



Crofton Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108142
LEA Wakefield
Inspection number 277913
Inspection dates 21 February 2006 to 22 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Michael McIlroy HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Community		Crofton
Age range of pupils	5 to 7		Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 1NG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 303900
Number on roll	154	Fax number	01924 303900
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms J Rigby
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2000	Headteacher	Ms H Padwick

Age group 5 to 7	Inspection dates 21 February 2006 - 22 February 2006	Inspection number 277913
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

Description of the school

Crofton Infant School is situated in the village of Crofton near Wakefield. The school is smaller than average. There are 114 full-time pupils and 40 pupils who attend the pre-school nursery part-time. Pupils start attending on a full time basis in the term in which they have their fifth birthday. Twelve per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and relatively few have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Crofton Infant School provides a good education for its pupils. This judgement matches the view of the school. Pupils enter the nursery with broadly average levels of skills and knowledge. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage. This start is successfully built on in Key Stage 1 so that by the time they leave the school pupils achieve standards which are consistently above average.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. Some achieve very well. Although standards rose in 2005, some more able pupils did not achieve as well as they might have. The school has taken effective steps to remedy this.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Work was well matched to pupils' needs and abilities but often drew on a narrow range of learning resources. Teachers use a wide range of assessment procedures but these are fragmented and less effective as a consequence.

The personal development of pupils is good and is a strength of the school. All pupils are made to feel special because of the effective care, guidance and support they receive. The curriculum meets the needs of learners of all abilities. Pupils' behaviour is good and attendance is above average.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides effective leadership and clear direction. She has motivated the staff, building a strong team after a significant period of staffing discontinuity. The quality of subject leadership and management varies but is satisfactory overall. The school has recently joined a local authority (LA) programme to develop the role of coordinators.

Governance is good. The school provides good value for money. Effective steps have been taken to remedy the issues raised at the last inspection and the school has the capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of subject leadership and management to enable subject leaders to have more impact on teaching and learning.
- Develop a whole school policy to bring coherence to the school's assessment systems.
- Use a wider range of resources to make learning more interesting.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school judges the achievement and standards of pupils to be good overall and inspectors agree. Pupils enter the nursery with broadly average levels of skills and abilities. They make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage, achieving well in all areas of learning. Most pupils exceed the early learning goals expected of pupils aged five. Their personal, social and emotional development is particularly good.

In Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make good progress. Over the past four years standards achieved by pupils in the core subjects at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above the national averages. Results last year showed improvement and the school met most of its challenging targets. Standards were particularly high in reading and writing. The few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made good, and occasionally very good, progress. However, some more able pupils did not achieve as well as they might have. This was partly due to a number of changes in staffing. Nonetheless, the school analysed these results carefully and took effective steps to improve provision for more able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. Assemblies and circle times provide rich opportunities for pupils to express their views, concerns and hopes. The recent Asian earthquake affected the pupils deeply. They tried to help those in need through fundraising and were fascinated by the subsequent and informative 'Asian Day'. Pupils' knowledge of cultural events increases their awareness of the wider world.

Behaviour is good. Pupils understand and follow the school's 'Golden Rules'. They develop a strong awareness of right and wrong to guide their decisions. Pupils enjoy and are interested in learning. They concentrate well, listen carefully to instructions and make high quality contributions to discussions.

Pupils feel safe in school and know what to do in any rare instances of bullying. Their positive attitudes to learning are reflected in their good levels of attendance. Pupils feel their views are taken into account and acted upon. They are developing a good awareness of public responsibility; for example, the school council has been to meet the Mayor of Wakefield at the town hall.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Strengths of teaching included a brisk pace in lessons and a good match of work to the ability of pupils. Able pupils were challenged appropriately. Good questioning by teachers and careful explanation of what pupils had to learn contributed to pupils making rapid progress. Some good links were also made between subjects; for example, in a literacy lesson pupils' mathematical knowledge was skilfully drawn upon to develop their questioning skills. The recently introduced marking policy is well applied to inform older pupils of how they can improve their work. Effective use is made of skilled teaching assistants and other additional adults. While the best lessons were stimulating and interesting, the range of resources is often narrow. Too much work is completed on worksheets.

Pupils are enthusiastic and eager learners. They work well both collaboratively and independently. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants. A wide range of assessment data is used to track progress and identify underachievement but this is fragmented and less effective than it should be. The school recognises the need for an assessment policy. Learning is greatly assisted by the very strong relationships that exist between teaching staff and pupils. Parents read with their children for fifteen minutes every morning in the classroom and this has a significant impact on the progress made by pupils in reading.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is balanced and broad and meets statutory requirements. It meets the needs of learners including the less and more able. There is an appropriate focus on the core subjects. The information and communication technology (ICT) skills of pupils are being rapidly developed in the new computer suite. There are opportunities for more able pupils to develop their writing to higher standards by teaching them separately. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have good access to all the curriculum. On occasion, additional homework is set to support learning.

The experiences of pupils are enriched by 'creative weeks' which enable many cross curricular links to be developed. Last year there was a very successful 'environment week.' Weekly 'enrichment afternoons' enable particular aspects of learning to be developed such as mathematical counting skills, physical education (PE) and ICT.

There are organised visits to places of historical interest, such as Cannon Hall. Links exist with the local church and the local authority musical service. Music is strong in the school. Pupils sang heartily in assemblies. Extra curricular activities include clubs for recorders, ICT and football. Pupils returning from the football club glowed with excitement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of the school's care, guidance and support is good. There are very effective induction arrangements for new pupils. The very good links with parents enhance this.

All pupils in the school are made to feel special. Awards are given for politeness and good behaviour, both of which are strong features of school life. If they have problems, pupils know they can go to the staff for support.

Pupils are well supervised in and around the school. They are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle from their earliest days in school. Older pupils are aware of the dangers of drugs and the problems caused by tobacco and alcohol. There are effective staff procedures for child protection, First Aid and in helping pupils cope with their problems.

Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is effective. Good communications between all staff ensure that the needs of pupils at risk are well known. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support these pupils and to

track their progress. Young pupils are told how they are progressing and older pupils receive guidance on improvement through teachers marking their work.

Key Stage 1 pupils have opportunities to exercise responsibility through the elected school council, as playground buddies and classroom monitors. All pupils, including the youngest, are encouraged to show responsibility by tidying up after lessons.

Good links with the nearby junior school, to which nearly all pupils transfer, mean that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school judges the quality of leadership and management to be good overall and inspectors agree. The headteacher provides good leadership. Staffing is now stable after a period of considerable discontinuity. There is an effective and well motivated teaching team and the climate for learning has been considerably enhanced.

There is a strong focus on learning and school improvement. The evaluation of the school's performance and identification of key areas for improvement is accurate. Effective action has been taken to remedy issues identified in the last inspection report. Parents are consulted about school developments. There is a strong emphasis on the involvement of all the stakeholders in the school. This is exemplified by the opportunities for parents to be involved in school in their child's learning.

Middle management of the school is satisfactory. The management of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, as is the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. Subject leadership is underdeveloped. Whilst subject leaders scrutinise the quality of written work, they do not know enough about what pupils are learning in their subject across the school. Some are new in post. The school is participating in a programme with the local authority to develop subject leadership skills.

Governance of the school is good. Governors are involved in the life of the school and provide challenge and support for the headteacher. They hold the school firmly to account in its work to improve standards. School finances are administered efficiently and the school provides good value for money. The school possesses good capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we inspected your school recently. I am writing this letter to let you know what we found.

These are some of the best things we saw:

- your behaviour is good
- you enjoy coming to school
- you work hard in lessons and do well
- you are well taught by your teachers
- you have lots of fun at clubs, during enrichment afternoons and creative weeks
- you help and care about each other. Some of you are playground buddies
- your headteacher leads your school well.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to change some things to make your school even better. These are:

- to let teachers who are in charge of subjects see more of what is going on in classes, and to keep better track of how well you are doing as you move up the school
- to make learning even more interesting by using a greater variety of activities.

Once again, thank you for your politeness and help during the inspection of your school.