

Inspection of Cranwell Primary School (Foundation)

Cranwell, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 8HH

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 over twelve years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. 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 graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the moment pupils first walk through the door at Cranwell Primary School, staff make them feel at home and give them all the help they need to settle in. This positive, inclusive ethos permeates the whole school. There are strong, caring relationships between the pupils and adults. Pupils say, 'The staff take the time to get to know us and understand us.'

Many pupils join the school part way through their primary education. A thorough assessment of pupils' needs takes place as soon as they arrive. Being located so close to RAF Cranwell, a high proportion of pupils have parents or carers in the armed forces. There is high-quality pastoral support available, such as the school's Bluey Club for those with service parents on deployment.

Classrooms are calm places where pupils can concentrate on their learning. Most pupils sustain their focus and behave well. Pupils enjoy spending time together. They say it is easy to make friends at Cranwell.

Alongside its ambitious curriculum, the school provides an exceptional variety of wider opportunities. Carefully planned trips and experiences enrich pupils' learning. There is a plethora of clubs, as well as numerous pupil leadership roles, on offer.

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

The school's curriculum builds sequentially from Reception through to Year 6. Over several lessons, pupils work on a series of enquiry questions. They then apply the knowledge and skills they have learned to answer a big question at the end of each unit of work. Staff adapt the curriculum well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Additional resources, modified materials and effective adult support enable pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, when pupils join the school, there is not always sufficient time for them to catch up before the end of the year. Published outcomes do not reflect the high-quality education that the school provides.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain new learning clearly and show pupils what they need to do to be successful. For instance, in English lessons, teachers model how to construct sentences step by step, so that pupils can learn from their examples. However, in some foundation subjects, teachers do not build on pupils' prior learning well enough. Consequently, some pupils cannot recall key curriculum content securely and they do not deepen their understanding of important concepts over time.

There is a vibrant reading culture at Cranwell Primary School. Pupils love spending time in their well-stocked library. Many choose to read a book in there at break time

or lunch time. Through the curriculum, pupils encounter a diverse range of quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry. This begins in the early years, where children are immersed in a world of stories and rhymes. Learning to read begins as soon as children start in Reception. Staff teach phonics well. They check closely on pupils' progress and give additional help straight away if anyone falls behind. However, some staff do not always develop reading fluency as well as they could when they listen to pupils read their books.

Through the values of courage, perseverance and success, the school sets high standards for pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils live up to these expectations most of the time. Attendance is high. The school acts quickly to reduce any absence, working effectively with families and other agencies.

The school's personal development offer is a considerable strength. Learning how to live a healthy life begins in the early years. Children learn about the importance of staying hydrated and eating healthy snacks, as well as how to look after their teeth. The school is passionate about sport. In addition to having a range of opportunities to be physically active on the playground every day, all pupils have the chance to represent Cranwell in one of its many sports teams. Pupils think of others by supporting a local foodbank, raising money for the school's sensory room and sponsoring a snow leopard. Pupils know why equality is important. They say, 'Everyone gets to do everything here and they are treated fairly.' Pupils have respectful attitudes towards difference and diversity. However, some pupils do not understand world faiths well enough.

The school is well led. Governors are an integral part of school life. They have an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and its next steps. They check closely on many areas of the school's work. Staff speak highly of the training and support they are given.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundations subjects, staff do not routinely go back over important prior learning. They do not always help pupils connect what they have learned before to what they are learning now. As a result, some pupils cannot recall key curriculum content securely and they do not deepen their understanding of important concepts over time. The school should review its approach to the recall of prior learning so that staff revisit important content in all subjects, helping pupils to remember and build on the knowledge they have already been taught.
- Some staff do not develop pupils' fluency well enough when they listen to them read their books. Consequently, pupils who find reading difficult do not become

fluent readers as quickly as they could. The school should ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading fluency when adults listen to pupils read so that all pupils become confident, fluent readers as soon as possible.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	120674
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10298429
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pete Nelstrop
Headteacher	Chris Wilson
Website	www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 December 2011 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculums for English and religious education with subject leaders. They visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and talked to pupils about their learning in these subjects.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and the school development plan, as well as documentation relating to behaviour, attendance and governance.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

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