

Crowle CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116801
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	338894
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Field
Headteacher	Lynn Biggs
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors spent the majority of time observing learning, saw all three teachers, observed 11 lessons and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at records for the tracking of pupils' progress, the school development plan, the headteacher's reports to the governors and governors' minutes, health and safety policies, curriculum policies and a range of other policies and plans. The inspectors also took account of the 40 parental questionnaires which were returned.

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

- the progress of pupils in all year groups
- how effectively work is matched to the needs of all pupils
- the effectiveness of the provision for those pupils who are potentially vulnerable
- the effectiveness of the links with communities outside the local area to promote community cohesion.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one Reception class. The school has gained Healthy Schools, Eco-schools silver and Activemark awards.

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

2

Main findings

The school provides a good standard of education and cares for the pupils exceptionally well. It has a welcoming and happy environment in which pupils thrive and want to do their best. Relationships are strong and help pupils feel extremely safe and secure. Pupils are very polite and behave exceptionally well. They say that they very much enjoy coming to school and this is shown in the high levels of attendance year on year. These positive attitudes, together with the above average academic achievement, make a good contribution to the development of pupils' skills for their future economic well-being. Dedicated leadership, good teaching and effective liaison with external agencies help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to achieve well. Teaching is consistently good in all classes and promotes pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils work together extremely well and, even the youngest children show a good level of independence. Teachers mostly use assessments effectively to match pupils' tasks to the very wide range of ages and capabilities in each class. However, learning is not outstanding because in most lessons teachers are not clear enough about what the pupils are expected to learn and the small steps which build on pupils' levels of skills and knowledge are not planned carefully enough for pupils of all capabilities. Although pupils are developing the skills of evaluating their own learning, they cannot do this effectively because teachers do not make it clear enough to them what they are required to learn during the lesson to make outstanding progress. Teachers mark books regularly and pupils have targets for learning. However, the school is aware that marking and targets are not detailed or focused enough. Consequently, they do not provide pupils with enough guidance on how to improve their work or help them evaluate their own progress.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding, but their understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures is not as strong. Although there are good links with the local communities, the headteacher and governors are aware that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse range of communities in the United Kingdom and globally are not yet fully developed.

Most parents say that they get good information about their children's progress and feel that they can easily approach the teachers and headteacher if they are concerned. However, the school is aware that mechanisms for helping parents support their children's learning at home are not yet fully developed.

The headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the school's improvement which staff and governors support well. Because of the small number of pupils on roll and the strong ethos of care and support, all the staff know the pupils exceptionally well.

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Regular self-evaluation enables leaders to have a good knowledge of the strengths of the school and to identify those areas in most need of improvement. The school has good capacity to improve even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve upon the good quality of learning by ensuring that:
 - all teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and the small steps which build on pupils' levels of skills and knowledge are planned carefully for pupils of all capabilities
 - all pupils understand what they are required to learn during the lesson and use this information to evaluate their own learning
 - teachers' marking and pupils' targets provide pupils with enough information to help them improve their work and evaluate their own progress.
- Improve pupils' cultural development and promote community cohesion by raising pupils' awareness, knowledge and understanding of the diverse range of communities in the United Kingdom and globally.
- Improve mechanisms for helping parents support their children's learning at home.

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

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. By the time pupils' leave at the end of Year 4, their attainment is above average in writing and mathematics and high in reading. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well by skilled teaching assistants and also make good progress.

Pupils are proud of their school, thoroughly enjoy their learning and are very attentive in lessons. They say that instances of bullying are extremely rare and they are confident that teachers will deal with them well if necessary. Pupils say that one of the advantages of attending a small school is that everyone knows and looks after each other very well. Pupils' awareness of helping others in the community is heightened by activities such as raising money for charities, joint activities with the church and improving the environment in the local area. Pupils are enthusiastic to express their opinions through class discussion and assemblies, and are keen to make their views known about how to improve the school. The school council is proud of its contribution to converting the outdoor playhouse to a quiet reading area. Pupils have good awareness of how to live a healthy lifestyle and have an excellent understanding of how to avoid dangers. Although pupils show a very high degree of tolerance and understanding for pupils of all ages in school and people in the local community, they have few first-hand experiences of the similarities and differences between their own culture and those of others.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful and caring, and help to provide a positive climate for learning. Constant reinforcing of good behaviour and work effectively raises pupils' self-esteem. Although teachers' lesson plans detail the activities pupils are to undertake, they often do not show what pupils are expected to learn during the lesson. Consequently, in many lessons, although the activities provide good learning opportunities for the pupils, they are not focused enough on the detail of pupils' learning to ensure that the pupils make even better progress.

The curriculum does not provide a clear progression of skills and knowledge in all subjects, but it is enriched very well through visits and visitors, and links with the local community. Although the school lacks a hall and large field, physical education is taught at the parish hall and swimming at the local leisure centre.

The school pays excellent attention to all aspects of the care, guidance and support of pupils. Pupils are known very well as individuals by all members of staff. They are given many opportunities to discuss their feelings and to be aware that others may have different views and beliefs which must be respected. During the inspection, parents of pupils with learning or emotional difficulties spoke very highly about the excellent support they had received from the school working with external agencies. One parent said, 'The lessons seem to be prepared by teachers who know each child well so that the work matches their abilities'. Good induction arrangements when pupils first enter

¹ 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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the Early Years Foundation Stage, and strong links with local middle school help pupils quickly settle into their new communities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's vision for the school has been instrumental in creating an ambitious and hard-working team. Staff and governors work closely together and all share a strong sense of pride in the school. All are committed to sustaining the improvements already underway, with a strong focus on improving practice and provision at every opportunity. Parents' and carers' views are canvassed and valued. Almost all parents and carers expressed a high degree of confidence in the school leadership and were very happy with their child's experiences at school. Although the inspection found that the information provided for parents is informative and helpful, the school is currently developing mechanisms to enable parents to play a greater role in supporting their children's learning at home. The outstanding level of support and guidance given to all pupils, especially those experiencing learning or emotional difficulties, shows the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school provides regular opportunities for pupils to participate in the local community and also has links with a community in Gambia. However, the school is aware that the links with the communities outside of the local area and globally could be developed further. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures met requirements. Staff have received relevant training and know how to deal with issues involving child protection.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although children's individual skills on entry vary considerably, overall they are broadly typical for children of that age. They make good progress and by the time they enter into Year 1, their skills in literacy and numeracy are above average. The caring ethos and the good induction procedures help children feel safe, settle very quickly and become curious, independent learners. Pupils interact well with each other and behave exceptionally well. They thoroughly enjoy the exciting range of activities provided across all areas of learning. Children are able to engage in collaborative play and most have a good understanding of how to share and take turns. The quality of teaching is good and teachers use assessment information well to plan activities across all areas. The curriculum provides a good balance between focused teacher-led activities and those which children choose for themselves. Effective teamwork ensures that children's learning and development are well managed. Children's progress is tracked well and those who are experiencing difficulties are identified early and support given. The school is aware that the design of the buildings and lack of a sheltered area limits the effectiveness with which the outdoor provision is used to promote children's physical development and exploration of the world around them.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire or who spoke to the inspectors were very positive about the school. Parents commented how much their children enjoy coming to school and how the caring ethos of the school helps their children feel safe and secure. Although the number of negative comments made on the questionnaires was very low, a few parents expressed concerns which were mainly

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about communication issues between home and school. The inspection evidence shows that the school employs several systems to communicate with parents, has a genuine desire to know the views of all parents and is willing to respond where possible. The school is currently developing mechanisms which will allow even better communication between home and school, aimed particularly at helping parents to be more involved with their children's learning at home.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crowle CofE First 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 69 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	75	10	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	83	7	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	30	23	57	5	13	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	30	23	57	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	52	14	35	5	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	42	18	45	5	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	47	19	47	0	0	0	0
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)	21	52	14	35	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	47	16	40	5	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	38	21	52	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	40	17	42	6	15	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	55	13	32	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	67	12	30	1	3	0	0

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crowle CofE First School, Worcester WR7 4AT

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a pleasant experience. We enjoyed meeting with you, visiting your lessons and hearing what you thought about the school. We were pleased to find that you know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe. We were very impressed by the sensible way you behave around school, and we liked the way you play happily together and work hard in lessons. You were all very polite to us and very well-mannered. Well done!

You go to a good school where everyone cares for you extremely well. You make a good start to your learning in the Reception class and then continue to make good progress through the rest of the school. The teachers are very kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best. Your attendance is outstanding. You obviously enjoy coming to school very much and your parents do a good job getting you to school regularly and on time.

To help the school become even better, I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- make sure that teachers plan very carefully those small steps which help you learn well so that you know exactly what you need to learn in each lesson
- make sure that the teachers' marking and your targets for improvement help you improve your work even more and understand how much progress you are making
- help you to learn more about different religions and how people live in different parts of the world
- help your parents support your learning at home.

You can help too by continuing to work hard.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Her Majesty's Inspector

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