

Cragside CofE Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134473
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	344708
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Farrow HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	334
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Allan Heslop
Headteacher	Mrs Janice Craven
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors, one of whom was present for the first day. Inspectors observed 15 teachers and conducted 22 lesson observations. They also visited a number of other lessons for shorter periods. The inspectors had meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle managers, the governing body's standards committee, a local authority representative, groups of children and a group of parents. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's performance and assessment data, safeguarding and other key policies, improvement plans and progress reports on the key issues for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. They also analysed the results of the school's recent parents' and carers', and pupils' questionnaires.

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

- current standards and progress of pupils
- the impact of leadership and management on actions for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection
- the impact of improvements made to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Cragside is a much larger than average primary school. A lower than average proportion of pupils is known to be entitled to a free school meal. Virtually all pupils are of White British Heritage and there are more boys than girls in most classes. An average proportion of pupils are deemed to have special educational needs and/or disabilities, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above that found nationally. The school was subject to special measures following the last inspection in November 2008. In April 2009, the school moved into new premises. A new headteacher was appointed at the same time, after being appointed as temporary headteacher the previous term. A private Early Years and Childcare setting operates from a building adjoining the school. The setting will receive a separate inspection and was not inspected at this time.

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

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. When Cragside was inspected in November 2008, pupils' attainment was inadequate, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and pupils' progress from their starting points was also inadequate. Since then, improvement has been rapid. This is due to the relentless and successful focus of leaders, middle managers and staff, in improving pupils' attainment and progress, the quality of teaching, assessment and leadership. As a result, attainment is rising strongly and these other aspects are now good. Although the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been judged satisfactory, this is in the context of significant weaknesses in assessment and provision identified by the previous inspection in November 2008. From broadly average starting points children now make satisfactory and improving gains in their learning. Good actions have been taken to improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but more still needs to be done in ensuring that staff have consistently high expectations of what children can achieve, in providing a better balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities and in enriching further the significantly improved outdoor areas through the addition of large wheeled toys.

Standards are rising and are above average in Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2 attaining Level 4 in their summer 2009 national tests was above average in English and average in mathematics. However, below-average proportions attained higher levels, especially in science. Although similar to that found nationally, boys' attainment was not as good as girls'. Since then, the picture of attainment has improved further. Current detailed assessment information and evidence from the inspection, show that more pupils are now attaining highly, the gap in the performance of boys and girls is narrowing well, and, given their starting points, pupils are making good progress overall in their learning. Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or difficulties also make good progress due to the very effective interventions and actions taken to support and care for them. These include the impact of good and successful partnerships with outside agencies. The school is aware that progress is not as rapid in science; the focus has, by necessity, been on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders have clear plans to broaden the satisfactory curriculum, including provision for science, to make it more creative, interesting and engaging for pupils.

The quality of teaching is good overall; some is outstanding and teaching is never less than satisfactory. The school knows it needs to continue its drive to eradicate the remaining inconsistencies so that all teaching is as good as the best. The quality of care,

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guidance and support provided by staff is good. A caring and nurturing atmosphere permeates the school. This helps to ensure pupils feel safe and well supported, especially in times of need, and to make the most of their time here. It also promotes their good behaviour, strong personal qualities and good spiritual, social and moral development.

Upon her arrival, the headteacher quickly galvanised staff and governors in the shared quest for improvement. Good progress has been made against all five issues identified at the time of the last inspection. Morale is high, as evidenced in teachers' enthusiasm and the high quality relationships between pupils and staff and amongst the staff themselves. The headteacher, together with the dynamic deputy headteacher and empowered middle managers, has introduced a rigorous three-weekly monitoring and evaluation cycle. This has assured a tenacious, shared and successful focus on what is working well and what needs to get better. As a result, school self-evaluation is accurate and guides the sharply focused school improvement plan that is also monitored regularly. Governance has improved and is now satisfactory, with strengths in the way that the governing body's standards committee has worked with leaders to challenge and support improvement. The school has moved forward swiftly over the past year and its dependence on the good, intensive support from the local authority has diminished to a normal entitlement. As a result of these improvements, value for money is good and the school has good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - ensuring a better balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities
 - providing a higher level of challenge through questioning and guidance to make sure that all children can achieve their best
 - providing access to large wheeled toys.
- Raise attainment further in subjects other than English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring the good assessment information teachers have is used to plan lessons that are matched to pupils' individual needs
 - ensuring all teaching is as good as the best
 - developing the curriculum to ensure it is interesting and engaging across a wider range of subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Inspection evidence from lesson observations, the school's regular and accurate assessment information about pupils' progress and its evaluations of teaching, show that pupils are now making at least satisfactory and often good progress in lessons. This is helping to tackle the history of underachievement and ensuring that pupils' attainment is improving to be at least in line with that expected for their age. There has been good

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improvement in pupils' progress in mathematics, particularly for boys, and it now equals that in English. The special educational needs coordinator uses detailed tracking data about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make sure staff identify exactly what is needed to help them make good progress, whether in lessons or in small group interventions. Consequently, they too make good progress in lessons and in their learning. Pupils' improving and now average attendance, good behaviour and attitudes to learning are testimony to their increasing enjoyment of school. Parents and carers and pupils' questionnaire responses confirm this and also report that pupils are safe. Pupils spoken to say they feel very safe and confident that there is always someone there to help them when they have a problem. While they say there is occasional bullying, they also say that once an adult is informed, it is quickly tackled. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and the good range of sporting activities available after school is valued by them. The promotion of pupils' emotional well-being is strong, helping to build their confidence, self-esteem and good social skills. Pupils say they are proud to belong to their new school and local community and their contribution to both is satisfactory. There are good links with their local church and greater involvement in the local church community. Pupils' improving basic skills, personal qualities, team working and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, along with effective arrangements for moving into secondary school, help to make sure they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in 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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

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 extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3 3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships between pupils and staff and pupils' positive attitudes to learning typify all lessons. In good and outstanding lessons, teachers make sure their teaching is well-planned to meet pupils' individual needs, including those of higher ability. Pupils respond to teachers' questioning articulately, and with confidence. They work equally well on their own, in pairs or in groups, and they are successfully involved in evaluating their own learning and that of their peers. Such attributes and good teaching skills ensure pupils make good progress. In the few satisfactory lessons, although planning is detailed, it is not always pitched precisely enough to the different abilities of pupils in class; consequently, in these classes pupils' progress is no better than satisfactory. Assessment information, which is now of good quality, generally enables staff to track pupils' progress regularly, plan their future learning needs and quickly identify any areas of underachievement. This helps managers' pin-point exactly the individual interventions and support needed to help pupils catch up. Consistently good quality marking and feedback to pupils help them to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. The satisfactory curriculum is enriched through good use of ICT and the range of extra-curricular activities available. Pupils say these add to their enjoyment of school. Staff know their pupils well and care for them very effectively. Lunchtimes are well supervised and pupils enjoy playing games and taking part in the clubs available. They are confident that there is always an adult around in whom they can confide when they are troubled or just want someone to talk to. Some particularly appreciate the prayer garden that has been developed to provide space to think and reflect.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2 2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Good efforts are made to include all pupils fully in the life of the school and to provide them with equal opportunity to learn and develop as individuals. This can be seen in the

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way in which the school monitors the achievement of individuals and groups such as vulnerable pupils, and takes any action needed to make sure they are making similar progress to their peers. Robust safeguarding procedures are regularly reviewed and meet statutory requirements. The school continually strives to improve partnerships with parents and carers and these are now good. Their views have recently been canvassed and virtually all are happy with the education and care provided. Weekly informative newsletters are provided and parents and carers spoken to by inspectors appreciate these, as well as the tangible improvement in the school and in communications between home and school. Strong partnership working with a wide range of agencies successfully supports pupils' well-being, particularly for vulnerable children and their families in times of need. Good partnership with the local authority provided helpful support to promote pupils' learning in the beginning of the school's journey to improvement, and the local authority has sensibly stepped back as the school has built its own capacity and strengths.

Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. A strong sense of community pervades the school and some innovative work is taking place to help pupils understand notions of identity and diversity. The school is aware that pupils have more limited understanding of the diversity in other parts of the United Kingdom and plans are well underway to improve this through developments in the curriculum and by linking with two schools of different contexts, as well as a school abroad.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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Through an improving curriculum, better teaching, much improved resources and accommodation, standards are beginning to rise in all areas of learning. Although writing skills are comparatively weaker, the school is introducing a new strategy to promote independent writing to tackle this. Children's personal development is good; they behave well and interact with one another sensibly and productively. They are keen to learn, listen attentively in whole-class sessions and apply themselves happily to the range of activities available. Although much improved from the time of the last inspection, the balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated learning is not yet right and staff sometimes miss opportunities to challenge and stretch children's learning in their chosen activities. That said, new assessment and planning systems are good and provide staff with clear information to plan for children's next steps. Welfare and safeguarding arrangements are good and meet requirements well. Children understand how to be safe, for example when moving around the school and handling equipment. Leadership is good because leaders have done well to improve provision and outcomes in such a short space of time. Effective support from the local authority has contributed to improvements alongside the headteacher's drive to get things right. Significant investment has been made to increase the range and quality of equipment. This includes partnership with the private setting to develop large climbing equipment in a shared area. Children now access a wide range of activities indoors and out. Opportunities to play on large wheeled equipment are more limited.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The section 8 monitoring visit was converted to a section 5 inspection; consequently, parents and carers did not receive Ofsted questionnaires. However, the school's 101 recently completed parents' and carers' questionnaires have been considered. Outcomes from these were fed back to parents and carers in a newsletter, identifying what was good and the actions the school will take to improve further. Some parents and carers also met with inspectors, providing their views on improvements made since the time of the last inspection, the strengths of the school and what needs to improve. Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors and virtually all of those who responded to the school's questionnaire are full of praise for the quality of care, leadership and education provided. Parents and carers spoken to reported very good improvements since the last inspection. They mentioned, for example, improvements in leadership, communications,

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their children's learning and progress, and in developing their understanding of how to help their child's learning. When asked what the school could do better, one parent's view echoed that of many when she said, 'Keep on doing what they are already doing and not slip back'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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.



12 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cragside Church of England Primary School, Northumberland, NE23 6LN

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school. A special thanks to those of you who spoke to us. It was good to hear from some of you how much better you think the school is and how much you appreciate the space and beautifully maintained accommodation you now work and play in. It is also good to see that you are attending more regularly. We believe the school has made good progress since being placed in special measures following the last inspection in November 2008. As a result, the school is no longer a cause for concern and we have judged the school to be good overall. As a result of the good actions taken by the headteacher and staff, the standards you attain have improved. Aspects that we have judged to be good include:

- the quality of teaching overall and the progress you are making in lessons
- your behaviour and the relationships between teachers and yourselves, and your relationships with each other
- your personal, social, emotional, spiritual, moral and cultural development
- the actions the school takes to keep you safe
- the care, guidance and support you receive from all adults and the way they work hard to make sure you are all included equally into the life of the school
- the leadership and management of your headteacher, deputy headteacher, managers and staff in making the required improvements to the school.

The headteacher, governors and staff are constantly striving to improve the school. We have asked them to make sure all teaching in school is as good as the best and to develop the curriculum to make it more interesting and engaging for you. We have also asked them to make sure children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are always challenged to do their best and to provide more equipment that lets them travel about on wheels, such as large bikes.

On behalf of the team, I extend my best wishes to you all during your remaining time in school and for your eventual move into secondary school. You can help to improve your school further by coming to school regularly and maintaining your very positive attitudes and good behaviour.

Yours sincerely,
Margaret Farrow
Her Majesty's Inspector

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