

# Inspection of a good school: Croft Primary School

Mustard Lane, Croft, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 7DG

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

## **Outcome**

Croft Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are very happy to attend this warm and welcoming village school. Pupils said that they have fun while learning. Leaders support pupils to develop into well-rounded citizens of the future.

Pupils flourish under the high expectations that leaders have for their academic success. Pupils achieve well. They also have a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests, for example, by learning to play a musical instrument, by taking part in competitive sports or through designing a garden for the Tatton Park Flower Show.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well. Pupils live up to these expectations. Pupils' good behaviour is often commented on when they are outside school. Pupils take pride in the fact that they are representing their school in a positive light. If bullying should happen, leaders deal with it effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

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

Leaders have carefully designed a broad and ambitious curriculum, right from when children join the early years, including the provision for two-year-old children.

In most subjects, leaders have identified what pupils should learn and when this should happen. Teachers are well trained. They use their strong subject knowledge to present learning clearly. However, in a few subjects, leaders are still refining their curriculum thinking. There is too much content within some of these subject curriculums. This means that teachers are unsure about what key knowledge they should prioritise, so that pupils build on what they know and can do.

Teachers check that pupils are retaining the knowledge that has been taught. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to recall their prior learning. This helps to make sure that pupils' knowledge is secure before they move onto new concepts.

The early reading and phonics programme is delivered consistently well. Children in the two-year-old provision and in the Nursery class are immersed in songs, rhymes and stories. Children in the Reception class quickly gain an understanding of the sounds that letters represent. In key stage 1, pupils use their secure phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words with fluency and understanding. Those pupils who struggle to read receive effective support to help them to catch up. As a result, by the end of Year 2, pupils are confident and fluent readers.

Leaders and teachers identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities from the earliest age. Leaders work cooperatively with parents, carers and outside agencies to provide effective, targeted support. Teachers successfully adapt their delivery of the curriculum to enable these pupils to achieve well.

Pupils are calm, courteous and respectful at all times. There is no low-level disruption in lessons. This means that pupils can learn without distractions.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests in sports and the creative arts. Leaders foster pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development throughout the curriculum. In addition, there is a wide range of trips and visits. Leaders provide a number of initiatives to prepare pupils for their future life. For example, lawyers and engineers visit the school to talk about their careers.

Leaders' development is supported and promoted by the trust. Members of the local governing body know the school well. Leaders are very mindful of the well-being and work-life balance of all staff. Staff said that they are very appreciative of this.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are well trained in how to identify pupils who may be at risk of abuse. There is a culture of vigilance where every concern is reported. Leaders have ensured that there is a strong offer of early help. They work effectively with outside agencies as appropriate.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe in person and online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a small number of subjects, there is too much subject content to cover. This makes it difficult for teachers to know what content should be prioritised to help pupils strengthen their learning even further. Leaders should refine their curriculum thinking in these few remaining subjects so that pupils remember the most important knowledge that they need for future learning.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Croft Primary School, to be good in June 2015.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147387
<b>Local authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	10291439
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	280
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Julie Bennion
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Mains
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.croftprimary.co.uk">www.croftprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- There is provision for two-year-old children.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club.
- Croft Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Croft Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is a member of the One Community Trust multi-academy trust.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and a wide range of other staff.

- The inspector met with members of the local governing body, the trustees and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their work and their wider school life.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. She examined leaders' approach to safer recruitment. She also spoke to staff about their safeguarding knowledge and checked how well they understood their safeguarding responsibilities.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and while in lessons.
- The inspector considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the content of emails submitted by parents.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and history. She spoke with the staff who lead these subjects, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. She also spoke with pupils about their learning and viewed examples of their work.
- The inspector also spoke with pupils and viewed examples of their work in a range of other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Liz Davidson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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