

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Crowcombe CofE VA Primary School

Crowcombe, Taunton, Somerset TA4 4AA

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Inspection date: 8 January 2025

## Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Community is at the heart of this welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils actively embrace the school's values, particularly demonstrating courage. For example, the school encourages pupils to perform in front of others at Wells Cathedral. Warm relationships between staff and pupils mean pupils feel comfortable to share any worries.

The school has made great strides in improving the quality of education for pupils. However, there are still areas where further work remains. Pupils struggle to remember their learning in some subjects because the curriculum does not specify the most important knowledge they need to learn. Moreover, the school does not check pupils' learning well enough. Therefore, some pupils make repeated errors in their work.

The school has high expectations for how pupils should behave. Most rise to these. However, occasionally, some pupils do not follow the school's 'golden rules', and as a result, they disrupt learning for others.

Pupils are empowered to make a tangible difference to their school community. For example, pupils learn how to be responsible when planning a field trip to the Quantocks for others. They host orienteering sessions, plan routes and budget for snacks. Pupils benefit from clubs such as music, sports and art to develop their interests.

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

The school has undergone significant changes in recent years, including to leadership. It has swiftly evaluated the impact of the curriculum and made significant improvements. While this is having a positive impact in many areas, the full impact is yet to be realised across the curriculum and for all pupils. As a result, pupils are not yet learning the curriculum well enough.

In some subjects, the school has not considered the most important knowledge pupils need or how prior knowledge connects to new learning. This prevents pupils from developing their understanding over time. Where subjects are further ahead in their journey, the school has identified this essential knowledge. In these subjects, pupils revisit previous learning and build their knowledge well.

The school's work to check how well pupils have learned the curriculum is in its infancy. There are instances where staff check how well pupils have grasped concepts through thoughtful questioning. However, this is not widespread. Staff do not routinely check pupils' learning well enough. Because of this, some pupils make repeated mistakes, such as inaccurate letter formation. This means that these misconceptions persist.

The school is committed to creating a positive reading culture. Older pupils enjoy sharing book recommendations. Pupils value library visits. Children in early years learn about number vocabulary through reading carefully selected story books. Pupils are taught the school's chosen phonics scheme by trained staff. Pupils practise reading books that match the sounds they know. This develops their confidence. On occasion, pupils' learning is slowed by the poor behaviour of others. This prevents pupils from building their knowledge securely, including those who need the most support. Consequently, pupils are not becoming fluent readers as quickly as they could.

The school identifies the particular needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly. Staff adapt learning for these pupils to help them to learn the curriculum. However, the shortcomings in curriculum design and implementation are also having an impact on pupils with SEND. Along with their peers, these pupils do not develop detailed knowledge across the curriculum.

Staff have designed a clear behaviour policy with high expectations. However, staff do not apply these expectations consistently. At times, pupils' learning is disrupted. Older pupils are courteous and a delight to speak to. They have a strong desire to do well. Leaders are meticulous in tracking attendance. They provide additional support to families who need it. As a result, absence has reduced over time.

Pupils benefit from a carefully crafted personal development offer. They take pride in their meaningful leadership roles. For example, school councillors organised a bake sale to raise money for charity. Pupils develop empathy and compassion when writing letters to local residents who may be feeling lonely. Pupils know how to stay healthy and safe, for example with the local train station nearby. They say that too much screen time could be

a risk to well-being. Pupils understand that everyone should be treated with respect. They have a firm appreciation for diversity. The school nurtures pupils to become confident and resilient individuals.

School leaders have brought stability and direction to the school. The governing body has a clear understanding of its role. Staff appreciate the genuine care for their well-being during this time of change. Leaders and governors are not complacent and continue to drive improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Expectations for how some pupils should behave are not high enough. At times, low-level disruption is allowed to persist. As a result, pupils' learning, including in phonics, is hampered. The school must ensure that staff develop the expertise they need to apply the agreed policy for managing behaviour consistently so that all pupils can learn the curriculum well without disruption.
- In some subjects, the school has not identified the most important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. As a result, there are gaps in what pupils know and remember. The school needs to ensure that the most important knowledge is clearly defined so that pupils build their knowledge sequentially.
- In some subjects, assessment is not used well enough to check that pupils have remembered the knowledge they have been taught. This means that pupils make repeated errors and misconceptions are allowed to persist. The school should ensure that teachers are supported to use assessment strategies effectively in order to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the

last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123830
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344548
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	50
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Janis Dean
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Lewis
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.crowcombeandstogumberprimaryschools.co.uk">www.crowcombeandstogumberprimaryschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized school. It is federated with Stogumber Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School. There is one headteacher and one governing body. Subject leadership is shared across both schools.
- Reception and key stage 1 pupils from both schools are taught in two mixed-age classes at Stogumber CofE Primary School. Key stage 2 pupils from both schools are taught in two mixed-age classes at Crowcombe Primary School. Four inspectors carried out inspections of each school simultaneously.
- There have been changes to the leadership of the school since the previous inspection. The headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school was carried out in September 2023. The school should receive its next section 48 inspection within five school years.

- A breakfast club and an after-school club are held at Crowcombe Primary School and attended by pupils from both schools in the federation. A minibus is used to transport pupils to and from each school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 spoke with school leaders, governors and representatives from the local authority and diocese. Meetings were jointly held between the inspectors of both schools in the federation and leaders of the school.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

## Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Claire Baillie

Ofsted Inspector

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