



Inspection report

Crestwood Park Primary School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 103790
LEA Dudley

Inspection number 274697
Inspection dates 27 and 28 April 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs D Holdaway HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Lapwood Avenue
School category	Community		Crestwood Park Estate
Age range of pupils	4 to 11 years		Kingswinford
			West Midlands
			DY6 8RP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01384 818315
Number on roll	210	Fax number	01384 818316
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr B Patterson
Date of previous inspection	October 2003	Headteacher	Mr S Hudson

Age group	Published	Reference no.
4 to 11 years	13 June 2005	274697

Introduction

When Crestwood Park Primary School was inspected in October 2003, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on four occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in April 2005.

Description of the school

Crestwood Park Primary School is situated in Kingswinford, to the north of Stourbridge in the West Midlands. There are 210 pupils on roll, of which 9.5 per cent are entitled to a free school meal. Fourteen per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, close to the national average. Four of these pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. Almost all of the pupils are of white British heritage and all speak English as their first language.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

Crestwood Park Primary School is a good school, which is well led and managed. The school's progress accelerated rapidly following the appointment of the headteacher in January 2004 and the deputy headteacher in the following month. During the spring term of the same year, two further teachers joined the senior management team and together they vigorously set about achieving the school's vision and goals. In 2004, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 improved significantly, but the end-of-Key Stage 2 test results remained low. The pupils' attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is average for their age and they make good progress during the year. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; they are keen to come to school and enjoy discussing their lessons. The curriculum meets the national requirements and the pupils benefit from educational visits and additional clubs and activities.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of October 2003 required the school to address key issues concerned with standards, leadership and management, the quality of teaching and the provision in the Foundation Stage. There has been good progress in relation to all of the key issues.

Capacity to improve

The school's capacity to improve is good. The headteacher is committed to a programme of further improvements and, together with the deputy headteacher, provides a strong sense of direction and purpose. Confident and able phase co-ordinators, hard-working staff and effective governors have all contributed to the school's success. A questionnaire, and discussion at the annual governors' meeting, confirmed that the parents believe that Crestwood Park is an improving school. Long-serving non-teaching staff report that the school has come alive.

The school has maintained good liaison with the local education authority (LEA) and, while it has benefited from the advisor's targeted support, the school now has the ability to determine its own future. There are suitable systems to monitor the school's performance and tackle weaknesses. The school is developing procedures to review its progress but evaluation is not embedded sufficiently in the cycle of continuous improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities of the school's development plan are to:

- continue to raise standards by relating marking to levels in the National Curriculum and recording these levels regularly and systematically;
- prioritise future improvements, mapping the activities with suitable milestones and evaluating the impact of the school's initiatives.

Achievement and standards

When the school became subject to special measures in 2003, the standards of attainment were unsatisfactory in English and mathematics; the pupils did not make sufficient progress through the school. Standards of attainment improved significantly in the 2004 end-of-Key Stage 1 national tests. Almost all of the Year 2 pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or above in English, mathematics and science. The most significant gain was in mathematics, with two thirds of the pupils achieving the higher Level 3. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 remained below the national figures in all three subjects. However, a greater proportion of the pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics than in the previous year.

Standards in English and mathematics have improved significantly in lessons and most pupils are achieving the age-related expectations. In English, the pupils are confident to talk about their learning, using specific vocabulary to explain their views or opinions. There has been a clear focus on raising standards in writing and the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 write for a variety of purposes and audiences. For example, the pupils in Year 6 produced a lively piece of writing based on *Kensuke's Kingdom* using complex sentences with embedded clauses and wrote expressively from the character's point of view.

The pupils in the reception class have made very good progress since starting school in September. A significant proportion of them recognise and write initial sounds, blends and three-letter words; attempt to spell unknown words using their knowledge of phonics; recognise numbers up to 100; and perform simple addition and doubling operations. The most recent intake of pupils to the Foundation Stage has adapted quickly to the routines and standards expected of them.

Personal development

Attendance is good at 95.3 per cent.

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The pupils are keen to come to school and they are enthusiastic about their lessons. Positive relationships with each other and the adults in school promote confidence and self-esteem. They are helpful, polite and keen to talk about their positive views of school. During lessons the pupils applied themselves

quickly to their work, maintained concentration and avoided distractions. Even the youngest of pupils worked collaboratively, organised their resources effectively and persevered with challenging activities. The older pupils adjusted quickly from one activity to another, organised themselves responsibly and continued to work hard, even when they were not directly supervised by adults.

Around the school, the pupils are polite and courteous to visitors; they move calmly from one area to another and play co-operatively during break and lunchtimes. The pupils reported that there were no incidents of bullying and that they knew what to do if they were hurt or worried.

There have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions this year.

The school has established a climate in which all pupils are encouraged to grow and develop as individuals; the pupils' questions, thoughts and ideas are valued. Assemblies provide a sense of occasion and give pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions as well as celebrate achievements. The pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and lessons enable them to work together in small groups. However, opportunities for cultural development are not sufficiently explicit in planning or displays around the school. The grounds are well maintained and provide an attractive welcome to the school.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching was good overall; it was at least satisfactory in the 18 lessons seen and over two thirds of the teaching was good or very good. There were examples of very good teaching in each of the key stages and the Foundation Stage. Good practice has been shared effectively across the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory overall.

The lessons were well organised and the teachers' expectations were sufficiently high to ensure that the pupils were challenged appropriately. Planning focused on learning objectives; built on previous knowledge; met the needs of groups of pupils; and provided suitable direction for the teaching assistants. Where the teaching was good or better, the teachers set a lively pace and planned exciting activities, which engaged the pupils' interest and desire to learn. Positive relationships were modelled well by staff and fostered the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Most of the teaching assistants were well informed and contributed effectively to the pupils' learning.

The quality of learning closely matched that of teaching. Practical experiences deepened the pupils' understanding and underpinned newly acquired knowledge. Investigations and problem-solving enabled the pupils to apply their skills in a variety of real situations. The teachers' enthusiasm for teaching, subject knowledge and focus on standards promoted enquiry, high levels of motivation and perseverance.

There are suitable systems to assess the pupils' attainment at certain points in the year. The data is analysed well and appropriate action is taken to remedy underachievement.

Marking helps the pupils to improve their work and praise is given for effort as well as achievement. However, while marking provides the teachers with detailed information about the pupils' knowledge and understanding, it does not indicate measurable progress with references to National Curriculum levels. In lessons, the pupils' levels of attainment are not assessed or recorded regularly enough and they are not explicit in the day-to-day planning. Furthermore, the pupils are not sufficiently aware of the connection between the levels and the outcomes of their work.

The curriculum is broad, balanced, and based on National Curriculum requirements. The accommodation is safe, attractive and well resourced, enabling the full curriculum to be offered. In the Foundation Stage, outdoor areas are well planned and resourced. The curriculum is enhanced by educational visits and after school activities.

In the Foundation Stage, the relationships and quality of learning are of a consistently high standard. The co-ordinator is absolutely clear about what she wants the pupils to learn and her high expectations ensure that the pupils are challenged but successful. She plans an excellent balance of whole class, partner, group and independent activities in which the pupils are steered skilfully towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goals. The range of opportunities enables the pupils to move swiftly from whole-class to child-initiated activities, whilst keeping the focus tightly on learning and achievement. The curriculum is broad and balanced, enabling the pupils to explore, investigate, record, consider, imagine and create.

The pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs make satisfactory progress over time. Those pupils who have physical, emotional or behavioural difficulties are supported sensitively and effectively. Individual education plans are reviewed three times during the school year when new targets are set. However, the targets are not broken down into short, timed steps to ensure that the pupils make sufficient progress towards their goals. Furthermore, parents and pupils are not sufficiently involved in contributing to the individual plans or commenting on their effectiveness.

Aspects of health and safety are taught through the curriculum. During a science lesson, the teacher was careful to check the pupils' susceptibility to allergies before coming into contact with compost and pollen, and Year 6 pupils were made aware of potential risks during their experiments with sound. The school has been recognised as a *Health Promoting School*. Fresh fruit is available for Key Stage 1 pupils every day and school lunches provide a healthy balance of fresh meat, vegetables, salad and fruit. The pupils have nominated and voted members onto a school council, which has improved the resources at playtimes and helped to enhance the school environment.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has established a positive and caring ethos while successfully leading the drive to raise standards, to ensure high quality teaching and learning and to improve the learning environment. He has been ably supported by the deputy headteacher and key stage co-ordinators. They have led by good

example, motivated and galvanised teams and have shown strong commitment to the school's goals. The school has been revitalised under their lead and together the staff have worked hard to ensure that the school's vision is put into practice. However, the areas needing the most improvement have not been consistently prioritised so that there is insufficient clarity about what tests have to be done first and in what time scales. The leadership team has not yet developed rigorous systems for the school's self evaluation in order to direct strategic planning.

The school's very good procedures for monitoring lessons have provided the leadership team with an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching. Areas requiring improvement have been supported well with training and paired teaching; unsatisfactory teaching has been challenged appropriately and successfully eradicated.

The governing body provides a balance of support and challenge and the various committees know the school's relative strengths and weaknesses. The governing body is aware of its roles and responsibilities and is determined to contribute to the school's continued improvement.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Crestwood Park Primary School was inspected under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by Additional Inspectors in October 2003. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in March, May and October 2004 and in January 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of October 2003.

In April 2005, two HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, and was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

During the visit 18 parts of lessons and one assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior managers, the chair of governors and a representative from the LEA and informally with other staff. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of October 2003 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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