

Crowlees Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 107725 |
| Local Authority | Kirklees |
| Inspection number | 287897 |
| Inspection date | 27 March 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Robert Robinson |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 420 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs G Davies |
| Headteacher | Mr D Hardcastle |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 November 2002 |
| School address | Springfield Park off Parker Lane Mirfield West Yorkshire WF14 9PD |
| Telephone number | 01924 326595 |
| Fax number | 01924 326597 |

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

The school was inspected by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British ethnic backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils are from other ethnic groups, although no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Children enter Reception from several nurseries and a wide range of other pre-school establishments. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The socio-economic circumstances of the immediate area are above average. However, an increasing proportion of pupils are coming from more deprived areas.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It has maintained high standards and continued to improve since its last inspection. Parents applaud the education provided for their children, with comments such as, 'An exceptional school of which we feel privileged to be able to have our children attend.' The leadership and management, including governance, are first rate. A strong leadership and management team has been built up under the headteacher's exceptional leadership. The school has an accurate view of its performance and knows what it must do to improve. It is always seeking to enhance the opportunities for its pupils. For example, its innovative approach to enriching the curriculum has resulted in the creation of a highly successful outdoor classroom. Parents view this as, 'an excellent facility and opportunity for the entire school - wonderful.'

The quality of teaching is outstanding and pupils achieve very well during their time at Crowlees. Lessons are planned very carefully and the pace of learning in lessons is brisk. Enthusiastic teaching captures the interest of pupils and this helps them to make fast progress. Targets are set for pupils and their progress towards them is checked rigorously. The curriculum is outstanding with particular strengths in the development of literacy and numeracy skills. As a result many pupils reach high standards in English and mathematics. In the Foundation Stage children make very good progress and standards by the time they start Year 1 exceed those normally expected.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils love coming to school and as a result their attendance is well above average. They respond very well to the high quality of supportive care they receive. Behaviour is exemplary both in lessons and around the school. Relationships are harmonious between pupils as well as between pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy all their educational activities. They feel safe and trust the adults they deal with. They have a keen interest in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Throughout the school pupils help to ensure its smooth running. They are extremely well prepared for future learning because of their very good acquisition of basic skills and their outstanding attitudes to learning.

The consistency of high standards over many years provides the school with exceptional capacity to continue to improve. The school provides outstanding value for money because accommodation, staffing and other resources are used extremely well to promote a high standard of education for all pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement. The school development plan clearly identifies what it needs to do to maintain its strengths and to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards are well above average. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 standards have been significantly above average in each year since the last inspection. Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly average. Children make very good progress in all the areas of learning. Standards by the end of Reception are above those normally expected. Pupils continue to make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 due to skilful teaching and reach consistently high standards by the end of Year 2. High standards are then maintained

throughout Years 3 to 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because of the help they receive from staff and the close monitoring of their performance. Many of these pupils reach nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children quickly settle into the Reception because their personal, social and emotional development is fostered extremely well. Parents' comments include 'My child has come on leaps and bounds since joining the school.' Throughout Years 1 to 6 behaviour is exemplary and this assists pupils' learning since they show care and respect for one another and the staff. Pupils state that bullying is not a problem. They know they can seek help from older pupils who are playground 'buddies' or any member of staff so they feel very safe. Pupils appreciate the healthy meals provided. The school council awards stickers to those eating fruit at lunch times. The establishment of a fruit tuck shop is appreciated by pupils. Pupils become mature and sensible members of the community because adults treat them with respect and consideration. They willingly take on responsibilities around school and are keen to improve the accommodation. For example, pupils raised money and sought donations of paint from local businesses in order to improve the decor of the toilets. They then asked parents to help paint murals on the walls to improve the appearance of the facilities. Such activities effectively develop skills which contribute towards their future social and economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Classrooms are stimulating places to learn with attractive displays of pupils' work. Strong emphasis on presentation results in pupils producing a high standard of neat work as well as being proud of their efforts. Lesson plans give clear guidance to teachers and teaching assistants and are linked very well to pupils' prior attainment. Teaching assistants are used extremely well to spur on the learning of pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in small group work. Pupils learn very well through the many opportunities they have to work with a partner to discuss new learning and to bounce off ideas between each other. For example, pairs of pupils discussed enthusiastically how to improve the beginning of a piece of writing by incorporating a wider range of sentence openers. The marking of pupils' work is consistently of a high standard and helps pupils to appreciate how well they have done and what they must do to improve. Pupils are very aware of their individual half-termly targets for improvement as they are clearly recorded in the front of their books.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is rich and meets the needs and promotes the interest of all children very effectively. A strong emphasis on English and mathematics is balanced by many opportunities for pupils to develop skills in other subjects. In particular, opportunities are exploited to practise different styles of writing through the planning of individual writing tasks in other subjects and opportunities arising from educational experiences, such as visitors to school, visits and residential. The planning to help teachers use the outdoor classroom linked to the Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance and the National Curriculum is exemplary. A very good range of

extra-curricular activities and creative use of the accommodation are used very effectively to provide an extra dimension to learning. Pupils' maturity and understanding of healthy lifestyles are enhanced through personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils have benefited by working together to achieve the Active Mark for Sport, National Gold Healthy School Award and Eco School Bronze Award. The regular times when pupils can sit together to discuss matters of importance to them (circle time) are very much appreciated by pupils and benefits their personal development. Pupils remarked that, 'circle time helps you to learn things you would not usually find out in lessons.'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school meets its aim to be 'a large school with a small school feel, where children succeed in a safe and caring environment. Child safeguarding procedures are in place. Health and safety and risk assessment procedures promote a safe environment. Parents and pupils agree that children are looked after well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported extremely well. Parents' comments included, 'The school was particularly good at diagnosing my child's problems, helping him and keeping me informed and involved.' The tracking of pupils' progress is extremely thorough and is used very well to assist pupils to make outstanding progress in their learning. Pupils who are not making expected progress are clearly identified at all levels of attainment. Intervention strategies are put in place to speed up their learning and the success of the help is monitored closely by the management.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher has built up a high performing team of senior managers, subject leaders and support staff. The professional development of staff is given high priority. The expertise within the school is also being used very well to assist other teachers and other schools: for example, through the school's status as a leading school in the Local Authority's Primary Strategy Initiative (sustaining success) and the use of its advanced skills teacher. The leadership and management of the school are constantly striving to improve the provision for pupils. For example, all classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards. These are used very skilfully to assist teaching and learning. Governors' expertise is used very well to assist the school. They support and challenge the school very effectively. For example, they were very keen to extend the new initiative to create an outdoor classroom by ensuring that adequate funding was available for its development. As a result pupils now have excellent outdoor facilities and staffing to add an extra dimension to learning for pupils throughout the school. Pupils enthuse about the outdoor classroom. The exceptional way it is used adds purpose and enjoyment to learning.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 1 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 1 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 |

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 1 |
| 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 |

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Crowlees C of E Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School, Springfield Park, off Parker Lane, Mirfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 9PD

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so polite and friendly. I enjoyed my visit and I want to share with you what I thought about your school.

You stated that your school is great. Well, I agree. Your school is an outstanding school because the leadership and management of the headteacher and other staff are first rate. As a result you make very good progress in your learning and reach high standards. Your personal development is outstanding because you enjoy school and all get on so well together. Your behaviour is superb and this helps your learning so keep it up. I am very pleased that your attendance is well above average. I also appreciate that you are cared for extremely well by staff and feel safe at the school as well as having many opportunities to take part in activities that will keep you healthy. Your very good attitudes to learning assist your progress. Teachers plan exciting lessons which capture your interest and enthusiasm for learning. I particularly enjoyed working with you in the outdoor classroom.

Normally I would suggest how your school could improve. However, on this occasion I am not making a suggestion as there are no significant weaknesses at your school. Your headteacher and governors have detailed plans for the future to ensure that your school continues to provide an outstanding education for all of you.

I am sure that you will continue to help your teachers and the headteacher by attending regularly, behaving very well, working hard and doing your best.

I appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn, I wish you well for the future.