

Crofton Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101611
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	307756
Inspection date	21 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	441
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Robson
Headteacher	Mr J Brown
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2003
School address	Town Court Lane Orpington BR5 1EL
Telephone number	01689 826320
Fax number	01689 898415

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, investigated and evaluated the following aspects: achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, teaching and learning, the curriculum, care guidance and support and leadership and management. The following areas emerged from the school's pre inspection documentation as specific areas to be explored:

- The factors which led to the school's recent improvements in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of the action the school might be taking to improve boys' performance in writing.
- The effectiveness of the school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance.

Description of the school

Crofton is a much larger than average infant school. Just over three quarters of the pupils come from a White British background. The remainder come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average. The school has a special unit for pupils with severe learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. A long-standing headteacher and long standing deputy headteacher both recently retired. The current headteacher took up the post in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Crofton Infant is a good school providing good quality care and education for all its pupils. Pupils achieve well and their personal development is good. The school's atmosphere is calm, friendly and positive. Visitors frequently compliment this and say, 'It does not feel like a large school'. Parents hold very positive views about Crofton and give it good support. Their numerous comments included, 'I am delighted with my children's achievements', 'The ethos is great', 'My child feels valued and at home' and 'Parents are encouraged to get involved'. The Parent Staff association raised funding for the interactive whiteboards to enhance pupils' learning.

Good leadership and management are key factors contributing to Crofton's success. The school has been well led over the years and the new headteacher brings enthusiasm, good experience and a track record of success to the post. The new school website initiated by the headteacher is providing good information to parents. Other leadership responsibilities are effectively shared in this large school. All leaders make a valuable contribution to the school's effectiveness and to school improvement. Self evaluation is accurate and the findings are used well to guide planning for improvement and to set challenging targets. The governing body are actively involved in the life of the school. They are committed; provide good support and constructive challenge. There is a positive culture among the staff. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to making the school even better. A draft strategic plan has already been formulated and provides clear priorities for this to happen. Recent improvements to mathematics, rigorous self-evaluation and strong teamwork demonstrate a good capacity to improve further.

Pupils make good progress overall because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. The purpose of lessons are made clear so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Very good relationships have been established between teachers and their pupils. Teachers' instructions, demonstrations and explanations promote learning well. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively by teachers and pupils to illustrate key learning points. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who respond well to their teachers. Occasionally introductions are overlong and pupils are not sufficiently involved in their learning. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has recently improved pupils' performance in mathematics by increasing practical investigation and problem solving activities. As a result, standards have risen from average to above average. While standards in writing are above average, girls perform considerably better than the boys. The headteacher and staff are currently revising the curriculum to increase creativity and the links between subjects in order to add meaning, relevance and further enjoyment to pupils' learning. In particular, staff are exploring interesting and effective ways of increasing the range writing opportunities, which will inspire boys. Pupils in the unit for severe learning difficulties make good progress and are well integrated into the life of the school. A good range of additional activities, which contribute to pupils' enjoyment and interests, enriches the curriculum. These include ballet, choir, little chefs (cooking), eco warriors, French and football.

Good care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development. The school has established effective systems to assess and track pupils' attainment and so teachers have a good overview of how well each pupil is doing. Pupils are set individual targets so that they know what they are working towards. The school has recognised that writing targets are in need of further refinement to help boys make better progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with real strengths in moral and social development. Pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies and nominate fellow pupils for awards

for their positive personal qualities. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected by their enthusiastic participation in lessons and other activities. Despite the school's size and the large number of pupils, staff know them very well. Consistent expectations by staff, very good relationships and positive rewards lead to behaviour which is often exemplary. The very few pupils with challenging behaviour are well managed by staff. Attendance levels are in line with the national average. The school is working with the partner junior school to improve consistency in attendance matters. Recent attendance data is showing signs of improvement. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating, taking regular exercise and keeping safe. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously. They were involved in appointing the new headteacher and have also made valuable contributions to improving playground markings and in promoting healthy eating. Pupils at Crofton are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with knowledge and skills a little above those expected for their age. The school's very positive atmosphere, strong partnership with parents and effective induction arrangements enable children to settle very quickly. As one parent wrote, 'Staff have been very supportive in helping my child settle at school'. Good teaching and a stimulating curriculum give children a good start. Teachers and assistants provide a good blend of direct teaching and allowing children to explore, work creatively and independently. During the inspection, children were developing basic writing skills using a variety of implements including paint brushes, felt pens and the interactive whiteboard. This is important because improving writing is a whole school priority. Children are enthusiastic learners and make good gains in all areas. The school has plans to introduce covered areas to extend the scope of the good outdoor facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in writing for boys by providing a wider range of writing opportunities that will motivate and inspire boys.
- Refine the current system of individual target setting so that all pupils are clear what they have to work on to improve, particularly for boys in writing.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

2 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crofton Infant School, Orpington, BR5 1EL

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed the visit and would like to tell you what I have found. Crofton Infants is a good school and you can be proud of it.

These things are strengths of the school.

- You enjoy school and take part in activities with enthusiasm.
- The school is a friendly and pleasant place to be.
- Children in Reception get off to a good start.
- Teaching is good, which is why you learn so much.
- You are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most of you behave exceptionally well.
- The school is well led and your new headteacher has made a great start.
- You show care and respect for other pupils and adults.
- Staff know you very well; they take good care of you and give you good support.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.
- You are well prepared for your junior school.

There are two areas that the school has been asked to improve.

- Some of the boys could make more progress in writing and your teachers are working on ways to make this happen.
- Clear learning targets for each pupil would help some of you, particularly the boys to make even more progress.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts Lead Inspector