

Inspection of Croft Primary School

Station Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire NG17 5FJ

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

At Croft Primary School, pupils are happy, polite and curious. They appreciate the kindness and support they receive from staff. The 'Croft Code' sets out clear expectations for conduct around school. Teachers provide gentle reminders to pupils, when needed, to ensure that everyone can learn in a safe, purposeful and nurturing environment. Pupils strive to meet the high standards set for their behaviour and learning. However, in a few subjects and in the early years, these expectations are not fully realised.

The school collaborates closely with its families to ensure that the needs of all its pupils are met. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are spotted quickly and given the necessary support. Staff have a secure understanding of the strategies they can use to support pupils with SEND. These pupils benefit from extra resources, additional adult support or specific adaptations to learning as part of this help.

Pupils enjoy taking on roles and responsibilities, such as the school council. These opportunities enable pupils to express their opinions and listen to others. The 'Green Team' makes decisions to improve the school and the local community. Pupils learn how their actions can impact themselves and those around them. For example, pupils support local businesses through the school's reward system and loan books from Sutton Library.

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

The school is in a period of rapid change. It has introduced new systems for the curriculum and behaviour. These changes have had a positive impact on pupils' attendance and have also reduced suspensions. The curriculum has a clear ambition for what the school intends pupils to know and recall. The school has an accurate understanding of what is working well and what it needs to develop further. Parents and carers recognise the 'positive changes' that are happening at the school. However, for some of these changes, it is too early to evaluate the impact.

Pupils' recall of the school's curriculum varies. In some subjects, pupils engage in their learning with enthusiasm. They make meaningful connections with the knowledge they have gained and deepen their understanding of key concepts and ideas. Pupils with SEND benefit from appropriate adaptations that help them learn the same curriculum as their peers. In these subjects, lessons build logically and progressively. However, this consistency does not extend across the entire curriculum, including in English and mathematics. The school has begun to address this, and has implemented additional strategies to resolve gaps in pupils' knowledge of the curriculum. These strategies are beginning to have a positive impact, but this is not yet reflected in published outcomes.

Pupils enjoy listening to and sharing different types of books. This helps them learn to read fluently, enhances their vocabulary and allows them to discuss their understanding of the text. Generally, pupils at the early stages of reading learn to sound out words well. They begin to apply the learned sounds and words to their writing. Occasionally, inconsistencies in teaching slow down pupils' reading progress. The school has tackled this by providing staff with additional training. It also ensures that pupils who miss

phonics lessons, or who are at risk of falling behind, receive extra support. This helps these pupils to keep up with the programme.

The early years environment is welcoming. Staff carefully design different spaces to foster children's independence and confidence. For example, children access various tools and resources to design, create and make their ideas. The early years curriculum is currently being revised so that it identifies the key knowledge that children need to recall and closely aligns to the rest of the school's curriculum. During directed activities, staff prompt children to repeat and extend their ideas. This is less effective during independent play. As a result, children's communication and vocabulary development are not as rapid as they could be.

The school's systems for attendance and punctuality are clearly communicated to parents. When necessary, the school provides support to families who may face barriers. As a result, pupils' attendance and punctuality have improved. When pupils miss key parts of learning, staff adapt timetables to help them catch up.

The school's personal development offer is both broad and rich. For some pupils, including those with SEND, the school adapts its provision to provide a more tailored offer. Individual talents and interests are carefully nurtured. For instance, pupils perform in choirs, take part in theatrical productions and learn to play instruments. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and contemplate. This helps them to understand the importance of physical and mental health. They learn how to stay safe online. Pupils understand how to appreciate diversity and difference within their community and beyond. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in contemporary British society.

Staff recognise how the changes to systems, processes and routines are leading to improvements at the school. They appreciate the consideration the school gives to their workload as the changes are implemented. They know that the work on the school's curriculum will benefit the pupils.

The information governors receive about the school helps them to provide appropriate support and challenge. They ensure that they make checks on their statutory roles and duties.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's vision for the curriculum, including in early reading, English and mathematics, is not fully realised. As a result, pupils' recall of key knowledge in some subjects is variable. The school must ensure that all staff have the necessary expertise

to implement the whole curriculum well. Checks should be made to ensure that pupils know more of the curriculum over time.

- In the early years, too much of the important knowledge that the school wants children to know is left to chance during independent learning times. This does not help children who have gaps in their early knowledge to catch up. The school should ensure that children practise and deepen their understanding of the early years curriculum during independent activities to address any gaps in their development.

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	122463
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10324111
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	383
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Martin
Headteacher	Sally-Ann Seward
Website	www.croft.notts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The governing body is responsible for the school's breakfast club.
- The deputy headteacher took up the position in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and leaders with oversight of the curriculum and the early years.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also sampled the school's English curriculum, focusing on pupils' writing. They also considered the school's curriculum for religious education, and art and design.
- 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 during lessons and at social times. They also considered the school's offer to support pupils' personal development.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and pupils on site. They considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector
Justine Roberts	Ofsted Inspector

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