



Cragg Vale Junior and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107508
Local Authority Calderdale
Inspection number 287834
Inspection date 18 September 2006
Reporting inspector Robert Robinson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Cragg Vale
School category	Community		Hebden Bridge
Age range of pupils	4–11		West Yorkshire HX7 5TG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01422 883747
Number on roll (school)	46	Fax number	01422 883747
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr David Oliver
		Headteacher	Mrs Carole Lobley
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2002		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
4–11	18 September 2006	287834

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Almost all children are of White British heritage. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are above average. Numbers on entry fluctuate each year but are always small. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cragg Vale Junior and Infant School's motto: 'Helping you be all that you can be' is met well because it is a good school. Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Year 6 have generally been above average, although they vary from year to year because of the small group numbers. Pupils achieve well as the teaching throughout the school is good. Particular strengths are achievement and standards in reading, mathematics and science. The school acknowledges and the inspector agrees that standards in writing are not as high and need to improve. Teachers are now rightly beginning to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their writing skills in purposeful work in other subjects. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are also not used sufficiently in other subjects to hasten pupils' progress.

The school is a caring community where children are valued and flourish. It provides good care, guidance and support for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As a result, pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, is good. The school's golden rules to 'respect, be kind, work hard, look after property and each other, listen carefully and be honest' are met well in practice both in the classroom and around school, although occasional reminders are needed at lunchtimes. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living and most are keen to bring a healthy lunchtime snack. Attendance rates are good and this benefits pupils' learning.

Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly. This helps pupils to appreciate how well they have done and what they must do to improve. Targets linked to the National Curriculum spur pupils on to make brisk progress in their learning. The curriculum, including provision for Reception age children, is good. Educational visits, including a residential experience, visitors to the school and a good range of extra-curricular activities, are used effectively to provide an extra dimension to learning. Consequently, pupils are happy, healthy, safe and successful. Although the school site limits outdoor education, particularly for younger children, the accommodation is used well.

The leadership and management, including governance, are good. The headteacher leads the school well. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development. It has good capacity to continue to improve because of the strengths in the leadership and management and the quality of teaching. Financial management is good and the school provides good value for money.

Parents are very supportive of the education provided for their children. A parent commented, for example, 'We are very pleased with the way staff at Cragg Vale educate and care for our children. They encourage a caring relationship between children of all ages. They know each child as an individual and respond to their different needs.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and give pupils more opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects.
- Plan more ways for pupils to use ICT skills in other subjects to improve standards further.
- Improve the outdoor accommodation for children of Reception age.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress as they move through the school. They achieve well relative to their starting points. On entry to Reception, children's attainment varies from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group. During the past two years, attainment on entry has been above average. By the end of the Reception year most exceed national expectations for children of this age.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. However, standards in English dipped in 2004 and 2005 compared to those in mathematics and science. Only two pupils took the national tests in 2006, so valid comparisons with previous years are not possible. Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 6 remain above average but pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is higher than that in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Older pupils take on responsibility well to help in the smooth running of the school. Relationships are good and pupils get on well with each other. Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is good. Very occasionally, reminders have to be given to a minority of pupils about behaviour at lunchtimes. Most pupils sustain interest well in lessons though a few lose concentration when working together. Pupils show respect and care for one another. They have a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are mindful of those who are not as fortunate as themselves. They have a growing awareness of different cultures through visits and visitors to school. Attendance rates are above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school quite rightly judges the quality of teaching and learning as good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of carefully planned activities which are taught skilfully by capable teachers and assistants. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to help children to grasp new learning.

However, too few activities are planned for pupils to use ICT in other subjects to help them to make even faster progress. The pace of lessons is generally brisk because they are well organised. Behaviour management is good as relationships between pupils and staff are harmonious. Occasionally, questioning is not used effectively to challenge individuals whose concentration has lapsed.

The marking of pupils' work is a strength. Praise is given as well as pointers for improvement. For example, a teacher wrote 'Your work is correct. However, this is not enough for a lesson's work. You need to start immediately and don't let yourself be distracted.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum effectively meets the needs and promotes the interest of all children. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. However, the limitations of the site inhibit outdoor education for the younger children. The planning for games in Years 1 to 6 is restricted because the school does not have a field. Despite this, pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop skills in games 'under the arches' and through occasional visits to other schools. Pupils' maturity and understanding of healthy lifestyles are enhanced through good emphasis on personal, social, health and citizenship education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All requirements for child protection are in place. Health and safety and risk assessment procedures promote a safe environment. Parents and pupils agree that children are looked after well. The tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and good use of the information gained is made to assist pupils to make good progress in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is fully supported by an effective governing body and by dedicated, capable staff. The school is well resourced. Improvements to the accommodation, such as the new library area, are planned carefully to ensure maximum benefit for pupils' learning. Governors' expertise is used well, for example, to develop the site and to assist with lessons in ICT.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school. They regularly take parents' and pupils' views into account when planning for the future. As a result, they have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Parents and pupils are appreciative of all aspects of the school's work. A parental comment encapsulated the feelings of others: 'My child thoroughly enjoys his time at school. I cannot fault Cragg Vale School in any way.'

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I enjoyed my visit and I want to share with you what I think about your school.

What I liked most about your school

- You are taught well so that you make good progress in your learning.
- You behave well and you are polite and friendly.
- Your attendance is good and you enjoy school.
- The headteacher and governors know how to make your school better.

What I have asked your school to do now

- Provide more opportunities for you to practise your writing skills in other subjects.
- Plan more ways for you to use your ICT skills in other subjects.
- Improve the outdoor accommodation for the youngest children.

I appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. I trust that you will work with the headteacher and other staff to help them to improve the school. I wish you well for the future.