



Crooksbar Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111616
LEA Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number 278733
Inspection dates 2 March 2006 to 3 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Geoffrey Cooper

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Petrel Crescent |
| School category | Community | | Crooksbar Estate |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Norton, Stockton-on-Tees TS20 1SN |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01642 531750 |
| Number on roll | 268 | Fax number | 01642 531750 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr Andrew Ward |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 November 1999 | Headteacher | Mr Jonathan Twidle |

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|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Crooksbarrow Primary School is situated in Norton on the outskirts of the Teesside conurbation, in a setting characterised neither by educational privilege nor by disadvantage. Currently 268 boys and girls between the ages of 3 to 11 are on roll. Most pupils come from a white British background, with a very small number from a range of minority ethnic origins. No pupils are learning English as a new language. The numbers entitled to free school meals or identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. When children enter school their attainment is broadly average, although physical development is good and communication, language and literacy are comparative weaknesses.

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, effective school. Inspectors, pupils and parents all agree with the school's evaluation of itself. The school's sustained improvement has been recently recognised with a national commendation.

Pupils achieve good standards. Personal development is outstanding, as are care, guidance and support. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very effective, ensuring children make good progress. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. A strong curriculum provides well for all subjects and its enrichment benefits all pupils. These outcomes result from very effective leadership and management at all levels. Administration is smooth and unobtrusive, enabling a strong focus on learning, and very good links with other organisations ensure the well-being of all pupils. Very effective strategies give the school a secure understanding of its strengths and areas for development.

Whilst there are no major weaknesses, the school has identified and planned for a number of areas for development. Although English standards are above average overall, standards of writing are not as strong as those in other areas. Education for a diverse society is identified as an area for further development. Subject leaders fill a meaningful role, but some have not had the opportunity to develop teaching in their area.

The school is well placed to make further improvement. A low spend per pupil and positive outcomes ensure very good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, especially for higher attainers, and the overall achievement by boys compared to girls.
- Develop school strategies for education in a diverse society.
- Continue the development of subject leadership, particularly in the non-core subject areas of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards achieved are good. The school sets and achieves challenging targets. Science results have been consistently high. Standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. These core skills help ensure pupils good achievement across the curriculum. Good provision ensures that all pupils progress well. Good arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities mean that they make good progress. Pupils from all backgrounds make progress that matches that of their peers.

When children enter school their skills and knowledge are about average. They make good progress in nursery and Reception classes and are well on target to achieve the

goals set nationally for their achievement. Good progress continues throughout the school, culminating in achievement above expectations by the end of Year 6. While school data shows that boys achieve standards that are better than boys nationally, girls continue to outperform them overall. The one area for further development is in writing. Early assessments show some delay in the acquisition of writing skills, which is not fully overcome by the time pupils leave the school. This is highlighted by the fact that few pupils achieve the higher levels possible in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Cautiously, the school evaluated this aspect as good. Inspectors find it to be outstanding.

Pupils enjoy their life in school. They are eager to learn and always keen to work. Attendance is good overall, with many individual examples of excellent attendance. Behaviour is exemplary and parents write about the 'sense of happy enthusiasm' around the school and 'the extraordinarily positive atmosphere.' Pupils are demonstrably kind to each other and several pupils identified 'teamwork as the best thing about this school', adding 'that is why we win in competitions.' Playground buddies help out with playground games for younger children and pupils said that initiatives such as the anti-bullying week were 'brilliant' in promoting high standards of behaviour.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good overall. Assemblies make a good contribution, especially where they share and celebrate the work of the school. However, pupils do not fully appreciate the richness and diversity of cultures other than their own.

The school ensures pupils understand about keeping healthy and safe, enjoy their school life and are prepared well for adulthood. Discussion with pupils shows that they are well aware of the healthy lunch menu the school provides. However, packed lunches do not always reflect the school's stance on healthy eating. A newsletter for pupils is a showcase for celebrating pupils' achievements outside of school. The school council is proud of its contribution to school improvement. A wealth of activities, such as sports tournaments, fund raising for charity and local projects, support social development and help pupils develop the skills needed to contribute to the community and for life beyond school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The quality of teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding.

Relationships between staff and pupils are of high quality. The atmosphere for learning is brisk and purposeful because of the strengths in planning, the pace of lessons,

deployment of staff, and the challenge and support for pupils who need to learn at different rates. As a result, all pupils progress well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff manage pupils very well, ensuring time for learning is well used. These combined strengths ensure pupils' learning is effective and they make continuous progress. Particularly good use is made of pupils' attitudes and social skills as they work together in pairs and groups, supporting each other's learning.

Work is thoroughly assessed. There is good assessment of the learning that individuals have made during lessons through effective questioning. Written tasks are thoroughly marked with support given for further learning. This is generally successful in helping pupils make good progress, except for higher attainers in writing. Pupils know their individual targets, and progress against these targets is noted. Good use is made of pupils' assessments of their own and other's achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good; it meets all statutory requirements and is well enriched by other activities. Skills in literacy, numeracy and science are well developed. ICT is now a strength of the school, successfully resolving an issue from the previous inspection. Very good opportunities are created for independent learning throughout the school, beginning with the Foundation Stage.

Advantage is taken of opportunities to extend awareness of other languages with teaching assistants from a neighbouring secondary school. A parent said 'there is a holistic and well rounded environment for children who can participate in school plays and sports programmes.' The physical education curriculum is extensive, making a significant contribution to pupils' well-being and personal development. Popular clubs help pupils to learn, inspiring a great sense of achievement, especially in sport. Good provision teaches pupils to stay safe and healthy.

Parents appreciate the extra-curricular activities that enrich the statutory curriculum, broadening pupils' experiences through visitors, visits and residential opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Child protection arrangements are in place and up to date training includes lunchtime supervisors as well as teaching staff. Potential risks around the school and on trips are assessed, prioritised and minimised. Pupils say they feel secure and parents wholeheartedly agree, saying 'Crooksbarrow is a very caring school ... which looks beyond any child's learning difficulties and disabilities and treats all of them in the same way.'

Pupils appreciate the systems in place for them to discuss their concerns, boosting their confidence and self-esteem, and helping them to deal with stressful situations. Accurate assessment information in all areas of the curriculum is analysed thoroughly and the outcomes used very well to provide detailed support for individuals. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own and each other's work.

Effective arrangements to prepare pupils for the next stage in their lives at secondary school are well supported by close sporting, social and academic links.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good at all levels, with examples of outstanding provision and smooth administration. The result is a very effective atmosphere for learning and consistently high standards.

A strong sense of educational direction stems from the work of the headteacher and culminates in the very effective and committed teamwork of all staff. The school has good strategies for understanding its strengths and areas for development. Self-evaluation is accurate. Good planning for improvement ensures the school is forward looking and developing its provision further. Development planning takes account of the data available and the views of staff, parents and pupils. Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils, although recent results in English have not satisfied the school's aims for higher attaining pupils. Boys and girls continue to achieve better than boys and girls nationally.

The school achieves good value for money in the effectiveness of its learning environment, its use of staff, the building and other resources. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. The governing body fills its role well. Governors are perceptive and effective, with good strategies in place that put them in a strong position to make well informed decisions to move the school forward. The combined strengths of leadership and management confirm that the school is well placed to improve 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 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

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? | 1 | 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? | 1 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | 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 | 2 | 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? | 1 | 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 | 2 | 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

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The Pupils

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04 March 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. It is an exciting and interesting place to be. You have told us that you think you are doing well and we agree with you, your parents and the school that you achieve well.

The standard of your work is good, not only in literacy and numeracy but also in many other subjects. For example, much of your art and design is very good and your sporting achievements are particularly good. Work in information and communication technology has improved a great deal in recent years. Much of this success is due to the fact that you are remarkably well behaved in class and your attendance is good, which gets your learning off to a good start. Teaching is good and lessons are interesting. You are exceptionally well cared for and supported. Mr Twidle and all the adults in school work well together to make sure you do your best.

Most things in your school are strong and well done, but there are a few things that can be done better. Girls tend to do better than boys (although boys do well in your school compared to boys in the rest of the country) and not many of you achieved highly in writing recently. You live in a diverse society and your school could do more to help you understand and appreciate its values. Some subject leaders do not get enough opportunity to know how good teaching is in their subjects and how to make it better. The school has already identified these areas for improvement and is doing something about them.

You do well in school and the school is determined that you will continue to do so. You can help by making sure you continue to try hard at all times.

Best wishes

Geoff Cooper

Additional Inspector