong communication skills. Children are inspired. They use their deepening understanding very effectively in their learning, independent play and exploration.

Leaders have set out the important phonics knowledge that pupils need to help them to read. Pupils practise the sounds they learn through reading and writing activities. In Reception, children are provided consistently with books that match the sounds they are learning. This builds their confidence with their early reading of words and sentences. However, in key stage 1, there are a small number of pupils who do not always access books that are matched well to their learning needs. This hinders the development of their reading fluency. Leaders recognise this variability and are addressing it. This includes ongoing investment in good-quality books, which can be matched appropriately to pupils' various stages in learning to read.

Pupils' respect for adults in school leads to calm and purposeful classrooms. Any incidents of low-level disruption are managed well by teachers. The behaviour of the youngest children is exemplary when they meet in the hall for their social-lunch session. Pupils learn to care about each other.

Access to extra-curricular opportunities is part of the planned programme of education. This means that all pupils benefit from meaningful activities, which skilled staff or visitors lead. These include cooking, learning musical instruments and accessing the 'magic garden'. Enhancing pupils' social skills is a priority for staff. Starting in nursery, children begin to learn the important language they need to describe how they feel. They know the impact emotions can have on their bodies and minds.

Governors focus well on supporting and challenging leaders to improve the provision. They understand their responsibilities, accessing relevant training to extend the expertise needed for their roles. They have a clear oversight of ongoing developments in the school.

Staff work together very effectively. They appreciate the support and professional development provided for them. Parents value the contribution of the dedicated and nurturing staff team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders promote high expectations for standards of safeguarding. A team of designated leaders work together to ensure that no pupil is at risk of harm. When concerns are raised leaders respond quickly. All staff have been trained to fulfil their shared role to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn how to keep safe, now and in the future. Age-appropriate strategies are taught to help them to stay safe online. Pupils identify trusted adults on their 'safety circles' sheets. They are encouraged to speak out and tell an adult if they have a worry or concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of pupils in key stage 1 are not routinely given books that help them to build reading fluency effectively. This means they spend too much time breaking down individual words, which limits their flow and confidence when reading books. While leaders have identified this variability and are addressing it, they should complete this work quickly. Improvement actions must ensure that all pupils read books that support accurate and fluent word reading, using the knowledge of phonics sounds they are secure with.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136332
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10211800
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Keith Martin
Headteacher	Deborah James
Website	www.crosshallinfant.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Crosshall Infant School Academy became an academy in October 2010.
- There is a before- and after-school childcare provision on the school site which is managed by leaders and those with responsibility for governance. This is called Crosshall Nursery Wraparound Care and Crosshall Kids Club.
- Leaders do not currently use any alternative provision to meet the needs of pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and special educational needs coordinator.

- Inspectors met with six members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in five subjects: early reading, art & design, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and, where relevant, looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the school's designated safeguarding leader, the school's finance administrator and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- Inspectors considered 56 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including their free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 47 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. Inspectors also observed the behaviour of pupils across the school site.

Inspection team

Kristian Hewitt, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jessie Linsley	His Majesty's Inspector
Oriana Dalton	Ofsted Inspector

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