

Crowland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102129
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	307905
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2008
Reporting inspector	John Collins

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	392
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	100
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Mairead McCarthy
Headteacher	Mr Hasan Chawdhry OBE
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Crowland Road London N15 6UX
Telephone number	020 8800 4553
Fax number	020 8211 7473

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils, at this larger than average primary school, come from many ethnic and social backgrounds. The largest ethnic groups are other White backgrounds, Caribbean and White British groups. Over one-quarter of the pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM) and over two-thirds do not have English as their first language (EAL), well above the national average. One third of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. About one-quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). The proportion of pupils starting and leaving the school at other than the usual times is high. Additional on-site provision for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children is provided independently by the Crowland Playgroup and Play Centre, from where most children transfer to the Nursery on a part-time or full-time basis. The school funds a breakfast club, has achieved the Sportsmark and Healthy Schools Awards, and is currently working towards the International School Award.

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. From the severe fire three years ago and a high turnover of staff at all levels, many improvements have helped the school to recover its sense of purpose and direction. This is due in no small part to the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, governing body and senior staff. Their progress is well summed up by one parent who wrote, 'Since the fire I have watched Crowland Primary School climb the ladder on the road to success.'

The school has successfully tackled issues over behaviour, improved the quality of teaching and been more rigorous in tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. All this has contributed to a trend of rising standards and good achievement for pupils regardless of ability, gender or background. Most children start in the Nursery with much lower than expected levels of skills in language and mathematics. More than one-third arrive with little or no English. They make a sound start to their learning but by the end of Reception most have not achieved the learning goals expected for their age.

The make-up of classes varies significantly from year to year in the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties, those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Nevertheless, there is a trend over time of rising standards and better achievement in English, mathematics and science. The latest test and tracking data show that standards by the end of Year 6 are closer to the national average than three years ago even though there was a dip in 2008. Nevertheless, the school recognises more needs to be done to raise standards in writing and mathematics. While target setting plays its part in the overall rise in standards for particular groups of pupils, the school is aware that more needs to be done in setting targets for individuals. At present, too many pupils are unsure of their next steps in learning and this slows progress.

The school celebrates its cultural diversity well and has developed strong local and international links with other schools and organisations. This helps it to promote community cohesion well. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' development are good. The 'values' theme, used effectively in assemblies and class lessons helps pupils to develop a strong sense of their own value as well as developing an understanding for the plight of others less fortunate than themselves. Behaviour is good and the great majority of pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils of all ages enjoy their lessons, one saying, 'School is fun and I learn lots of different things.' The improvements have been recognised by many parents, one writing to say that, 'Since being at Crowland, my son is a different child.'

Good teaching and the good curriculum are improvements since the last inspection. These, alongside the improvement in behaviour, have helped to develop a stable learning atmosphere across the whole school. However, the school is aware of the need to be more consistent in its challenge of its more able pupils who do not always achieve as well as they might. Good support from well-qualified teaching assistants enables pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to play a full part in lessons. This is also the case for those pupils whose first language is not English. Well-targeted and well-managed support enables them to make progress equally as good as others.

The successful changes since the last inspection, the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, governing body and leadership team, improvements in teaching and learning, and rising standards and achievements provide ample evidence that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision for the younger children is satisfactory and improving, due much to the work of the recently appointed, experienced EYFS leader. The new leadership and management have been in place for only for six weeks so the impact is not yet fully realised. Nevertheless, the new leader's action plan is a good basis on which to take forward provision in EYFS. For example, she has correctly identified the need to make better use of assessment data to measure progress and identify next steps in learning. Good quality care and support, and effective liaison with parents, helps children settle quickly. Parents and carers are encouraged to come into school to share information about their children and this is used effectively to plan for children's needs. Most children enter the EYFS with skills well below those expected nationally, particularly in language, writing and number. A significant number of children start school with little or no English. Assessment shows that most children make satisfactory progress from low starting points, but by the end of Reception few have achieved the expected levels for their age particularly in language, communication and number. In both Nursery and Reception classes children's learning is supported well through a wide range of classrooms activities, but the use of the outside area is under-developed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, by ensuring pupils have a clearer understanding of their targets so that they know what they have to do in order to improve.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that more able pupils are consistently challenged to achieve as well as they might.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Despite the dip from 2007, the latest test and assessment results for Key Stage 2 show that the overall trend of improving standards over the past three years has been maintained. The rate of improvement for pupils working at the higher levels has not been as good, particularly in writing and mathematics. This pattern is repeated in Key Stage 1 where, for example, no pupils achieved the higher level in writing.

Overall standards by the end of Year 2 have fluctuated over time and progress has not been constant due to high numbers of pupils with limited English skills starting school at different times than usual. Given the low starting points of most pupils on entering school, achievement by the end of Year 6 is good and most pupils make better than expected progress. These improvements are being brought about by better teaching, the increasingly effective use of tracking and assessment data to target under-achievement, and stronger subject leadership.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The 'Values' themes make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being in lessons and assemblies. Themed assemblies such as ones celebrating Black History help pupils develop a good understanding of other cultures, enabling them to contribute well to the harmonious multi-cultural community. Pupils are very polite and respectful towards each other and all adults within the school. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning. As one member of the school council put it, 'I like

coming to this school because it is fun and I can learn lots of different things.' Pupils delight in roles of responsibility such as being part of the school council, looking after younger pupils, and showing visitors around the school. The school council feels it helps all pupils to make a significant contribution to school life, such as improving facilities in their playground. Bullying is infrequent and pupils say that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and fairly. They understand what to do if it happens and say they are confident in approaching an adult if they have concerns. Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and many make healthy choices in the Breakfast Club and at lunchtime. Attendance is below average but improving. The Breakfast Club is well supported and is helping a substantial number of pupils to improve their punctuality. The school is doing all it can to ensure that learners come to school regularly and on time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The increased stability of staff, coupled with effective monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff, is leading to more consistently good teaching across the school. Inspection evidence shows that teaching and learning are now regularly good and sometimes better. This has been a major factor in the good progress now being made by most pupils. Well-planned lessons, very good relationships between pupils and all adults, and the consistently good management of behaviour create a purposeful working atmosphere. While tasks are generally well matched to the needs of most pupils, teachers do not always consistently challenge the more able pupils to achieve as well as they can. Good use of assessment enables pupils with moderate learning difficulties to be effectively supported by well-trained teaching assistants who make a positive contribution to their learning. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together with other agencies to meet the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties leading to sensitive and successful inclusion.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is being developed creatively through 'Focus Weeks' such as Writing, Science, International and Anti-Bullying Weeks. It is enhanced well with a good range of visits and visitors and residential visits for Year 6 pupils. Better use of links across different subjects is enabling pupils to apply their skills and knowledge in subjects. The development of information and communication technology (ICT) skills is beginning to extend pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. A recent topic on a health and safety film linked with other European countries involved writing stories, setting up backgrounds for a puppet theatre and making puppets. This helped to develop social skills of cooperation and team working. Whole school topics such as the Black History Month enable pupils to develop a good awareness of their own and others' cultures. Physical education lessons, use of the school swimming pool and sporting clubs make a good contribution to pupils taking exercise and being healthy. The learning of Spanish as a foreign language has been favourably received by pupils who express their enjoyment of these lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for because the school has developed strong partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies. The Family Support Worker is influential in developing these links. Robust child protection and health and safety procedures are in place, and pupils themselves say they feel safe, cared for and valued. Home visits before school and good links with the local secondary school help the transfer processes. Good tracking systems are being used effectively to ensure that progress is monitored more consistently. Assessment is used well in planning for particular groups but the more able are not consistently challenged. The early identification of children with difficulties ensures appropriate interventions, for example in the additional learning of phonics in Key Stage 1. Marking often gives good guidance to pupils on what they have to do next in order to improve their writing skills, but talking to pupils shows that many are not clear on what their individual targets are or how these will help them to improve. The school recognises that this is an area for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's outstanding leadership and management have given the school a strong sense of direction and purpose. He and the governing body, with the very good support of the deputy headteachers and other senior staff, have been the driving force behind the school's recent improvement. The school has been led very effectively through its recent troubles by an outstanding governing body, which is strongly supportive as well as challenging the school and holding it to account for its decisions. The leadership's success in turning round the decline in standards and achievement is recognised by many parents, the great majority of whom support the school. One wrote, 'Crowland Primary School keeps getting better and better!' The role of subject leaders has been strengthened and they now play a progressively effective part in leading developments in their subjects. They are making a more positive and effective impact on the work of the school. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. Nevertheless, the school recognises more needs to be done and its current improvement plan has appropriate targets to move it forward.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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	1
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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

23 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crowland Primary School, London, N15 6UX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. You were a great help in talking to us and showing us your work. You told us you like your teachers because they make learning fun. We agree with you that Crowland Primary is a good school.

These are some of the things we think the school does well.

- The headteacher, governors and other senior teachers are doing an outstanding job in running the school.
- Teaching and learning in most lessons is good and the special 'Weeks' are great fun.
- Many more of you are now reaching higher standards and making good progress.
- You get on well together and your behaviour is good.
- The school takes good care of you.

Here are two things we think the school could do better.

- Raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, by making sure you understand how your targets will help you improve.
- Help teaching to get even better by challenging those of you who find learning easy at all times in lessons.

You can help by attending school regularly and trying hard to do your very best at all times. Continue to enjoy your time in school and remember to ask your teachers and the other adults if you need help.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Collins

Lead Inspector