



Croft Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122463
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281273
Inspection dates 4 April 2006 to 5 April 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. David Speakman LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Community		NG17 5FJ
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623 455255
Number on roll	351	Fax number	01623 455256
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Steve Carroll
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Sue Ball

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of a White British background and there is a small proportion whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. When children enter the school their attainment is generally below average. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The headteacher has been in post for five terms at the time of the inspection. The school has gained the Investors in People Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory and the inspection team agrees. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The headteacher has recognised the underachievement that has occurred in the past and is successfully taking steps to address it. Achievement has improved and is now satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are below average. This is partly because this year group has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Quality and provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well but given their low starting point they do not reach the goals they are expected to by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards are similar to the national average by the end of Year 2. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils behave well and care for others, reflecting the good pastoral care shown by the school. There is a good range of extra curricular activities and enrichment opportunities to make learning interesting. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Reception and at Key Stage 1 but there are some weaknesses in Key Stage 2, where work is not always matched well to pupils' ability, marking is not helpful and pupils are not always given enough opportunity to work independently. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Initiatives based on the school's analysis of its performance are beginning to improve the rate of pupils' learning. Given the recent improvements, particularly in the Foundation Stage, for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and in tracking pupils' progress, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attainment for pupils in Years 3 to 6 by setting challenging tasks so that all pupils reach the levels of which they are capable. - Ensure that all teaching includes work that is well matched to pupils' capabilities, that work is marked properly and pupils are more involved in the learning process.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter school with standards lower than expected nationally. They achieve well in Reception but because of the short time they spend there, some as little as one term, they do not achieve the goals they are expected to by the end of Reception. Pupils achieve well throughout Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are close to the national average. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 are currently achieving satisfactorily. However, achievement in recent years has been inadequate because the work has not been challenging enough and teachers have not made enough use of assessment. The school sets itself appropriate targets but did not meet them. School assessment data shows that there is still some underachievement in Year 3 because these issues have not been fully dealt with, but achievement in Years 4, 5 and 6 is satisfactory. Recent initiatives such as tracking

progress and improving basic literacy and numeracy skills are having an impact. Although achievement is now better, standards are likely to be below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve satisfactorily in English and mathematics and well in relation to their individual targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make sound progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They enter the school with a low level of social and emotional development but during their time in the Reception class they develop these skills well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The performance put on by pupils in Years 3 and 4 relating to the fears and experiences of evacuees during the Second World War, for example, showed a high level of empathy with the characters. Pupils' attitudes towards school are positive and this has a good impact on learning. Most pupils' behaviour is good in and out of lessons. They clearly understand systems for sanctions and value rewards. A wide range of pupils said they are happy and enjoy being at the school. Pupils have a sound understanding of healthy eating and awareness of the importance of exercise. They know how to stay safe effectively and know what to do if they are afraid or upset. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community. They willingly take on responsibility through a range of jobs, for example the school council and raising money for charities. Preparation for their future economic well-being is unsatisfactory because standards in literacy and numeracy are too low. Pupils' attendance is average and improving due to sustained focus on dealing with absence.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 where there is a focus on pupils developing the ability to learn for themselves. Good questioning encourages pupils to think about tasks and be keen to contribute, knowing their suggestions are valued. From an early age, pupils assess their own and others' work. They have a good awareness of what they are doing well and how to improve. In Years 3 to 6, most teaching is at least satisfactory. However, the systems for checking the quality of lessons have shown that pupils in Year 3 are not achieving well enough. This is because activities and tasks are not matched well enough to different pupils' abilities. As a result, more able pupils do not make enough progress and lower attaining pupils find difficulty in understanding new work. Marking of pupils' work is not of an acceptable quality where large sections are left unchecked and there is little comment to support improvement. In other year groups, pupils are actively involved, keen and enthusiastic and learning is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Older pupils appreciate the comments teachers make, to improve

their work. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' progress, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage where pupils have a good balance between teacher directed and self-chosen activities, which helps their personal development. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is satisfactory and includes sex education and guidance on harmful substances. Reasonable care is taken to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes have appropriate learning activities. Some good links are planned between different subjects, adding interest and enjoyment to learning. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy have not been covered well enough in the past but this has improved recently. There are good initiatives to improve pupils' thinking and problem solving skills and raise achievement but these have not yet impacted on attainment at Year 6. Early identification of pupils' special educational needs and sharply focused individual education plans mean these pupils' learning difficulties are being tackled well. There is a good range of clubs and additional activities to enrich the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support of pupils are sound. Pupils are well cared for and given good pastoral support. There are good arrangements for a smooth start into reception. Health and safety is promoted effectively and governors make regular risk assessment visits. Child protection measures are clear and staff are appropriately trained. The school makes all required checks on adults working in the school so that pupils are kept as safe as they can be. Lunchtime supervision is good and the introduction of the new play area and play leaders has had a good impact on the level of care and support. First aid provision is good. Pupils trust and respect the adults in the school and younger ones are often helped by older pupils, including during special events when age groups mix for one day projects. Pupils feel that the school deals effectively with any incidents of bullying. Academic progress has not been supported satisfactorily but is improving. Most pupils now receive satisfactory guidance through the individual targets they are set in literacy and numeracy, but marking of some pupils' work is unsatisfactory and the use of assessment information in planning suitable activities is inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher monitors the work of the school satisfactorily and is clearly focusing on finding effective ways to raise standards. She has a clear idea of where she wants to take the school, and staff, parents' and pupils' views are sought appropriately. The quality and effectiveness of

self-evaluation are sound. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Since the appointment of the current headteacher, improvement has been better. This includes improved provision in Foundation Stage, support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the introduction of systems for tracking and analysing pupils' progress. The headteacher has introduced systems for checking how well the school does and has identified the important priorities needed to raise achievement. These improvements and the commitment of most staff indicate the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Some subject leaders are new to their responsibility but already, through their monitoring activities, have a clear view of what is needed to improve outcomes and there are signs that standards are rising in Years 4 and 5. The work of the governors is satisfactory. They are involved in the school's development and in finding out more about its day-to-day work but are not yet fully involved in evaluating the school's overall performance.

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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?	3	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	4	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	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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

We were pleased to meet you when we came to inspect your school. Thank you very much for talking to us, making us welcome and helping us find out about you and your school. We were especially pleased with the progress that you make between the time you start school and the end of Year 2. We found though that some pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not achieved as well as they can. Although there are some good lessons in the Key Stage 2, some could be improved. The headteacher, teachers and all of the other adults in your school, do their best to look after you and give you a secure place in which to learn. We thought you behaved well in lessons, in assemblies and in the playground and it was clear that you enjoy going to school. You had good things to say about your school, your teachers and friends. The headteacher and other teachers who are responsible for subjects know what you do well and what needs to improve. However, there is still some way to go and we are asking your headteacher and governors to: - get teachers to help pupils in Years 3 to 6 to make better progress and reach the levels of which you are capable - ensure that teachers match your work to your capabilities better, mark your work correctly and involve you more in your learning. We wish you well in the future.