



Crowton Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111336
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278662
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Dee Brigstock CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kingsley Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Crowton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2RW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01928 788230
Number on roll	68	Fax number	01928 783082
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs R Downes
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs A Thacker

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small school in a rural area. Almost all pupils are from a white British background. Pupil mobility is quite high as families move in and out of the locality. Staffing is stable generally, although there have been two changes in the leadership of the school since the previous inspection in 2000. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is quite low and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. When children start school their skills and knowledge are broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school at the heart of its community. The care, health, enjoyment and achievement of pupils are at the core of the school's life.

All pupils, including the youngest in Reception, make good progress. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have very effective practical support from teaching assistants, which helps them to learn well and improve their confidence. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are very well behaved and take pride in the recent developments in school. They are also enormously appreciative of the very healthy meals prepared for them daily.

Teaching is good. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very good. Pupils learn well, because they are set interesting work and their ideas are respected. The curriculum is good partly because there is a very wide range of extra curricular activities and really interesting visits and visitors on offer for such a small school. The school is aware that older pupils need to do more challenging work in information and communication technology (ICT). Care, guidance and support are effective.

The school is led and managed well and provides good value for money. The headteacher ensures developments to the buildings and to the curriculum relate precisely to raising standards and to increasing pupils' enjoyment of their learning. The school knows itself very well and is accurate in its evaluation of every aspect of its work. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is poised to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase access to the ICT curriculum, particularly for the pupils in Years 5 and 6, by providing additional teacher training and opportunities for the older pupils to explore computer programs independently.
- Plan more opportunities for pupils to make their own assessments of their work and construct their own targets for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When pupils start in Reception, their standards are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress because of the exciting learning activities, which encourage them to interact with their classmates and adults in the room.

By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are much better than in most schools and all pupils achieve well. Boys for example, make far better progress than is typical nationally. In mathematics and science, good progress is due to the wide range of investigative work that pupils do, whilst in English, it is because of the additional practice that pupils have in using their literacy skills in other subjects such as history. In addition, particularly in English, teachers tell

pupils how they can improve on their work through their marking. There is scope to improve standards even further through educating older pupils in making their own judgements on what levels they are attaining and what they need to do next to improve even further; this is a target in the school's own improvement plan.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. They have very focused additional support that is exactly suited to their needs and includes additional practical activities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding, and reflected very clearly in the way pupils play and learn together. This is a very friendly school and instances of bullying are rare.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on their faith, have respect for other religions and communities, and enjoy learning about their customs. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in the playgrounds and at lunchtime. The management of the school has re-arranged the playground markings, so that older pupils can enjoy active games and 'kick a ball around,' whilst still leaving space for the younger children to play safely.

Almost all pupils enjoy coming to school, and the level of attendance is high. Pupils feel very safe. Those on the extraordinarily well-trained and self-possessed school council say, 'The teachers are friendly. They sort problems out.' Pupils have an exceptional understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. They list school meals, as one of the 'best things' about school because the 'cook makes them herself'. Pupils' social skills are excellent. They requested and got a 'friendship bench' so that pupils who felt lonely could be identified and befriended. During the inspection, there was no need for the bench. Older pupils spotted those who were alone very quickly and intervened to invite them into their games.

Pupils are heavily involved in the local community and have won an award for their work to protect the environment. They raise money for charities in innovative ways. These activities, and their acquisition of basic skills, prepare them very well for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Recent, unavoidable staff absence is a concern for the parents of the older pupils. The school has tried hard to minimise disruption by employing additional staff and the headteacher teaches every morning, creating an additional class for learning in English, mathematics and science. From the test results last year, and pupils' current work, above average standards are being

maintained. However, learning in ICT has been disrupted for the older pupils because new staff are unfamiliar with the technology.

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and lessons are interesting and fun. Lessons in the Reception are very well planned so that children learn through well-constructed play activities. Children use the interactive whiteboard and the computers daily, which focus their learning very well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported extremely well by very well trained classroom assistants. These staff provide additional practical resources to help pupils learn and also guide them in becoming more independent learners.

Teachers know their pupils very well and plan work for them, which matches their needs. Marking, particularly in English, is good and identifies improvements that pupils can make. The older pupils do not have a sufficiently active role in assessing their progress towards meeting their targets and this is highlighted in the school's development plan for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe and healthy. Their environmental work and involvement in the community is outstanding. The range of extra curricular activities available is very good, and visitors to the school such as musicians, artists in residence, sports coaches and authors benefit pupils' learning through providing additional expertise. Visits, including a pilgrimage to the cathedral, also enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have extra help and support, which is used very well to help them learn. In Reception, staff make very good use of the improved outdoor learning area and all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are delivered very well through active learning activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care guidance and support, including child protection and risk assessment procedures for pupils are good. The school ensures pupils' health and safety very well indeed. Procedures for monitoring and celebrating all pupils' personal and academic success are good; for example, through its analyses, it has identified boys' good achievement in comparison with other boys nationally.

Strategies to help pupils achieve well are applied rigorously and their success is measured closely. The school works very well with outside agencies to ensure that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported.

The induction procedures in the Reception class enable children to settle into school routines happily. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very well prepared to move onto their next school because they spend a week at the local high school in their final term.

One member of the school council said that this was good because, 'You really get a feel for it'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and some aspects are exemplary. Most parents, who answered the questionnaire for the inspection, agree with this. The school's evaluation of its own performance is very accurate, and the priorities in the school's development plan, indicate the next steps to take to improve further. The headteacher is very clear thinking; her vision is shared by governors and staff and pursued rigorously. Planned improvements to the outdoor areas are imaginative and include thoughtful additional provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such as a sensory garden. The school is rightly proud of how well all pupils are included in all the school has to offer.

The headteacher has dealt well with recent staff absence so that pupils' progress was affected as little as possible. Staff teamwork is very good. Governors work in close partnership with the local community for the benefit of pupils, and are fully involved in the school's self review process. Views of parents and pupils' acquired through school questionnaires are valued. The budget links well to school improvement priorities and the school is very successful in accessing additional grants and funding for specific projects.

The system for monitoring individual pupils' progress is good, and monitoring of teaching results in focused, helpful suggestions for improvement.

Improvement since the last inspection is good because standards in writing have risen. The school's substantial investment in new technology has resulted in a much greater range of computer hardware. However, the impact of this on pupils' learning, particularly for the oldest pupils, needs to be improved further.

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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	1	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	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	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	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

Please make sure you explain what this letter says to all the children in school.

First of all, I would like to thank all the children in school for making my visit so enjoyable and for keeping me company in the playground and at lunchtime.

These are the things I liked the most:

- The way that you behave in the classrooms, dining hall and in the playground.
- All the adults look after you very well.
- I think you are learning new information and skills very well.
- The school dinners and snacks!
- The headteacher, other teachers and governors know what to do to make your school even better.
- The way you learn how to help other people and the environment.
- All the visits and visitors you have.
- How often you come to school.

I have asked your school to work on these things now:

- I think you should spend more time learning about and using all the programs on the computers and interactive whiteboards.
- I think that those of you in Years 5 and 6 could set your own targets to improve your work and I have asked the headteacher to help you with this.