

Croxton Kerrial Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120126
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	339605
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pamela Graham
Headteacher	Amanda Woodland
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors spent the vast majority of their time looking at learning. They observed all teachers and visited eight lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at: the school improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, curriculum planning documents, attendance figures, evidence of lesson observations and information from the questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 45 parents and carers.

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

- whether pupils' attainment in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 is high enough
- the quality of self-evaluation and how well the leaders tackle weaknesses in pupils' achievements
- the progress of pupils from the end of Reception to the end of Year 2.

Information about the school

This is a very small school that serves five local villages. It was reorganised in September 2008 to take pupils up to Year 6. All pupils come from White British backgrounds, and few are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most have reading and language difficulties. With such small numbers, these proportions change significantly from year to year. The school has gained the Healthy Schools, Heartstart 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

This is a good school, held in high regard by the local community. Parents and carers speak highly of the outstanding care, guidance and support that make their children feel extremely safe and valued. Pupils attend regularly, behave impeccably and appreciate the extra help they get in such a small school. One pupil echoed the views of many when saying, 'I love my school! Nothing is perfect, but this school comes close.'

Pupils achieve well. At Key Stage 1, teachers build well on children's good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, by Year 2, attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This good progress continues throughout Key Stage 2 so that attainment by Year 6 is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Girls do particularly well, and their attainments are higher than boys in the large majority of classes. This was also the case in the latest national tests.

Pupils think highly of their teachers who they describe as, 'friendly', 'caring' and 'always there to help you if you are stuck'. Teachers are really skilled at making learning fun so that pupils learn quickly. They use their detailed knowledge of pupils to provide work that is challenging but achievable. However, they do not always provide boys with sufficient opportunities to work independently and solve problems that would help them attain higher standards. Teachers' marking is helpful to pupils and shows them clearly how they can improve their work.

The curriculum is planned well to provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. For example, they write eloquently about Van Gogh's paintings in art and design, and produce excellent line graphs in science to show the times of the sun rising and setting. The topics in the curriculum particularly meet the needs of girls, and the school is rightly starting to introduce more activities to stimulate boys' imagination.

The good leadership and management and excellent partnerships with parents are key reasons for the school's success. The headteacher is highly respected by all members of the school community for her high expectations and unwavering support of pupils and staff. The leaders collect extensive data on the progress of all groups of pupils and this gives them an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the school's improvement plan does not focus sharply enough on strategies to rectify any weaknesses found in order to make the best use of this information. The school provides good value for money and has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are higher, assessment systems have been refined and weaknesses in science have been rectified. This, together with the way the school has maintained its many strengths, shows that it is well set to improve further.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that boys make faster progress by:
 - including more topics in the curriculum that make the most of their enthusiasm
 - giving them more opportunities to work independently at challenging tasks.
- Make better use of the school improvement plan to raise standards further by:
 - ensuring that the plan has clear strategies to rectify any weaknesses in pupils' attainment
 - including ways of measuring the success of these strategies.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress from their starting points. In Key Stage 1, they learn quickly in lessons and show great enjoyment of school. They read confidently, and take great care with their writing. In mathematics, they develop a good feel for number and learn to calculate quickly in their heads. They persevere well when set challenges and are rightly proud of their good achievements. In Key Stage 2, they continue to do well, and progress in all classes is good. By Year 6, pupils are starting to take responsibility for their own learning and know clearly what they need to do to move to the next levels. Their good progress in English and mathematics shows in the way they read with expression, write poignant stories and think of many different ways to do complex mathematical calculations. In science, progress is faster than was seen in the previous inspection because pupils are far more adept at investigational work.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those with reading and language difficulties, make good progress. They are supported well in class by teachers and skilled teaching assistants, and are delighted when they are able to answer questions in class discussions.

Pupils enjoy learning, develop an excellent sense of right and wrong and grow into mature individuals. Their good awareness of how to live healthy lives is evident in the way they talk knowledgeably about the best foods to eat and how regular exercise strengthens the heart. This has been recognised by the Healthy Schools, Heartstart and Activemark awards. Pupils' economic well-being is well provided for because of their good progress, strong sense of teamwork and enthusiastic involvement in enterprises that raise funds for the school. They take responsibility for their community well, and enjoy helping improve their school as members of the school council and eco committee. Their spiritual development is remarkable, as can be seen by the way they think so deeply about issues such as the horrors of war and the power of prayer when you are afraid for yourself or someone close to you.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The consistently good teaching means that pupils learn quickly in all classes. A strength of the teaching is the way teachers make the learning expected clear at the start and refer back to it during the lesson. This helps both pupils and teachers assess how well they are learning. Teachers' expectations are high, and they make a point of valuing all pupils' contributions. Teachers are skilled at using the interactive whiteboards, and these do much to help pupils to master skills such as making symmetrical shapes or understanding how a 270 degree angle equals three right angles. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately, and use the information well to plan further work.

The curriculum meets the needs of the different abilities and ages in the classes well. The good provision for literacy and numeracy, and the interesting way the work is planned, explains why pupils do so well in these areas and enjoy them so much. The introduction of French has been a great success, and pupils from Reception onwards are proud to show off their new skills. A wide range of visits and visitors and an excellent number of popular clubs after school enrich the curriculum.

Parents and carers say how much they appreciate the excellent 'family atmosphere' that makes their children want to come to school every day. Adults know the pupils very well, and are quick to help those who are unwell or sad. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from sensitive support and flourish as a result. The systems for rewarding pupils for their good behaviour and achievement are very effective because they understand them well and believe they are applied fairly. Pupils who are new to the school or moving on to the next one benefit from excellent guidance on what to expect.

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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 has created a team of staff committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils and banishing any form of discrimination. She leads well, not only in striving for high academic standards, but also in ensuring that pupils develop as mature, caring individuals. Other leaders make good contributions to school improvement in their many areas of responsibility. The leaders make good use of the systems to track pupils' progress to evaluate the school's effectiveness, but recognise the need to set clearer targets to rectify weaknesses, for example in boys' attainment. The leaders make regular evaluations of teachers' work and provide helpful guidance on how to improve their teaching. The school promotes community cohesion well by providing pupils with many opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures in the local area and further afield. The links with a school in Namibia are particularly fruitful, and give pupils a real understanding of life in that country. The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is not afraid to hold the leaders to account in order to raise standards. Governors work effectively to ensure that safeguarding systems are robust and reviewed regularly.

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	1
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

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

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2
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Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is good. Children make good progress in all areas, and attain particularly well in speaking, reading and mathematical calculation. Girls tend to do better than boys because they are better at persevering with tasks even when they are difficult.

The teaching and learning are consistently good. All adults are successful in helping children feel safe and happy in school. The bright classrooms are full of exciting things to stimulate children's imagination. Children move confidently from one activity to another and, while adults intervene when necessary, they are given many opportunities to learn independently.

Staff observe children's learning and development carefully, and make detailed assessments of their achievements. The curriculum provides good opportunities for children to develop their skills outside. For example, one group built well on their learning in the classroom by moving outside to explore dinosaur sounds using musical instruments. Children benefit from working with older pupils in the class, and try hard to match their skills in reading and number lessons.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They soon learn the rules and behave very well. They learn how to look after their clothes and the importance of washing their hands. The sensitive encouragement and guidance they receive make them look forward to school every day. The leaders evaluate the provision well, and have good plans to improve it.

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 and carers' views are extremely positive, and they feel that the school gives children a good start to their education. They are particularly appreciative of the way all staff know and care for their children so well. They value the good teaching, and the excellent quality of communication between home and school concerning their children's progress. They appreciate the strong leadership and management and the way the school keeps improving. Parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Croxton Kerrial Church of England 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 71 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	76	10	22	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	37	82	6	13	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	69	11	24	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	64	12	27	0	0	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	34	76	9	20	0	0	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	73	9	20	0	0	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	73	11	25	0	0	1	2
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)	29	64	14	31	0	0	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	67	11	24	1	2	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	53	16	36	2	4	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	62	11	24	1	2	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	32	71	11	24	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	69	12	27	1	2	1	2

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.



8 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Croxton Kerrial Church of England Primary School, Grantham, NG32 1QR

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work hard in lessons and play so happily in the playground. You think yours is a good school, and you are right.

This is what we found out about your school.

You try hard in lessons and make good progress.

You behave extremely well and make good friends.

You know a lot about how to live healthy lives and stay safe.

You think deeply about people in the world who are poor or sad.

Your leaders do a good job, and help the school to keep improving.

The activities provided for you are interesting, and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school that teach you important skills in things like music and sport.

Your teachers make learning fun and help you when you find things difficult.

All staff at the school do everything they can to keep you safe.

To make your school even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- make sure that the boys do as well as the girls - you boys can help by always trying your hardest in lessons and trying to be the first to put your hands up
- have clearer targets in the plan to improve the school so you all make the best possible progress.

Good luck for the future and make sure you come to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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