

Crownfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102294
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	323614
Inspection date	7 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Sudworth

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Anthony Sargeant
Headteacher	Mr Gary Nott
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2006
School address	White Hart Lane Collier Row Romford RM7 8JB
Telephone number	01708 747070
Fax number	01708 737811

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school with a particular focus on the following:

- pupils use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum and the impact of the school's efforts to improve writing
- the effectiveness of assessment and tracking arrangements in their contribution to pupils' progress and the pupils' knowledge of how they need to improve
- the quality of subject leaders' reporting and evaluations in improving all-round provision.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, chair of governors, various staff and pupils. Parents' questionnaires were analysed and visits made to lessons. Work samples and a range of documents were examined. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This primary school is larger than average. There are considerably more boys than girls. The proportions of pupils entitled to a free school meal and those who have difficulties learning basic skills and/or who have emotional problems are around the national average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is other than English is lower than that found nationally.

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. It has several outstanding features, including excellent leadership and management firmly focused on high expectations of both academic standards and pupils' personal development. This focus has resulted in a trend of above-average standards. High expectations are also evident in a clear determination to raise academic attainment even more, as well as the school's general provision. The headteacher, who leads the school extremely well, sets out annually his own commitments to parents for further improvements. The pupils' personal organisers clearly demonstrate the high expectations for every aspect of the school's work.

Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well and reach good standards from their average starting points. Staff provide additional sessions after school for pupils who need extra help. Consequently, pupils learn well. Their personal development is excellent. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and praise the school's efforts for their children. As one parent commented, 'Crownfield Junior School not only does a good job in teaching our children academically but teaches them good life skills.' Parents particularly praise the 'happy' and 'well-run' school which their children enjoy. They notably comment on the 'good level of education and discipline' and their children's good progress. Pupils are well prepared for their future education.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school as is demonstrated in their attendance, which is above average. They take a genuine part in school affairs. They run their own radio station and announce birthdays, play requested music and keep other pupils reminded of events for the day and the future. The school council consulted other pupils about ideas for playground equipment. Members chose items on their behalf which fitted in with their budget allocation. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. They participate in the regular sporting opportunities and many either cycle or walk to school. They know not to talk to strangers. Their behaviour in school is outstanding and pupils have a very positive attitude to their work which contributes to their good progress. Pupils engage extremely well in local events, such as activities with other schools. The choir performs locally. The study of values in assemblies contributes very considerably to pupils' very healthy respect for one another and ready concern for the environment.

While pupils have traditionally attained well in mathematics and science with above average proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels, pupils' progress in English has not been as good because writing has been a weaker aspect of their work. The school is determinedly tackling this comparative weakness by adopting new approaches that appeal more to the boys. Staff have used pupils' interests, given more choices and made the subject for writing more appealing. In a Year 6 class, the teacher set up a murder scene and provided the pupils with two witness statements. The pupils were requested to compare the reports, seeking out similarities and differences, and asked to compile their own report for the police investigation service. They were engrossed in the task and set about it with a real purpose. Such approaches have resulted in pupils' greater motivation to write and also in the much-improved results. Nevertheless, there remain improvements still to be made in this aspect of work because pupils are late in learning to write in joined script and their handwriting is not as neat as it could be. Pupils' reading skills are a particular strength because of parental support, good reading materials, thorough recording of their progress and an excellent library and librarian.

Pupils' good attainment in mathematics is due to neat setting-out of work when recording it - which promotes accuracy, teachers' use of effective mental strategies and a clear written expectation of what pupils should be able to do at the end of each year. Pupils have good opportunities to investigate in science which supports the good results in this subject. There is good structure to the ICT curriculum with use of various technological devices, as well as computers. The school recognises the need to use computers more effectively across the curriculum but a good start has been made in this. Year 5 pupils used them well in mathematics to tackle problem-solving activities and enjoyed it so much that they wanted to come back at lunchtime. Good use is made of mathematics in science to record the results of their investigations and there is an increasing use of literacy in different subjects. For example, pupils wrote sensitively to their parents as evacuees in their Second World War studies. The curriculum recognises the importance of each subject and there is good provision for religious education and personal, social and health education. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Nevertheless, pupils in the main do not have enough opportunities to express themselves creatively in art in different media. Music and physical education are particularly strong aspects in the overall good curriculum provision.

The staff's care for the pupils is outstanding and safeguarding arrangements are very securely in place. Health and safety arrangements are taken very seriously. Pupils have individual cards on which are recorded any minor accident and the details of it, supporting the careful monitoring of individual pupils. Staff's tracking of pupils' progress is excellent. Record keeping is extremely thorough and pupils' progress is monitored regularly across the school. This ensures that any pupil not making the expected progress is quickly identified and strategies are put in place to get them back on track. Pupils are very aware of their next steps in learning in English, mathematics and science because these are written in language they can easily understand. Marking is very thorough and supports pupils' further learning. A very positive aspect of marking is the dialogue that teachers use with the pupils through posing questions about the work, and the pupils respond to these in their books.

The governing body has evaluated the school's arrangements for community cohesion well. It has made a good start to developing this aspect with an honest recognition that there is more to be done, for example in helping pupils appreciate global diversity. Governors take a keen interest in the school under the strong commitment of the long-serving chair of governors. Governors visit and so learn about the school's strengths and areas for development. Very thorough and highly detailed evaluative subject reports help to keep governors very well informed. All staff are held to account for pupils' progress. Lesson monitoring is regular and helps staff to develop their skills further. Subject and senior leaders are not afraid of informing one another where matters need immediate redress, as well as praising effective practice, which leads to a good level of consistency in the quality of teaching.

This is a school with an outstanding capacity to improve further because of the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, thorough systems to monitor progress, very hard work and commitment from the staff - shown in improving results over time, and the very high commitment to provide the very best for the pupils and their families.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and teach pupils to write in a joined style from an earlier age.
- Ensure pupils have more opportunities to work creatively in art in a range of different media.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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/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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

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?	1

Leadership and management

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crownfield Junior School, Romford, RM7 8JB

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed my day with you. You attend a good school and make good progress in reaching standards that are above average. Your development as young people is outstanding and I was most impressed by your behaviour and attitudes to learning. Thank you for sharing your work with me and talking to me about your school. You have a very good understanding of what to do to keep healthy and to keep yourselves safe. Your parents are really pleased that you attend Crownfield Junior and I can understand why. I was impressed with your local radio station; what a good idea! You obviously enjoy the extra sporting activities. The staff take very good care of you and keep very careful records of your progress. Your headteacher and the staff do a really good job of keeping up the standards in your school and they all work well together.

I have just two matters that I am asking the staff to take action on. Firstly I want them to improve the quality of your handwriting and enable you to join up your handwriting from an earlier stage in the school. Secondly, I want them to give you more opportunities to work creatively in art with a range of different materials.

Thank you once again for your help when I visited. I hope that you will continue to work hard in the future and always do your best.

Yours faithfully

Peter Sudworth

Lead Inspector