

Crossacres Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105410
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	377239
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Vanessa MacDonald

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Leach
Headteacher	Suzanne Blay
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons and observed 16 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation that included the school development plan, data relating to pupils' progress and attainment, safeguarding policies, records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching and learning and reports written by the School Improvement Partner. The inspectors also analysed 64 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the school ensures that all pupils reach their potential, particularly boys and more-able pupils.
- How effectively the school ensures that teaching is engaging and stimulating and helps all pupils to make progress.
- Whether the curriculum is varied and relevant and meets the needs and interests of all pupils.
- To what extent leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are involved in evaluating the school's performance and planning for improvement.

Information about the school

Crossacres is larger than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average; a minority of them are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs is lower than the national average. The school has gained Healthy School silver status, Activemark silver, Artsmark silver, ICT mark, ECO schools, Sing Up gold and the International Schools Award. The breakfast club is run by the school and was part of the inspection. The on-site, privately run, after-school club and holiday provision is inspected separately.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. The senior leaders, managers and governors provide outstanding direction for the school, with an unrelenting focus by all on continued improvement. Leadership responsibilities are distributed effectively and teamwork is strong, resulting in a united, determined and clear vision about what can be achieved. High expectations are set and self-evaluation is rigorous, leading to secure plans for improvement which are sharply focused on raising achievement. Best practice in teaching is effectively shared and staff are constantly seeking out ways to make pupils' learning even more engaging and stimulating. The areas for development raised at the time of the last inspection have been dealt with very successfully. This, together with the school's outstanding personal outcomes, improving attainment and a determined drive to improve continually, demonstrates an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

The outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make an excellent start to their education. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are well below those expected for their age. Pupils reach average and improving levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. Learning and progress, including those for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are good and also improving. This is due to good teaching, some of which is outstanding and often innovative. Teaching is always engaging and provides opportunities for pupils to use and apply their basic skills in different subjects and real-life contexts. However, occasionally opportunities to challenge the more-able pupils to attain the higher standards they are capable of are missed. The outstanding curriculum is rich and varied. The importance of first-hand experiences is strongly embedded into the curriculum, including a residential visit. An impressive range of extra-curricular activities, such as netball, gardening and keep fit, is offered to pupils and promotes their personal development extremely well.

Attendance, though improving, remains average and the school is aware that more needs to be done to raise this further by continuing to work closely with parents and carers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is community cohesion, developed through a curriculum which promotes an excellent understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils say they feel extremely safe, their understanding of healthy living is outstanding and their contribution to the school and wider community is excellent. Care, guidance and support are also outstanding, reflecting the high levels of commitment and skill among the staff in ensuring pupils'

safety and well-being. Partnership working is outstanding and contributes strongly to pupils' learning and outstanding personal development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve progress further by:
 - ensuring that more-able pupils are consistently challenged in all lessons
 - working with parents and carers to continue to raise attendance

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils' achievement is good and improving and they enjoy school. In the vast majority of lessons learning is at least good and pupils are well engaged. Pupils acquire knowledge, develop a good understanding and learn and practise their skills well. They are keen to succeed and work at a good pace because they are clear about the expectations set for them. Learning is focused on giving pupils real-life contexts in which to work. In an outstanding Key Stage 2 lesson, for example, pupils were invited to be editors and reporters. They applied their skills very effectively and were challenged to refine their answers to continually improve their work. In some lessons opportunities are missed to challenge more-able pupils fully and this slows their progress.

The relentless actions of leaders at all levels have ensured that boys' attainment and progress have improved very well through the introduction of curriculum topics and well-planned activities which stimulate and capture their interests effectively. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals do consistently well because of the detailed monitoring and additional support they receive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants and through specifically tailored intervention programmes, ensuring their progress is good. The impact of rigorous monitoring and focused priorities has resulted in good improvements in the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6, most notably in the proportions attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics.

Behaviour is exemplary and systems to manage it are very well embedded across school. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive, ensuring lessons are productive. Pupils take a lead in encouraging others to adopt healthy lifestyles. They enjoy promoting active play and exercise through their roles as 'Play Pals'; they run the school tuck shop and have, for example, promoted healthy lunchboxes at a stall at a parents' and carers' evening. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the daily running of the school through the active school council, as prefects in the older classes and as monitors for a wide range of purposes across school. They are proactive in raising money to improve their environment, for example the astro-turf pitch, and also for different charities. Pupils take full advantage of the extensive range of sporting and cultural opportunities provided by the school. They have a very keen awareness and appreciation of the richness and diversity of the world, enhanced by visits to different places of worship. This is also reflected in the warm, friendly and cooperative atmosphere within the school where learning is highly valued. Pupils' very well-developed social skills, good use of their literacy, numeracy

and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across different subjects, improving attainment and attendance ensure good preparation for the future.

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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The school has an excellent support and training programme in place to improve the quality of teaching. Where teaching is at its best, work is very well matched to pupils' individual needs, ensuring they make at least good progress. This is based on thorough and detailed planning which takes account of each pupil's previous learning and ensures that all pupils are challenged, particularly more-able pupils. In other lessons there are some missed opportunities to ensure that more-able pupils are suitably challenged to ensure best possible progress. The warmth of the relationships contributes strongly to the positive and purposeful learning. The interactive whiteboard is used very effectively to involve and engage pupils and enhance their learning, often in innovative ways. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils' learning. Assessment and tracking systems are rigorous and give teachers a good understanding of pupils' progress and achievement. Pupils have clear targets for improvement, know them well and they are highly effective in shaping their learning. Marking is used consistently across school to help pupils understand how to improve their work.

The curriculum provides memorable experiences and rich opportunities for good-quality learning, which enable pupils to have a wide range of first-hand experiences. There are highly tailored programmes for a wide range of groups of pupils and a strong focus on engaging boys through curriculum topics, for example 'Emergency' and 'Superheroes', to enable them to attain and progress as well as girls. The school has been rigorous in designing the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils and is constantly reviewing this. The use of themes and topics is firmly embedded, with excellent opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in different subjects. Pupils have an opportunity to choose their own class topic twice a

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

year, often with a focus on other countries and cultures, which contributes significantly to pupils’ understanding of the diversity of the world.

The school’s commitment to the care of its pupils is reflected in how much pupils enjoy school, feel safe and develop both personally and academically. Carefully targeted support, as a result of rigorous analysis and rapid identification of need, ensures that all pupils who receive it are better able to make good progress. Work with other agencies is integral to the support given to pupils and families with a range of different needs. There are very effective transition arrangements for pupils joining and leaving the school which include transition units for Year 6 pupils, strong home-school links with parents of Reception children and well managed transition to Year 1. The school has undertaken a wide range of strategies to promote attendance and has a very strong and successful partnership with Manchester Airport to support this. This has led to marked improvements, especially in reducing the number of persistent absentees. The school recognises that it still has work to do in this area and is continuing to work with parents to further improve attendance for all pupils. The breakfast club provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their social skills through playing games and interacting with both adults and pupils of different ages, as well as providing them with a range of healthy breakfast choices.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school which is sharply focused on improving the outcomes for the pupils in its care. They are highly successful in sharing this vision with all staff and members of the governing body. As a result, morale is very high and belief in the school’s success permeates all levels of the school community. Self-evaluation and monitoring practices are highly developed and rigorous and contribute to very well-focused plans for driving further improvement. The changes implemented to address the identified differences in groups, most noticeably boys and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, have been highly successful. Leaders and managers at all levels are fully involved in the monitoring and review of their subjects and support the professional development of others with a positive impact. The promotion of equal opportunities is good, with any differences between groups of pupils narrowing, and there is no evidence of discrimination. The school’s focus is now on ensuring more-able pupils are always sufficiently challenged in order to raise attainment further.

The work of the school is very well supported by an active and experienced governing body. Members of the governing body are involved fully in the school’s self-evaluation and are actively involved in its daily life, each governor having specific links to classes. Governors are very well-informed and ask challenging questions of

the school’s leaders and managers to ensure that the school continues to improve the outcomes for its pupils.

Parents’ and carers’ views are sought and acted upon and the school communicates well with parents through regular newsletters, the school portal and parents’ evenings. Outstanding partnership work provides pupils with opportunities to experience the wider world through, for example, the Higher Futures for You programme. Links with a cluster of schools help to develop and promote good practice in a range of areas, most recently a new strategy for improving attainment in reading. The school has excellent links with other schools, both locally and globally, through its international work. The impact of these through the curriculum on pupils’ understanding of people from different backgrounds and other communities is outstanding. Safeguarding practices are excellent and are central to the school’s work, with specific examples in site safety, staff training and attention to health and safety evident in all daily lesson plans.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children’s starting points are well below expectations for their age, particularly in their communication and number skills. They make outstanding progress by the end of Reception. Children are happy and settled in the bright, stimulating environment which encourages them to be active, creative and confident learners. Relationships and behaviour are excellent and children have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. There is an excellent balance of adult- and child-led learning, with clear evidence of providing opportunities for children to learn through following their own interests. For instance, the Superheroes topic really grasps the attention of the children and, in particular, boys as they explore and write about what qualities are needed to be a Superhero. Strong emphasis on teaching letters and sounds sets the children on the road to developing early reading and writing skills successfully.

The curriculum is rich and imaginative and key workers constantly monitor and assess the progress in children’s learning. Teaching is outstanding because planning is based around children’s interests and focused on activities that provoke curiosity in

learning, challenging children to solve problems and promoting the development of the wider skills of organisation, persistence and perseverance. Adults effectively facilitate next steps in learning through comprehensive record keeping and observations. Links with parents are excellent and there are many opportunities for them to actively engage as partners in their children’s learning, for example through the ‘Share’ programme.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. There is a very strong sense of commitment and energy which is shared by all staff. Tracking and monitoring are rigorous so that planning for further improvements to provision is based on secure evidence and clear targets. This ensures children’s learning and development needs are met extremely well.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers responding to the questionnaire indicate a positive view about all aspects of the school’s work. Inspection findings support these positive views. A few parents and carers consider that the school does not inform them about their child’s progress or deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Through their extensive review of the school’s records, observations, and discussions with pupils and staff the inspectors found that the school has good procedures for informing parents about progress and efficient systems for managing behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Crossacres 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 413 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	75	15	23	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	51	80	10	16	3	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	67	17	27	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	66	19	30	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	67	21	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	63	23	36	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	61	23	36	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)	39	61	20	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	63	20	31	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	64	18	28	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	59	22	34	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	61	20	31	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	73	14	22	2	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



13 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Crossacres Primary School, Wythenshawe, M22 5AD

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the team and me when we inspected your school recently. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it.

Crossacres is an outstanding school. You get an excellent start to your learning in the Nursery and Reception classes and make excellent progress there as a result of the outstanding teaching and care you receive. The good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching in the main school and the excellent range of subjects and engaging lessons mean that you are making good and improving progress. Throughout the school all the adults who work with you know you very well and the school takes excellent care of you. You say you feel very safe in school; you have a very well-developed sense of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle and are highly involved in school and local community life. Well done!

Mrs Blay, the governing body and staff work very well together to make your school successful and I have asked them to help the school to improve further by:

- making sure that the work for those who learn quickly is always challenging enough and helps them make even better progress in order to improve standards further
- continuing to work with your parents and carers and think of ways to improve your attendance further.

Thank you again for making our visit such a lovely experience.

Yours sincerely

Vanessa MacDonald
Lead inspector

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