

Crofton Infant School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 108142 |
| Local Authority | Wakefield |
| Inspection number | 324713 |
| Inspection dates | 12–13 May 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Keith Bardon |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 180 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ms J Rigby |
| Headteacher | Ms H Padwick |
| Date of previous school inspection | 21 February 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | High Street Crofton Wakefield West Yorkshire WF4 1NG |
| Telephone number | 01924 303900 |
| Fax number | 01924 303900 |

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| Age group | 3–7 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves a village community with broadly average but very mixed social and economic characteristics on the outskirts of Wakefield. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those who have a statement for their special educational needs is broadly average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises one part-time Nursery-age class and two full-time Reception-age classes which work together as the Foundation Stage 1 and 2 unit. The school has achieved a number of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools, Sportsmark and Investors in People. A breakfast club managed by the school is available to pupils in term time.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school and the manner in which it promotes pupils' personal development and provides for their care, support and guidance is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school considerably because they are provided with a wide variety of interesting and stimulating opportunities to learn. Pupils of all ages work hard and are taught well and as a result, make good progress. Parents hold the school in high regard. They feel their children flourish and 'come on in leaps and bounds' and 'would not want them to go anywhere else'. They particularly like the way in which the headteacher leads from the front, greeting each child individually at the start of the day. Pupils are equally positive because they 'get to learn really good things' and feel totally safe and secure in the school's warm and friendly atmosphere.

Throughout their time at the school pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2 most pupils are reading, writing and manipulating numbers with good skills for their age. Standards at this point are generally above the national average, although they vary year-on-year according to pupils' starting points. The school monitors the progress of each pupil in Years 1 and 2 very carefully and provides well judged and effective additional help for those who need it. However, systems to record the achievements of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently detailed.

Pupils make excellent progress in their personal development and are extremely well behaved. They apply themselves fully in lessons, follow instructions carefully and take pride in their work and achievements. They discuss important matters sensibly and maturely, listen carefully to others and show a very clear sense of responsibility towards those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils understand fully why eating fruit and joining in active games at playtime are good for their health. The very good range of personal and academic skills pupils acquire enables them to progress smoothly to the next stage of their education at the junior school.

Excellent working relationships and engaging activities make for lively lessons in which pupils learn at a good pace. Activities are planned well and clear objectives ensure lessons have focus and purpose. Pupils concentrate hard and evaluate their own achievements honestly at the end of the lesson. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together so that all pupils understand the work and have the help they need to succeed. The quality of care the school provides is exemplary and pupils receive excellent support and guidance from all staff. Development initiatives which emphasise creativity and skills are adding much to what is already a good curriculum. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good overall, with particular strength in relation to its local community. However, pupils have only limited opportunities to appreciate how people in communities that are different from their own lead their lives.

Leadership and management are good. All decisions put pupils first and senior staff are constantly looking for ways to make this good school even more effective. Rapidly changing circumstances are regarded as a challenge rather than an obstacle with staff working closely together to address emerging issues. Decisions are based on accurate self-evaluation with governors playing a full part in collecting information and supporting school development. Links with outside agencies are used extremely well to extend provision and provide support where it is needed. The school's relationship with parents is excellent and this benefits all pupils.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children often start in the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are a little below age related expectations, particularly in their communication and language. A warm, caring, bright learning environment along with good teaching and well-adapted learning opportunities all contribute to children's good progress. Welfare is promoted well and all requirements are met. By the end of Reception most children are working securely within and sometimes exceeding the expectations for children of this age. Learning opportunities strike a good balance between activities led by adults and others chosen by children. Children are encouraged to learn by exploration as seen when a small group of children were persuaded to gently stroke the shell of a snail to encourage it to move. Further opportunities enable children to think for themselves and make their own decisions. As a result, children's personal development is excellent. Staff regularly assess children's learning and record the outcomes. However, the assessment systems used do not illustrate clearly the progress individual children are making. This makes the information more difficult for staff to use when planning lessons and does not provide parents with an ongoing picture of their children's achievements in the different areas of learning. While the provision is good overall and children achieve well, indoor activities and resources are particularly interesting and stimulating. The school is working hard to improve outdoor provision. Staff work closely as a team and effective leadership and management ensure a good pace of improvement. 'The ease of transition into a new learning environment demonstrates the excellent standard of care,' is typical of the support parents have for the way children are welcomed into the Nursery.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish rigorous systems for recording children's achievements in Early Years Foundation Stage which illustrate clearly the progress they are making.
- To broaden pupils' understanding of others, provide them with more opportunities to look at and appreciate how people in communities that are different from their own lead their lives.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils, including the very few from minority ethnic groups, make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. Pupils' attainment was significantly above average in 2008. It is a little lower this year because a higher proportion of pupils had lower starting points and a sudden surge in pupil numbers adversely affected pupils' progress in Year 1. Effective measures have been taken, pupils' progress has picked up and they are back on track to meet their targets. Many pupils read with considerable skill for their age. They recognise many words on sight and tackle unfamiliar words with confidence using a good understanding of how letters and sounds link together. The school's initiatives to raise standards in writing are paying dividends. Many pupils compose well structured pieces of text using a clear and fluent handwriting style. The gap that previously existed in boys' and girls' attainment in writing has all but been eliminated and both are achieving equally well. By the end of Year 2 almost all pupils have a firm grasp of numbers and are recalling a good range of number facts from memory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive regular, well planned support and as a result, they make good progress towards their individual targets. Those capable of high levels of attainment are challenged with appropriate work and achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely polite, well mannered and kind to others. They feel completely safe and secure in school and trust the 'nice and kind teachers' to give them all the help and support they need. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. They have a strong sense of self-worth and a clear understanding of right and wrong. They show a clear sense of responsibility and willingly help in class and around school, making an outstanding contribution to the community. Cultural development is good and pupils gain considerable pleasure from the musical and sporting activities that many participate in. Many pupils have only limited contact with those from different backgrounds outside the local area. This restricts their understanding of how others spend their lives. Most pupils attend school regularly and punctually so that can start the day in an enjoyable way by reading with their parents or carers. They are learning about the world of work by raising money for charity and for things they would like to buy for school and preparation for future learning and beyond is extremely good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers structure lessons carefully, using the information gained from regular assessments to build successfully on what pupils know and can do. Activities are generally matched closely to pupils' abilities. Occasionally, the challenge these provide is too low and they do not give pupils enough scope to try different ideas and extend their understanding. New work is introduced clearly and thoroughly. Teachers frequently engage pupils with well judged questions. They employ a wide range of well considered techniques, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT), to stimulate pupils' interest and help them maintain concentration. Marking is good and provides pupils with useful information about how to improve. Teaching assistants are deployed well and the support they provide for individuals and groups of pupils makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make. Pupils appreciate the help they receive and work as hard for the teaching assistants as they do for their teachers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those of high ability. However, the school is not yet satisfied and well planned development is under way to further improve the linkage between different subjects. Very good use of a national programme provides an excellent platform for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Curriculum enrichment is good with a broad range of very popular lunchtime and after-school clubs. Frequent visits and visitors add much to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Regular use of ICT enhances pupils' learning in many subjects. Designated curriculum weeks enable pupils to study different areas of the United Kingdom and places further afield such as India and France. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about communities closer to home which may be different to their own. Music is a strength of the school and many children learn to read music and play simple instruments to a very good standard.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff provide exceptionally good support and guidance and high quality care for all pupils. Relationships are excellent and children confirm they feel confident to approach staff if anything is troubling them. Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet current government requirements and are highly effective in promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety. All children are encouraged to live a healthy lifestyle and particularly enjoy their regular 'wake up and shake up' activity sessions. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported and guided by experienced and well-trained teaching assistants and make good progress. Good links with the local junior school smooth transition at the end of Year 2. Pupils' progress is assessed frequently and outcomes scrutinised rigorously. Any pupils who are falling behind receive very well planned support, often through one of the very effective intervention programmes the school uses.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led with purpose and skill. Management procedures are well established and effective and the school runs smoothly. Good decision making has enabled difficulties, such as the sudden surge in pupil numbers last year, to be overcome with a minimum of disruption. Procedures for checking the work of the school provide clear and accurate information and plans for development reflect the school's needs closely. The school has made good progress since it was last inspected and has good capacity for improvement in the future. Subject leadership is good and has become more effective as a result of the training staff have received. Many management responsibilities are delegated well but others have yet to be shared equitably and there is a little imbalance, particularly at the most senior level. The school takes rigorous action to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and that any possibilities of discrimination are eliminated. By regularly and systematically checking and reviewing the progress and development of each pupil, the school is able to match provision closely to the needs of the individual. As a result, there is no gender bias and all pupils, including those who may be vulnerable are able to make good progress in their learning. The school promotes community cohesion well. It plays an important part in the life of the village, making an excellent contribution to the local community. While some links with the wider community are starting to be forged, the school's contribution in this respect is far more limited. The school benefits from a conscientious body of governors who provide both effective support and critical analysis of its work and effectiveness, helping it to provide good value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| 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 | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 1 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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| 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

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| 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 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 | 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**

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and chatted to us which made us feel comfortable and welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do, and special thanks go to those who talked with us about the school.

Crofton Infant is a good school and I can see why you enjoy it so much. The school has a lovely, friendly feeling to it and you all seemed very happy. Teachers and all the staff take extremely good care of you and I know you appreciate all the help they provide. Your behaviour is excellent. You are polite and well mannered, help each other in class and play happily together at playtimes. I particularly like the way you listen carefully to your teachers and try your best with the work you are given.

The progress you make with your work is good. I enjoyed reading your written work because it was well put together and easy to understand. In fact, the quality of your handwriting is something many of you can be very proud of. Teachers give a lot of thought to lessons and plan them carefully so it was pleasing to hear you say that you learn a lot from them. I was sorry I did not have time to go to Canon Hall with Year 1 and share in all the interesting things they got to do, but I thoroughly enjoyed listening to them talk about it the next day. From the displays around school I could see that you are all given many interesting and exciting things to do. I have asked your teachers to give you more opportunity to share your experiences with children from other communities.

I enjoyed the assembly very much, particularly when members of the ocarina club played their instruments. The quality of their playing was extremely good and I was very envious of the skill they showed.

Children make a good start to school in the Foundation Stage classes and learn many interesting and useful things while they are playing. I have suggested that keeping examples of the things children have done as a record of their progress would enable teachers to see how much you are improving in your work, and the school agrees.