

Cranford Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121966
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	359133
Inspection dates	28–29 March 2011
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Coles
Headteacher	Denise Harris
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 12 lessons or parts of lessons and observed five teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, governors, the Chair of the Parents' Association and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including monitoring, evaluation and assessment records, policy documents, the school improvement plan, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. A wide range of documents and records were scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils, including a case study of a vulnerable pupil. Inspectors took into account the results of 51 parents', 44 pupils' and nine staff questionnaires.

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

- Whether the improvement seen in 2010 in the Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes is set to continue this year.
- Whether there is any difference between the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics and whether this is largely responsible for the differences in achievement, standards and performance trends.
- The impact of recent changes in leadership and management on provision and outcomes.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school, which is experiencing recent and rapid growth and is over subscribed. Most pupils come from outside the village and attend through parental choice. The number of pupils joining the school at times other than usual is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, while the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average. There has been a significant level of staff change since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools' status, Activemark and the Artsmark.

'Frolics' operates after school each day. This after-school care is the responsibility of the governing body.

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, which enables pupils to learn effectively and make good progress. There was a period of uncertainty following the previous inspection and standards fell sharply. With the arrival of the headteacher in 2009, a role that was made permanent in March 2010, there has been a significant rise in standards of attainment as a result of improvements to the quality of education.

Standards in English rose in 2010 to broadly average, but in mathematics, attainment was below. Teachers monitor attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of each term and records show that pupils in Year 6 have already attained levels above those nationally expected for their age in reading and writing. This continues the improvement seen last year in English. There has been a similar improvement in standards in mathematics, which are in line with age related expectations. However, attainment in mathematics is still falling behind that in English. Although pupils have secure numeracy knowledge and understanding, their skills in problem solving and understanding the language of mathematics are less well developed, particularly in lower Key Stage 2. In Year 5, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics shows a similar improvement and is above what is reasonably expected for their age. This improvement results from closer monitoring of pupil progress and improved teaching.

Not only is academic progress improving rapidly, but pupils' personal development carries a high priority. Staff are extremely caring about their pupils' well-being and consequently pupils feel valued and respond well to all the opportunities the school has to offer. They enjoy school very much and feel safe in the calm and well-ordered environment, where relationships between adults and pupils and pupils themselves are of a high quality. In fact, pupils said their friends would be the first people they would ask for help, closely followed by their teachers.

Since the arrival of the headteacher, there has been a renewed enthusiasm to move the school forward and to achieve a position where all pupils are able to realise their full potential. The significant progress made in school improvement is in no small way due to the exceptional commitment of the headteacher and her determination to move the school forward. Being a small school, the number of staff who can take on responsibility is few, and the scope is further reduced by changes in the teaching staff, both recent and some imminent. This has meant that the headteacher has taken on a heavy burden of responsibility in addition to a strategic role. This includes a two day teaching commitment each week. She has the full loyalty and support of all staff, but other leadership roles are currently informal and under review. As a result of the rapid recent improvements and the commitment of all staff, together with arrangements for a more established workforce, the school has a good capacity to secure further improvement

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to solve problems and apply their knowledge and understanding of numeracy
 - developing the language of mathematics.
- Reform the leadership structure to define clearly support for the headteacher in leading the school by:
 - reorganising subject leadership in the light of recent and imminent staff changes
 - create senior leadership role(s) to support a range of aspects of leadership, management and school administration.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start in the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for children of their age. However, a much greater than usual proportion of pupils join the school mid-year and mid key stage, many with additional needs. Children make good progress in the Reception Year and this continues through Key Stage 1 so that overall attainment by the end of Year 2 is now above the national average. It is well above in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is showing a similar trend of improvement and progress is good. As a result of accurately targeted support, both in small groups and on an individual basis, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similarly good progress. Their good progress is shown by the increasing number of these pupils who quickly achieve the skills to enable them to continue learning effectively without the need for continued intervention. The quality of pupils' learning is good and fully supports the trend of improvement.

Pupils at all ages are well behaved and engage enthusiastically in learning activities. They enjoy school, saying they find lessons interesting and feel that they are making good progress. Lessons usually progress at a brisk pace so pupils' interest is maintained. For example, Year 6 pupils showed high levels of engagement when producing imaginative writing stimulated by a fantasy scene from the film 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. They discussed their initial ideas, sharing thoughts with each other in a mature and sensible way, which highlighted their high level skills to articulate clearly their feelings. Pupils can be relied upon to work without direct supervision so that teachers and teaching assistants can remain focused on their teaching. Pupils work well collaboratively and older pupils show a very mature approach to group discussions, listening respectfully to what others have to say. Year 5 pupils showed maturity when discussing the features of different types of interviews. Their good speaking and listening skills and their consideration for other's views helped make this activity successful and pupils shared good quality scripts for interviewing children affected by the recent earthquake in Japan.

Pupils feel safe in school. They say there is very little aggressive behaviour and if ever this happens, it is always dealt with effectively and promptly. Pupils look after each other well. Playground buddies help keep the playgrounds safe and calm places and older pupils value the opportunities to look after younger children. Pupils engage in healthy living well. They choose healthy food at lunchtimes and take part in physical activity in lessons and

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many in the clubs that take place out of lesson time. They develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy in terms of avoiding the misuse of harmful substances.

Pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education. Current literacy skills are above age expectations and numeracy skills in line. Pupils' willingness to adapt to change and to embrace challenge is good and they show well-developed entrepreneurial skills: they are proactive in initiating charity work and produce action plans outlining how they intend to raise money, showing good enterprise skills in executing their plans. Pupils are active in supporting national and overseas charitable work, such as sponsoring a child in Tanzania. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider communities is good. The school council has a good level of influence over what happens in school. Even though their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, pupils' knowledge of the backgrounds of people from overseas living in the United Kingdom is more limited.

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	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	2

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching has improved and the large majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good, with a small minority being satisfactory. Teachers are fully aware of the different levels individual pupils are working at and they plan accordingly, matching work to need well. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and based on mutual respect. There is little need to manage behaviour because pupils are interested, but on the odd occasions when this is necessary, pupils respond

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well. Teachers are skilful at gaining pupils' interest by the way they use technology to introduce lessons and by making sure that pupils are actively involved for the majority of time. Pupils' work is marked up to date. Comments contain useful advice on how pupils can improve, especially in Years 5 and 6, where this is more detailed. In the lessons in which teaching is satisfactory, the pace is adequate and expectations of what pupils can do are not challenging enough. Consequently, the learning is satisfactory.

The school has recently reviewed the curriculum to provide well for pupils' academic progress and for their personal development. Well thought out links between subjects and a themed approach to learning ensure topics appeal to pupils' interests and provide them with the opportunity to learn and apply skills in a wide range of contexts. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those capable of more difficult work, enabling them to make equal progress to other pupils. During the building of the new hall, limitations to provision for physical education were minimised. Close partnership with the local secondary school enabled pupils access to the full range of activities and their full entitlement of two hours per week. Key Stage 2 pupils have swimming lessons at the local pool. A good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities are varied and include sports clubs and other opportunities such as chess, which appeal to different preferences. These add significantly to the quality of pupils' learning and the level of enjoyment they experience in school.

Staff are very caring and support children and their families well in difficult times. Advice and good quality guidance are systematically removing barriers to learning that pupils might experience. Typical of many views expressed was one sent in by a parent who wrote, 'I would like to commend my daughter's class teacher along with the headteacher for all the support and guidance my daughter and I have been given in a difficult time we have been through and still going through. They both have been fantastic.' After school care provides well for those pupils who attend, providing them with healthy snacks and a wide range of creative activities to occupy them purposefully.

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 has, in the short time in post, established strong teamwork among the staff. She leads by setting high expectations and by example. She has an impressive knowledge of all pupils and carefully tracks the progress of each individual. She uses this knowledge to hold teachers accountable for the progress of each pupil in their care through regular pupil progress reviews. This has had a positive impact on achievement and standards. Robust monitoring of teaching has also had a positive impact in eradicating

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any inadequate teaching there may have been in the past. Staff promote equality of opportunity for all pupils well and are effective in removing any barriers individuals might experience to their learning and in closing the gap in attainment in English and mathematics.

The governing body has also gone through significant change, with a new Chair and a number of new governors. They perform their duties satisfactorily, and under the good and competent leadership of the Chair, have audited their strengths and have identified where they need to improve and where the training needs are. The governors are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the school's performance and are holding school leaders to account by asking more challenging questions.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Policy and practice is regularly reviewed and kept up to date. All policies are in place and required checks made on all staff. Support and safeguarding are particularly strong for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Their emotional well-being and academic progress are well supported through adults in school and good links with a range of support agencies.

There is an audit of how well the school promotes community cohesion. This has provided a clear understanding of the school's position in relation to local, national and global communities. There is a strong sense of community within the school itself, with pupils from different backgrounds and of different ages getting on noticeably well. The school makes a strong contribution to promoting its links with the local community. It is seen as an important part of village life and is effective in bringing in the neighbouring communities through parental choice and a wide variety of community events organised through the church and the Parents' Association. School leaders have begun setting up links with schools with contrasting pupil populations, both in this country and overseas and use parents' backgrounds and teachers' contacts well to achieve this. The development of community cohesion is linked well into the curriculum.

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

There is a good range of effective learning activities, covering all areas of learning, to support the effective development of children's basic skills and their physical, social and emotional development. Learning activities take place both indoors and outside and there is plenty opportunity for flow between the two areas. Progress and development are assessed effectively and well recorded in each child's learning journal. Particularly good use is made of photographic evidence and spontaneous notes to record individual development accurately. Children's progress and development are managed effectively and consequently are good. This continues the improvements seen at the end of the last academic year. Leadership and management are good. Adults are managed and deployed effectively. Security and safeguarding arrangements are good, with full and effective adult supervision.

The supportive atmosphere helps children settle in quickly and they soon feel confident to make friends and enjoy learning. The learning environment is imaginatively organised and children learn through play equally well in both areas. Most teaching is good and adults provide an interesting range of learning experiences to promote independence. Where teaching is satisfactory, adults provide too little opportunity for children to think things out for themselves. Adults are deployed efficiently and work effectively with the children, guiding and supporting their learning.

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

Over half of the parents and carers sent in questionnaires and this response is much higher than is usually found. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and there was well over 90% agreement for all statements in their questionnaire, with many attracting 100% agreement. They expressed no concerns in their written comments. Inspection findings support parents' and carers' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cranford 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 87 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	61	19	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	57	22	43	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	55	23	45	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	57	22	43	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	59	21	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	55	23	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	49	26	51	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)	28	55	20	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	57	21	41	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	49	24	47	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	55	23	45	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	55	23	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	73	14	27	0	0	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 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 2009/10 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.



30 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cranford Church of England Primary School, Kettering, NN14 4AE

We very much appreciate the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, both in lessons, as a group, and when being shown around school on our arrival. Your views and the commendable way in which you conduct yourselves at school were very helpful in helping us make decisions about your school.

You go to a good school, and one which is also improving rapidly. You all make good progress now and the standards in your school work by Year 6 are similar to those found among many other pupils in primary schools. Your personal qualities are good. You clearly enjoy school and behave well. Your sensible and mature approach to school life helps make the school a safe and pleasant place for you to learn and make friends.

We have asked your teachers to do two things to help improve things even more.

Help you do better in mathematics by making sure you get good at solving problems.

Getting the staff to take a greater share in leading and managing the school so that your headteacher can continue to run the school effectively and help you improve even more than you have done already.

We are sure your school will continue to improve and are confident that you will do all you can to help by continuing to behave well and showing interest in your work.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman

Lead inspector

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