



Croxton Kerrial Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120126
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291638
Inspection date 8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Croxton Kerrial
Age range of pupils	4-10		Grantham NG32 1QR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01476 870393
Number on roll (school)	65	Fax number	01476 870393
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	P L Graham
		Headteacher	Amanda Woodland
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school takes pupils up to the end of Year 5 and is much smaller than most other primary schools. It has recently grown from two to three mixed-age classes. All pupils are of White British heritage. They come from the village and surrounding area and only a few are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below average and attainment on entry to the Reception class is slightly above average in most years.

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 school, with some outstanding features. As a result, pupils achieve well. The enthusiasm and energy of the headteacher ensure that all members of the school community contribute well towards improving standards and provision. An outstanding curriculum, together with good teaching, provides pupils with a wealth of interesting activities. This inspires pupils and enables them to make good progress throughout the school. Teachers plan work that makes learning purposeful and use resources well to engage the pupils' interest, such as those for information and communication technology (ICT). Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and, by the start of Year 1, most children are comfortably meeting or exceeding the levels expected for their age. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 5. Progress in Years 1 to 5 is good in English and mathematics, with the best progress being made in reading. This is because there are many opportunities for pupils to develop these skills by researching information for their work in other subjects. In science, pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, but progress in Years 3 to 5 is satisfactory. This is because teachers do not expect pupils to produce work of a consistently high enough quality. This particularly affects more able pupils who are not always sufficiently challenged by the work they are given.

Care, support and guidance are good. All members of staff understand the personal needs of individual pupils and very good relationships contribute well to the friendly atmosphere. Outstanding opportunities for taking responsibility and to work in teams help pupils to demonstrate exemplary skills in personal development. These prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education. The school's motto, 'together we can achieve anything', exemplifies the co-operative approach to learning adopted by adults and pupils. As a result, pupils are confident and polite and show their obvious enjoyment of school by attending regularly and taking an active part in all it offers. The school is well led and managed. Action taken to maintain high standards is effective and the school has managed its growth from two to three classes smoothly. There are very thorough procedures for checking that pupils make enough progress in English and mathematics, and this information is used well to support pupils' differing needs. Science is not monitored as rigorously, and comparative weaknesses within this subject have not been identified quickly enough. The school has outstanding links with the parents and these contribute well to pupils' good progress. Parents are right to be very pleased with the work of the school. The school's good track record for tackling weaknesses and maintaining well-above-average standards demonstrates its good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure work is sufficiently challenging in science for pupils in Years 3 to 5, especially for the more able.
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning in science more rigorously so that weaknesses can be identified and tackled quickly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and, by the end of the Reception year, most are working at or beyond the levels expected for their age. They have especially well-developed skills in personal, social and emotional development and become confident and enthusiastic learners.

Pupils continue to make good progress from Year 1 onwards. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in English and mathematics and are exceptionally high in some years. These standards are successfully maintained in Years 3 to 5 and are also well above average by the end of Year 5. This is because there are very thorough procedures for checking how well pupils are doing and the information is used well to support differing needs. Standards in science are above average throughout the school. Progress in science is good in Years 1 and 2, but in Years 3 to 5 it is satisfactory because teachers do not always expect enough from the pupils, particularly the more able.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are confident and love coming to school. One boy commented that 'every day I learn something new'. Children in the Reception class settle quickly into school routines and are enthusiastic and chatty. Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. This is an important reason why they make good progress, though there are occasions when learning is slowed because some do not listen well enough at the start of lessons.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Throughout the school pupils are sociable and articulate. They have a good understanding of cultures other than their own. For example, they show sensitivity when describing their friends in schools in Perth and Alabama. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to look after others. Pupils know how to stay safe and are proud to be 'road safety officers' or school councillors. They talk enthusiastically of the role they play in shaping the school: for example, they have raised funds to improve playground equipment. Pupils take a very active part in the local community.

The choir performs to various local groups and pupils have planted oak trees around the village. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of staying healthy and explain how growing food in the school garden helps them to learn about healthy diets.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in most lessons because teachers plan work that is interesting and purposeful. In the Foundation Stage in particular, the many practical activities have a good impact on learning. For example, children improved their number skills quickly by going on an 'astronaut search', and they happily splashed through 'water' in their 'Wellington boots' as they learnt about the letter 'w'. Throughout the school, teachers have good expectations of how pupils should behave. The positive, supportive relationships are a key feature in motivating and engaging pupils. Lessons are well organised and interactive whiteboards are used successfully to illustrate and enliven lessons. Teachers make good use of knowledgeable teaching assistants to support pupils' learning, for example, by working with those who have learning difficulties. Teachers check pupils' learning meticulously in the Foundation Stage, and in English and mathematics, and then use this information well to ensure that work is closely matched to pupils' needs. This good practice is less well developed in science, especially for more-able pupils in Years 3 to 5. Consequently, science work is not always challenging enough, slowing the rate at which skills are improved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides pupils with a very wide range of experiences both in and out of lessons. There are many interesting practical activities, although in science in Years 3 to 5, pupils are not always expected to produce written work of a good enough standard. Creativity is fostered very imaginatively through drama and role play, and there are many opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and to work together. Termly 'leadership days', when pupils work in small teams on different projects, contribute especially well to their personal and social development. The school places great importance on helping pupils to learn about staying safe and healthy. There is a wide range of sporting activities. Projects such as the 'Taste of Success' scheme encourage pupils to eat healthily. Visits and visitors make a good contribution to learning and help to bring subjects alive. For example, older pupils spoke very positively about how they had learnt new sports skills on their residential visit to Staffordshire.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a very happy school with a welcoming atmosphere. It works very well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Pupils say that they feel very safe and happy and they know what to do if they have a worry. There are good procedures for children when they start school in the Reception class, which help them to settle quickly. For example, older pupils act as playtime buddies.

Teachers provide good academic support. Over the last few years the school has significantly improved procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Teachers generally use this information well to ensure that differing needs are being met, though this is less successful in science than in English and mathematics. Pupils are given regular feedback on their work and they are set clear targets that help them understand how to improve. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of specifically targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants, helping them to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, other members of staff and governors work together well to ensure that pupils receive a good education. There is a strong commitment to school improvement and priorities for development are firmly based on a thorough analysis and accurate evaluation of the school's test information. Good systems for monitoring teaching, learning and standards in English, mathematics and in the Foundation Stage allow members of staff to identify and improve any shortcomings quickly. For example, the school took speedy action to resolve the comparative weaknesses in boys' achievement in the Reception class.

There are recent improvements in the way science is being assessed in Years 3 to 5, but these have not been in place long enough to have enabled the school to identify the comparative weakness in pupils' written work in this subject.

Governance is good. Governors have a very active role in supporting the school and monitoring its work. They have identified ways that they can become even more proactive in holding the school to account. This school provides good value for money.

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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?	1
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?	1
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	1
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1
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 us to your school in such a polite and friendly way and for showing us your work. We are pleased that you come to such a good school.

Here are some other things about you and your school

- Your teachers make sure that you take part in an exceptionally wide range of interesting activities.
- Good teaching helps you to enjoy school, learn well and make good progress.
- You are very good at taking responsibility.
- We especially like the fact that you cook the vegetables you have grown in the school garden.
- All adults in school are very kind and caring and they give you good support.
- Members of staff and governors are working hard to make the school even better.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Help you to do better in science by making sure that your work is always hard enough for you, particularly those of you in Years 3 to 5 who find your work easy.
- Check up more often how well you are doing in science.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard and trying your best.