

Cranford Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121966
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314169
Inspection date	9 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip James
Headteacher	Lynne Schneidereit
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2006
School address	Church Lane Cranford Kettering NN14 4AE
Telephone number	01536 330300
Fax number	01536 330659

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Cranford C of E is a much smaller than average primary school. The school provides for pupils from the village of Cranford and surrounding villages. A significant proportion of pupils travel from outside the normal catchment area. Most pupils are from a White British background. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The school was last inspected in May 2006 when it was taken out of special measures because it had made good improvements since its inspection in February 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cranford C of E Primary School has made significant improvements during the past three years and its overall effectiveness is now good. As one parent commented, 'There have been huge changes to the school since the last inspection.' Pupils are achieving well because of good teaching and a well planned curriculum. Good care, guidance and support and a positive school ethos underpin pupils' good personal development.

The commitment of all staff is a key factor contributing to the school's success and to the improvements made. The local authority has also provided good support in the school's drive for improvement. Subject leaders have significantly improved their skills in monitoring and improvement planning. School performance is systematically reviewed and positive action has been taken to improve assessment, target setting and teaching. These improvements have had a good impact on achievement and standards.

Parents' views of the school are mixed. Most are pleased with the care and education provided for their children and the school's atmosphere, and teachers' enthusiasm and competence receive particular praise. However, a significant number do not have total confidence in the headteacher's leadership and do not think that the school takes sufficient account of their concerns and suggestions. The staff and governors recognise the need to build a stronger partnership with some of the parents.

Standards fluctuate year on year at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because numbers in each year group are small. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress from their different starting points. National test results in 2007 indicate that by the end of Year 6 standards were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

Across the school, teachers have established good relationships with pupils. The purpose of each lesson is clear so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers' explanations, instructions and questioning promote learning well. Activities and tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged and make good gains in their learning. Occasionally, the pace of the lesson is not brisk enough and learning slows. Pupils have clear individual learning targets in literacy and numeracy so they know what to do to improve.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is shown by their keen participation in all activities and their good attendance. Pupils enjoy the good range of activities offered, particularly additional activities such as visits and music. High expectations by staff and very good relationships lead to outstanding behaviour. Pupils show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. They willingly take on additional responsibilities and make good contributions to the school and to the wider community. Pupils at Cranford C of E are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Childrens' overall attainment on entry to the Reception class varies from year to year. The current Reception class have entered with knowledge and skills a little above the levels expected for their age. Good quality teaching and an interesting curriculum enable all children to make good progress in all areas of learning. The wide range of activities that are planned around interesting topics such as 'animals', 'Arctic' and 'hot countries' motivate the children well.

Teachers and assistants provide a good balance of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. The outdoor learning activities are well linked to the indoor work but outdoor equipment and facilities are limited. The current assessments show that by the end of Reception, standards are above those expected.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all lessons proceed at a brisk pace and that learning time is maximised.
- Improve the outdoor learning equipment and facilities in Reception to extend the scope of outdoor work.
- Take positive steps to build a stronger partnership with parents and tackle their concerns and suggestions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well as they move through the school and build on their good progress in their Reception Year. In 2007, assessments indicated that standards by the end of Year 2 were above average. National test results for Year 6 in 2007 were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Achievement and standards were a little lower in science because of the school's focus on improving English and mathematics. The school has taken positive action to bring science in line with English and mathematics. Pupils who need extra help with their learning make good progress because they receive well planned and directed support from teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school and show positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is consistently above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Clear and consistent expectations by staff and very positive relationships result in outstanding conduct. Pupils are friendly, considerate and work well collaboratively in a range of activities. They adopt healthy lifestyles and possess a good understanding of the importance of healthy diets and taking regular exercise. Pupils thrive on additional responsibilities. Those on the school council have contributed to improvements to the playground. The Eco committee successfully promotes recycling materials and protecting the environment. The raising of funds for well known charities contributes well to the wider community. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the future because by the time they leave they possess very good literacy and numeracy skills. In addition to these, their personal and social skills are well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Across the school, teachers establish positive relationships with pupils and manage them well. Pupils are attentive and respond enthusiastically to their teachers' clear explanations, instructions and effective questioning. Good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work in pairs or small groups help pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills well. Pupils are challenged effectively and make good progress because activities and tasks are well matched to their abilities and needs. However, introductions to lessons are sometimes too long and this results

in a slow pace and a lack of pupil involvement. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make a valuable contribution to learning, particularly for pupils who need extra help with language, literacy or numeracy. The marking of pupils' work is constructive and helpful. Praise is given for good work and there are clear comments to guide improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum promotes enjoyment and good progress for pupils. It contributes well to their personal development. Pupils have good opportunities to apply and develop literacy skills in other subjects. They use and apply their numeracy skills satisfactorily in subjects like science. Opportunities for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects have improved considerably since the last inspection. The scope of outdoor learning in the Reception class is curtailed a little by the limited equipment and facilities. A good range of visits and visitors enriches pupils' learning. Popular clubs include basketball, gardening and tag rugby. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play the recorder, guitar, violin or a brass instrument. A residential visit for Year 6 provides interesting outdoor activities and successfully builds pupils' team skills. Health and safety education is promoted well across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective. The school has improved its systems to assess and monitor pupils' attainment and progress and these are now good. Assessment information is used well to plan teaching. Pupils have clear individual learning targets in writing and mathematics so they know what they need to do to improve. Pupils are developing skills of setting their own targets and reviewing their progress towards them. Individual target setting has not been extended to science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Staff and governors have pulled together successfully to move the school forward and have a shared vision for the future. This is based on good self-evaluation which is used well to plan and bring about necessary improvements. Sometimes indicators to evaluate the success of action planning are not precise enough or measurable. Nonetheless, the needed improvements to assessment, teaching and target setting have been made. Pupils are now achieving well and their good personal development is being maintained and built upon.

One of the main reasons for the school's success is the commitment and hard work of the staff. Through a range of training, local initiatives and local authority support, subject leaders have improved their skills in monitoring standards and provision in their areas of responsibility. This has helped staff to focus on the areas that need attention.

Despite the improvements to provision, achievement and standards, the school does not have the full confidence of all its parents. A significant proportion of parents have concerns about the headteacher's ability to address their concerns and suggestions. The school recognises that this aspect of the partnership with parents is not good enough.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. This enables them to provide constructive challenge and hold the school to account as well as providing support.

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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	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	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

10 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cranford C of E Primary School, Kettering, NN14 4AE

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Cranford C of E has made good improvements and is now a good school.

These are strengths of the school.

- You get off to a good start in Reception.
- You all thoroughly enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- Your school is a friendly, caring and pleasant place to be.
- Your behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school.
- Teaching is good, which is why you are making such good progress.
- By Year 6, standards are well above average in English and mathematics.
- You enjoy a good range of learning activities.
- You show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe.
- Staff take good care of you and give you good support.

- There are three things that we have asked the school to do to make it even better.
- Make sure that all lessons move along at a fast pace.
- Provide better outdoor equipment and facilities for the children in Reception.
- The school should take positive steps to address parents' concerns and suggestions.

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector