

Crockenhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118254
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339174
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Waller
Headteacher	Susan Norwell
Date of previous school inspection	0 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors and staff, and spoke to pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at samples of pupils' work, the school's data, its management and curriculum documentation, teachers' planning and the responses to 81 questionnaires returned by parents.

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

- achievement in Key Stage 1, and of more able pupils in both key stages
- the use of assessment data by teachers to ensure all pupils make the best progress they can
- strengths in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, identifying areas for improvement and working sharply to address them.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one Reception class. Most pupils are of White British heritage and only a few speak English as an additional language. About one fifth of pupils have special educational needs and/or difficulties. This is above average but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is lower than average. The needs of these pupils mostly relate to moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social needs. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The school has just embarked on a building project to extend and modernise the main school building. The school holds the Eco-Schools Bronze 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

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are taught well and grow in confidence because they enjoy learning. The school is a happy, harmonious community in which all pupils are valued. As a result of a well-planned curriculum and a wide range of interesting activities, pupils achieve well in their time at the school. They have an excellent awareness of keeping themselves healthy and safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although their awareness of cultural diversity is not quite as strong as the other elements. As a result, the school is planning to extend still further pupils' cultural development by finding more opportunities for them to interact with pupils of other cultural heritages. The school is at the heart of Crockenhill village and pupils make a good contribution to their school and the local community it serves. Parents value the quality of their children's school experience and one wrote: 'My child loves coming to school and has made very good progress throughout the years she has been there and continues to enjoy school, learning and socialising.'

Children join Reception with a wide range of skills and abilities and make good progress so by the time they leave Year 6, standards are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Standards in literacy at the end of Years 2 and 6 have risen rapidly and there is a similar drive to raise achievement in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress from their starting points because their needs are carefully assessed and they receive good support from well-trained staff. Less positive is the attainment of higher-attaining pupils because there is an inconsistent approach to planning work that stretches them and encourages them to make better progress.

The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported by a united team of enthusiastic staff who share a determination to drive the school forward and raise achievement further. Governors work in close partnership with the school and carefully monitor and evaluate all areas of their responsibility. The new initiatives to improve the achievement of pupils in literacy are showing clear signs of success and new strategies are in place to give the same focus to mathematics and science. Strategic planning of future developments is good. However, plans require refinement to ensure there are clear measurable outcomes for planned actions in terms of improvement in progress and the standards pupils attain. Leaders and managers are far from complacent and the school provides good value for money. Self-evaluation procedures are robust. Good progress has been made in addressing issues from the last inspection and all staff are clear about how the school can be improved. The effective and ambitious drive of leaders and managers ensures the school has good capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure greater consistency among teachers in planning lessons that provide challenge for pupils of higher ability by sharing existing good practice.
- Make improvement planning more effective by clearly linking the intended outcomes of actions to measurable improvements in pupils' progress and attainment.
- Extend pupils' awareness of other cultures by providing more opportunities for them to meet and mix with pupils from different ethnic backgrounds by linking with schools in more culturally diverse areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In the majority of lessons seen, pupils made good progress because they were motivated by lively teaching which engaged their interest. They work with interest and enthusiasm, both in groups and independently. Paired work is particularly good and pupils love sharing ideas and reviewing their work. Pupils are confident to answer questions because they know their contributions will be valued.

The school's comprehensive tracking data confirm that all pupils make good progress in their time in the school and attainment is broadly average. The picture has been uneven in Key Stage 1 until recently because the school is emerging from a period of staffing difficulties in Years 1 and 2. The decline in standards in Key Stage 1 has been reversed in reading and writing and standards are now securely average. Standards in mathematics are average and current initiatives in the school are directed at improving attainment in this subject to match that reached in literacy. This acceleration of progress in literacy had been helped by effective teaching and the good use of assessment so that nearly all pupils achieve well. At the end of Year 6, standards have been improving gradually and are broadly average in mathematics and science. Standards in English are above average because pupils make good progress as a result of challenging targets which have been set to good effect. However, the standards attained by more able pupils are not as high as they should be and the school acknowledges that further work remains to be done in this area. In some lessons, teachers use the knowledge they have of the pupils' progress to plan tasks that ensure appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities, especially those who find learning easier. However, this is not yet consistent throughout the school because existing good practice is not yet effectively shared.

A good feature of the school is the kindness pupils show to each other and the affection they have for their school. One pupil said: 'Everyone is kind and helpful. This is the best school ever.' Their good attendance is a testament to their enjoyment of all that the school provides. Pupils behave well, mix happily at playtime and lunchtime and feel they have an important part to play in their school. Good opportunities are provided for them to expand their citizenship skills and business awareness through charity initiatives, a link with a local organic food wholesaler and their involvement in the design of their new school playground, including selecting resources. The good progress pupils make, their

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love of learning and respect for those around them equips them well for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The inspection confirmed the school's evaluation that teaching is good. Assessment information is used to monitor the progress pupils make and each pupil is known well to staff. Relationships are positive and behaviour is well managed so that lessons are enjoyable, purposeful and engage pupils' interest well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and so explain new concepts clearly and provide a range of examples to support new ideas. Literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) are interwoven into lessons, especially in topic work, so extending the interest shown by pupils. In Year 4, for example, the work done by the class on Tudor stories was linked well to developing a play script as part of their literacy work.

Pupils are clear about what they are to learn in lessons. They are encouraged to evaluate how well they have understood their work and to identify those areas about which they are not sure, as well as what they know and understand. Pupils are also

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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closely involved in setting their own targets in literacy and numeracy to help them identify what they need to do next to improve the progress they are making. Teachers work in close and effective partnership with teaching assistants, who provide good support for pupils requiring additional help with their work. The care of pupils is given high priority and, as a result, pupils readily seek help when they need it and know they will get a quick response from adults. Good attendance is encouraged and pupils are supported well as they move between year groups in the school, with taster days in their new class at the end of the summer term. Pupils also comment that they are helped to catch up with their work if they have been absent.

The curriculum provides a broad range of learning experiences which enable pupils to explore their interests and make good progress in their learning. An especially good feature is the development of the creative curriculum, with the result that all pupils have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. One parent wrote: 'A lovely school and many opportunities. Swimming lessons for all children in their school career and the opportunity for all children to play a musical instrument. Fantastic!' Initiatives such as booster classes in mathematics and scientific investigations using ICT skills in science are showing early signs of raising standards in these subjects, following the successful drive to improve standards in literacy. The Activemark award reflects both the good provision for physical exercise in lessons and after-school clubs, and pupils' excellent awareness of the elements that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. A good range of visits and visitors extend learning well beyond the classroom. A local farmer, for example, came to assembly to talk about work on his farm and responded to very perceptive questions from pupils of all ages.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clear leadership which has united all staff in a shared vision for the school. An ambitious educational direction has been set, based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development and a clear allocation of responsibilities for senior leaders and managers. They have worked with determination to address the development points from the last inspection and are very clear about how further improvements can be made in the work of the school and the standards pupils attain. There has been some improvement in the attainment of higher-ability pupils in Year 6. More work remains to be done to ensure consistent good progress for

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higher ability pupils throughout the school. The initiatives identified to promote further improvements in standards are proving to be effective. Governors provide good support for the school. They question closely and, through careful monitoring, ensure that such areas as subject development plans and new initiatives remain fresh, relevant and pertinent to moving the school forward.

The school makes a good contribution to its local community. Links with other schools, agencies to augment the work of the school, local business enterprises and sports providers are good, and enhance the learning and care of pupils. Pupils' sense of responsibility for the world in which they live and learn is good and is reflected in their strong social and moral codes and the dignified and careful way they undertake all responsibilities. Parents are well informed about their children's progress. Staff are now extending their current reporting cycle with a more regular record of pupils' progress. The school meets safeguarding requirements well and attention to the pupils' safety is clear in the careful arrangements made for the new building works on the school site. All pupils are known and valued as individuals by all staff. They are treated equally and with respect, and so show a sense of fairness and respect in their attitudes to each other. Pupils have a strong sense of responsibility for the world in which they live and a growing knowledge of their own community. Their developing awareness of life elsewhere in Britain and beyond enhances their understanding of their role as citizens.

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
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

In Reception, children settle quickly into their learning because they are well taught and

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staff show a high level of care. They mix well and learn to share, and show enjoyment in playing together. Resources are good and provide excitement and stimulation for children in their learning. For example, children were engaged in a range of activities relating to weighing a variety of different items, comparing weights and deciding on heavier and lighter objects. A small group had great fun in comparing a large pile of feathers in beautiful colours with such everyday objects as a tin of baked beans. There is a good balance of learning activities led by adults and those initiated by the children. These are fun, extend children's skills and abilities, and ensure that they thrive in their learning. Independence is fostered well so children learn to put on their own coats to go outside and tidy away toys at the end of activities.

Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that vary from year to year but are less strong in elements of language, literacy and numeracy. Good leadership ensures that staff work as an efficient and energetic team, providing a good range of learning activities across all six areas of learning for children, both in the classroom and in the outdoor learning area. Children achieve well so that by the time they enter Year 1, they are close to average in language and numeracy skills and above average in other areas of their learning, particularly their personal, social and emotional development. Some restriction exists in the use of the outdoor learning space in poor weather while the canopy to provide cover is awaited but staff manage this temporary difficulty well. Good links are developed between school and home, beginning with home visits. All staff monitor children's progress well and use this information to keep parents fully involved in their child's development.

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

Parents who returned questionnaires or spoke to inspectors are very happy with the school. They value the fact that their children love school and are well taught and safe. They feel the school is led and managed well and all staff have a strong commitment to caring for pupils and developing their potential. One parent wrote: 'My child feels safe with all the staff and trusts them hugely. I feel this is because of the strong cohesion and cooperation between all the staff and the individual attention that each child receives.' Inspectors fully endorse these views. A very few parents were concerned about how the school manages unacceptable behaviour and the progress their child was making. Inspection evidence confirmed that pupils make good progress, including those

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with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Behaviour throughout the school is good and any incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with quickly and fairly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crockenhill 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	81	14	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	70	23	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	53	35	43	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	57	31	39	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	69	24	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	56	33	41	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	62	29	36	1	1	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)	44	54	34	42	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	58	29	36	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	57	31	38	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	58	27	33	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	58	72	20	25	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	75	18	22	1	1	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.



26 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crockenhill Primary School, Swanley, BR8 8JG

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so helpful and polite. We really enjoyed our visit. You are very excited about your new school building and several of you showed us the diggers at work on the site next to your playground. We were particularly impressed with how much you know about being healthy and keeping safe. You told us how much you like your school and that you enjoy your lessons because they are interesting and fun. We agree with you that you go to a good school where there are lots of activities and learning is enjoyable.

Your teachers encourage you to work hard and make good progress in lessons. You all get on well together and are well cared for. You make a good contribution to your school and the local community. The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to make your school a happy and successful place in which to learn. We have asked them to do three things to make your school even better. These are to:

- make sure that your teachers plan activities in your lessons that really stretch you, so that you do as well as you possibly can, especially those of you who find learning easier
- look carefully at the plans the headteacher, senior staff and governors make for improving your school so that it is clear what improvements they expect, especially in the standards you reach
- provide all of you with more chances to meet and work with children from different ethnic backgrounds so that you have an even better understanding of the cultures within Britain today.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best in all your lessons. It was a great privilege to visit Crockenhill and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Norma Ball

Lead inspector

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