



Cressing Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114832
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279455
Inspection dates 18 January 2006 to 19 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Helen Ranger LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tye Green
School category	Community		CM77 8JE
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01376583397
Number on roll	142	Fax number	01376583804
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father. John Corbyn
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Susan Giles

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 18 January 2006 - 19 January 2006	Inspection number 279455
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Cressing Primary is a smaller than average school. It serves the local village and its surrounding area. The pupils include children from three traveller sites, of whom many leave and return from time to time. The school is often over-subscribed because it is popular with parents. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is quite high. It includes five pupils with statements of special educational need. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for only two weeks.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Cressing Primary is a satisfactory school with many good features. It has judged its recent performance as good but the inspection finds that it is not quite as effective as this at present. This is mainly because a succession of staff changes a few years ago led to a loss of continuity in the learning of the older children. This has now been halted and the current staff are ensuring better consistency across the school as a whole. However, these improvements are yet to have a full effect on the achievement of the older pupils, which consequently is satisfactory rather than good. Teaching and learning are good and are based on a good curriculum. Children in the Reception year get a very secure start to their education. They are taught well. They do not quite meet the standards expected nationally because their attainment is often low when they start school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and reach standards in line with national averages. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall through Key Stage 2, but have not progressed as quickly in Years 5 and 6, as at the lower end of the school. The recent improvements to teaching have led to better progress in these age groups so that by Year 6, standards are broadly average. However, writing and mathematics are not as strong as reading and science. Pupils' personal development is good, supported by very good arrangements for day-to-day care. These arrangements very successfully integrate pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and cater for the needs of the traveller pupils. Teachers assess pupils' individual progress but do not consistently ensure that the information is used fully to help raise standards. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has made sufficient improvement since the last inspection and has good plans for continuing its development. The governors contribute soundly to the school's management. Parents' and pupils' views of the school are very positive. The new headteacher is at a very early stage of establishing her vision, but the school's recent progress demonstrates that it has a sound capacity for further improvement. In view of its overall effectiveness, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that consistently good teaching helps to raise standards in writing and mathematics, especially in Years 3 to 6. - Make sure that the information collected on pupils' progress is used regularly and more efficiently to inform teachers' planning and support the target-setting arrangements with pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils do well from Reception to Year 2. By the end of Year 2 in 2005 they had made good progress and reached standards that were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The performance of the older pupils by Year 6 has been more erratic, reflecting the variations in the quality of teaching. In 2003 and 2004 their results were significantly below the national average. In 2005, the

improvements in teaching led to a substantial rise in standards in English, mathematics and science so that the results were broadly average. The school sets challenging targets for its pupils but these were not all met last year. Several factors mean that the school's Year 6 results do not always reflect how well it caters for its pupils. In particular, there is a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. These pupils have often joined the school part way through Key Stage 2. While making good progress on the individual targets set for them, they often do not reach the nationally expected standards. The school loses some able pupils in Year 5 because their parents move to be nearer their favoured secondary school. The school's tracking of pupils who are currently in Years 3 to 6 shows that they are achieving well for their abilities and that there is no significant underachievement. The older ones are making up the ground they lost when the quality of teaching fell. Pupils with learning difficulties and traveller pupils make good progress because their particular needs are addressed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils behave well and an enthusiasm for learning helps them to enjoy school. They are polite and treat each other respectfully. Pupils say that there is very little unkind behaviour between them and they know what to do should it occur. They know that they are treated fairly and that adults will help them if they have any worries. They feel their views are taken seriously, such as when the school council helped to plan the new library. The older pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility; for example through their roles as play leaders. Pupils know how to lead safe and healthy lives, although they comment that the school meals do not always encourage them to choose the healthiest foods at lunchtimes. There are regular opportunities for exercise and sport. The good emphasis on literacy, numeracy, scientific and computer skills in the curriculum provides a sound basis for their future economic well-being. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils respect the views, beliefs and customs of others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and is reported by the school as having improved well. All the lessons seen during the inspection were judged to be at least satisfactory and most were good. There were some outstanding features in the teaching of the pupils in Classes 1 and 2. Pupils are given tasks that are matched well to the needs of the full range of ages and abilities in each class. Teaching assistants support pupils effectively. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and lessons take place in a pleasant and positive atmosphere. Occasionally, the good pace is not sustained, pupils are not as enthusiastic about the activities provided and learning is no better than satisfactory. Improved assessment procedures since the last inspection

mean that teachers know how pupils are getting on in all subjects. They are starting to use this information to plan lessons that meet their needs more closely, but this is an area to be improved further. Teachers are not yet making full use of all the information they have on how well the pupils are doing. There are examples of good quality marking and target-setting with pupils, who say these help them to improve their work. These systems would benefit from being even more widespread.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The inspection agrees with the school that its curriculum is good and is contributing well to the improvements in teaching. Lessons for the Reception children skilfully combine activities led by adults with those the children choose for themselves. In the rest of the school, the curriculum covers all the subjects that it should. Pupils are also offered French tuition and a range of themed weeks, such as Art Week and Sports Week. They enjoy these very much. Pupils with particular gifts or talents are identified and, where possible, provided with activities to develop their abilities further. Since the last inspection, the school has satisfactorily remedied the weaknesses in its provision for art and music. All subjects are now planned effectively and cater for the mixed age-groups in each class. The range of after-school and lunchtime clubs offered to pupils is quite limited at present, although the new headteacher is already extending what is available.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a caring place where pupils feel happy and secure. Health and safety matters are taken seriously and secure child protection procedures are in place. A strong feature of the school is the very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for the particular needs of traveller children. The staff responsible for these pupils ensure that they receive a curriculum and teaching that are targeted well to their individual requirements. The school works well with relevant external agencies to make sure that pupils get all the help they need. Parents are involved well in their children's education and feel that the school cares for and supports their children very effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with good features. The school has acknowledged the difficulties in providing stability in teaching in recent years but is emerging on a more secure footing from this challenging period. The self-evaluation arrangements are satisfactory and have supported recent developments. The school has acted well on the weaknesses that were identified at the time of the last inspection and maintained its strengths. It has remained very popular with parents throughout, because their children enjoy school so much. The school is opening the next chapter

in its history with the arrival of its new headteacher and is in a solid position to improve further. Members of staff with responsibilities are supported to carry out their duties effectively, with valued assistance from the local education authority. This gives the new headteacher a firm foundation upon which to build. Subject leaders increasingly collect information about how well pupils are doing and use this when deciding on future plans. The next stage for development is to ensure that the data are used fully when setting up initiatives with particular groups of pupils and for the whole school. Governors support the school soundly. They have been very active in ensuring that a financial deficit resulting from a temporary fall in the roll has been eliminated quickly. Long-serving governors give effective support and their less experienced colleagues are receiving training to enable them to play a full part in future developments.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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 welcoming me to your school and helping me to find out about it. This letter is to tell you about some of the most important things I saw. These are some of the best things

- You enjoy school, behave well and get on well together.
- You all have good teachers to help you learn.
- The school treats all of you as important individuals and cares about how well you are getting on.
- The adults in your school listen to your opinions and ideas and give you opportunities to become more independent as you get older.
- Your parents are very happy with your school.

These are things that can be made better

- The school knows that many of you can do even better with your writing and mathematics. I hope you will try hard when your teachers help you with these.
- Your teachers can use what they know about your progress to help them plan even better lessons and to let you know what you need to learn next.

Carry on enjoying your time at Cressing Primary School.