

# Crowcroft Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105413
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	336492
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jon Lovgreen

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Pauline Sergeant
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Danuta Brightwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Northmoor Road Longsight Manchester M12 5SY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, spending over eight hours observing work in the classroom. They held meetings with governors, staff, and various groups of pupils. A detailed scrutiny of pupils' work in their English and mathematics books also took place. Inspectors looked at monitoring and planning documents, minutes of senior management and governing body meetings, and reviews by the local authority. Questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and 74 parents were also scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress pupils are making in writing
- the effectiveness of senior managers and governors in monitoring the school's work, and in planning and bringing about improvement
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the quality of care, guidance and support for pupils and how successful the school is in encouraging parents and carers to be involved in school life
- how consistent teaching is, and how usefully work is marked.

## Information about the school

Crowcroft Park is an average size school in an inner-city location. The school is oversubscribed and there are more boys than girls on roll. The proportion of pupils coming from ethnic minority backgrounds has increased to over four times the national average. Those whose first language is not English make up three-quarters of the school population. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is above average. The numbers entitled to free school meals are above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and a Reception class. Well over half the pupils starting in the Nursery have not experienced a formal setting before. The school has the Healthy Schools Gold Award and a Sportsmark award, and also has National Healthy School status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Crowcroft Park is a good school. It has successfully met the challenge of a changing pupil intake by working hard to understand and meet the needs of its community. It is deservedly popular and oversubscribed. The headteacher has given a strong lead on how to provide an inclusive school which sets and shares high expectations. From the moment that they set foot in the building, pupils are made to feel at home and parents are welcomed. The strong bond between home and the school has been forged not just by good intentions, but by practical and thoughtful steps to engage parents, some of whom could remain distant. Families are fully consulted, for instance, about the home/school contract or the usefulness of reports. The school organises family trips in half term and visits for parents and carers to its Lake District residential venue prior to pupils going. To meet the increasing diversity of cultures and languages, staff have had extra training, and bi-lingual support and interpreter services are available.

Since the last inspection, standards have risen and pupils are making better progress. Behaviour and attendance have improved. This has come about because of the dedicated work of the headteacher and the commitment of other senior managers and staff. Starting from a low skills base in Nursery, pupils progress well and consistently achieve results which are close to national average by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in writing achieved by older pupils fell recently and remain weaker than other areas of learning. Teachers are working to correct this. Good teaching results in pupils being keen to cooperate and learn. Classrooms are lively and stimulating; lessons interesting. However, teachers sometimes overlook quiet inattention or mistake silence for understanding. Too few pupils learn how to work with a real sense of urgency on formal extended writing. Marking is much improved, but sometimes gives so much information that pupils miss the key messages.

Senior managers and governors have worked hard and successfully to oversee the school's improvement. However, they do not at present analyse test results, progress data nor teaching quality with enough regularity or sufficient rigour. Hence they sometimes focus on less important issues. Some evaluation is outdated or lacking in incisive judgement. Nevertheless, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve because it is determined, sets itself ambitious targets, uses guidance and advice from the local authority, and has been able to strengthen the governing body.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing, by:
  - training pupils from a young age to work with concentration on formal written

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pieces

- ensuring that the extensive comments teachers make when they mark pupils' work highlight how and where pupils should focus their efforts.
- Make the quality of teaching at least consistently good, by:
  - always having extra tasks and challenges ready for those who finish early
  - ensuring pupils' greater attention and involvement in class discussion.
- Improve the effectiveness of senior managers and governors, by:
  - more regular and careful checking on how well pupils are learning in lessons
  - more rigorous analysis of pupils' standards and progress, leading to a better understanding of what strategies are working and where improvements are needed.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

In lessons, pupils are well behaved and keen to learn. They show an appetite for finding out about new things. They enjoy working together so that even younger pupils are able to help each other. This helps many to overcome the language barriers that they face so that they can talk more confidently about their work. However, some stay silent or let their attention drift during whole-class activities, and teachers do not always spot this.

Pupils' attendance is above average and their punctuality is good. They behave responsibly, working to routines and being careful with equipment and books. Whilst many learn to work neatly and carefully, some take too long over writing tasks and their standards suffer. This is the result of not learning to work with speed and focus after they have thought out what they want to write. In contrast, pupils do well in science, enjoying relating scientific principles to their everyday life and experiences. Pupils feel safe at school, but a few get upset by occasional spiteful remarks. Most of the time, however, boys and girls, and pupils from differing backgrounds, get on really well together. Polite and sensible behaviour is the norm. Whilst most pupils are aware of the value of a balanced diet, a number choose not to follow one. This contrasts with their good uptake of the many sports activities on offer. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and are increasingly able to take on responsibility as 'buddies' to younger pupils or as members of the school council. Their work in the local community, as junior community wardens or performers in local homes for the elderly, is valued.

Results have improved and pupils are making good progress. From their low standards on entry, pupils begin to catch up during Key Stage 1. The strong focus on promoting reading and speaking skills helps pupils to get to grips with tasks and take a full part in lessons. This is also the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their needs are assessed quickly and teachers plan alternative approaches, such as visual clues alongside text or starter ideas to help them get going. Additional support from well trained teachers and assistants is provided. This also benefits those who are learning English as an additional language, where the careful emphasis on learning to recognise word shapes and sounds is a strength. Good progress continues for all pupils

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in Key Stage 2, as evidenced in the Year 6 national test results in which pupils have attained broadly average standards over the last three years. Pupils with English as an additional language do equally as well as their peers. Pupils' overall skills in English and mathematics, coupled with their ability to work in teams, give pupils a sound grounding for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Lessons of good quality are well planned, and presented with enthusiasm by teachers who go to some lengths to make sure that pupils understand what they are learning and why. Teachers use information about pupils' standards and potential effectively, preparing suitably varied materials and approaches for different groups. Lessons move at good pace but, at times, pupils who finish a task quickly do not have anything to move on to. They sit quietly and patiently but could be better employed. Additional teachers and assistants are well used and show good initiative in supporting pupils. Classrooms are well organised and extensive displays make them bright and informative. Teachers manage classes well, making good use of pair and group work. In less

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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successful lessons, teachers are not sufficiently alert to the minority of pupils who are quietly inattentive or silent, and do not draw them into class activities and discussion enough. Marking has improved and a recent policy has made it consistent and helpful. Written pieces are given considerable attention, but sometimes the extensive comments leave pupils with too wide a range of areas to improve on.

The curriculum is exciting and enjoyable. Half-termly topics help pupils to see links between subjects. In response to criticism in the last inspection report, pupils are expected to develop writing skills in a range of subjects and styles. For instance, they write reports of science investigations, produce a school newspaper, and write their own versions of Greek myths. Annual events, such as 'Around the World Week', enable pupils to learn about other countries; the Year 6 residential visit encourages teamwork, independence and initiative. After-school clubs are extensive and popular: from sport to drama; from art to gardening.

Teachers know pupils and their families well, and this helps them offer good care and support. All are welcomed. Parents appreciate the good school/home communication systems and the detailed reports they get. When difficulties arise, the school takes responsibility and finds solutions. Arrangements for pupils joining the school, whether in Nursery or later years, are extensive and well thought out. Good links with high schools ensure that pupils are well prepared for that important move at the end of Year 6. Thorough assessment and comprehensive records enable the school to support vulnerable pupils or those having difficulties with language or learning. Sensitive adjustments to the calendar coupled, with a tough stance on pupils having time off, have seen attendance improve and persistent absenteeism virtually disappear.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

School leaders responded well to the recommendations in the last inspection report making significant improvements in standards, pupils' rate of progress, the quality of teaching and the curriculum. The ethos of welcoming and providing for all, and responding to the changing nature and needs of the local community, has been created by the teamwork of all who work in the school. Specialist staff have been recruited to work alongside teachers. Appropriate training has been arranged on aspects of learning difficulty, such as autism and language acquisition for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Senior leaders have more detailed information on school

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performance. They have, however, allowed the important task of regularly checking what happens in lessons and how pupils are progressing through the school to slip down the agenda. The decline in writing standards was not spotted soon enough. Checks to make sure that teachers are tackling the issue of accelerating pupils' progress in writing have not been rigorous. Managers are in the process of improving the system for tracking and comparing data about pupils' progress. At present, some managers lack an understanding of the whole-school picture on achievement and attainment, which would help inform brisk and effective reporting to governors and more precise improvement planning. On other issues, such as curriculum review and budgeting, management is adept. For some time the governing body suffered vacancies and poor attendance but the situation has recently improved. Governors are now capable of giving the school the support and the challenge to help steer further improvement.

A good equality policy is put into practice such that all are treated equally, and tolerance and understanding of other views and beliefs have a high profile. The partnership with parents and carers is exemplary both in its vision and in its impact on relationships. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and effective and meet all current requirements. School leaders and staff actively promote community cohesion. Pupils learn to share cultures and religious celebrations with each other. Active links with a local supermarket, church, and other schools and local organisations, help to broaden pupils' horizons as do charity fundraising and collecting harvest festival food for the poor. The school is a cohesive community and, as such, is a good model for the local community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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Children come from a wide range of backgrounds. For many it is the first time that they are away from home, and an increasing number are not familiar with everyday English. As a result, their experiences of formal learning and routines are limited. Many have low skill levels in terms of language and communication, and personal and social skills. Visits by staff to every home help to allay worries, and the school goes out of its way to welcome parents into the classroom. Parents find advice about the kind of work to do at home, and packs to support this, most helpful. Children thrive in the stimulating and well organised setting. Extra support, including that from a bi-lingual specialist and from other helpers and some parents, mean that children get good attention, but are also encouraged to explore and learn for themselves. Most make good progress, particularly in understanding and using language, and in learning to get on with others. A good range of activities providing interesting play opportunities is well balanced by more formal learning. In an outstanding lesson, one class learned how to experiment with pitch in singing, then moved on to naming and using musical instruments. Teachers are careful to plan activities which build on pupils' knowledge and interests. Good leadership and effective management ensure a happy and harmonious atmosphere. Improved checking on children's standards and progress has enabled teachers to plan lessons and to guide children's work effectively.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

A relatively large questionnaire return from families showed them to be very supportive and appreciative of the school. They particularly like the friendly, welcoming atmosphere and comment on the 'kind and helpful staff'. They feel that effective leadership and management result in a smooth-running school that communicates with them quickly and clearly. Overall, they are very happy with their children's experience and development, especially noting the good teaching and levels of care and support given to pupils. A few feel that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities could do with more support. However, inspectors found that teachers were quick to spot such needs; good support was available from both teachers and support staff. A few parents echo a minority pupil view that behaviour could be better. Inspectors saw no incidents of misbehaviour but agree that there are occasions when a few pupils become inattentive or make the odd thoughtless comment about someone else. Teachers are alert to the need to keep a close eye on these issues.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crowcroft Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 247 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	45	39	53	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	36	49	34	46	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	43	38	51	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	34	41	55	3	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	34	46	34	46	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	31	48	65	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	45	35	47	4	5	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	26	46	62	1	1	3	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	31	45	61	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	36	39	53	4	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	22	45	61	5	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	32	43	36	49	1	1	4	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	51	33	45	1	1	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



4 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crowcroft Park Primary School, Manchester, M12 5SY

As you know, we recently came to inspect your school. This letter is to let you know what we found. Firstly, thanks to all of you for making us feel so welcome. Your smiling, happy faces helped us forget the weather outside!

We agree with you that yours is a good school. It cares for you from the moment that you come through the doors, so that you feel safe and happy. You know that there are plenty of adults who will listen to you and give help. Teachers do an excellent job in making sure that your families feel involved in what is going on. Most lessons are good and you enjoy them, as your good behaviour shows. You also love the extra clubs, trips and activities. Not many schools offer pupils the chance to do so many sports, stay at Ghyll Head, and play brass instruments or steel drums! You are making good progress and are learning important skills about getting on with other people. You are doing less well in writing. This is partly because teachers give you lots of advice in marking, but don't tell you exactly where to focus your efforts. You also find it difficult to give longer pieces of work your best attention.

Teachers, senior staff and the governors all want the best for you and are looking for ways to improve the school. We have asked them to concentrate on three things: helping you to reach better standards in writing; making lessons even more interesting; and checking more often and more carefully that improvements are happening. You can play your part by continuing to make every effort to keep up your good attendance, and by making sure that you listen really closely to what is being said when you are working as a class. Also, try to get into the habit of spells of total concentration and silent work when you are doing extended writing. This will help you to get more work of better quality done. When they mark your work, teachers give you ideas about how to improve. Make sure that these are clear enough for you and try to use them in your next piece of work.

Our best wishes to you for future success and happiness.

Yours sincerely

Jon Lövgreen

Lead inspector

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