

Crawley Green Infant School

Beaconsfield, Luton, LU2 0RW

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2013

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- High quality leadership, management, monitoring and governance ensure excellent teamwork and consistent approaches to teaching. This enhances significantly the pupils' learning and development.
- The school has sustained and built upon very successfully all aspects of excellence identified at its previous inspection.
- This is a school which sees the potential in its pupils. Teachers and their assistants plan the learning to give pupils the maximum opportunities to achieve their best.
- Pupils' outstanding achievement and rapid progress is secured by the ways staff listen to them and help them to make connections between the different parts of their learning.
- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding; this helps lay the foundations for lifelong learning right from the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is an underlying emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This results in their outstanding behaviour and understanding of being safe.
- The school's continuous drive for improvement includes regular reviews of all aspects of its work; this is focused currently on reading and refining the ways it teaches letters and sounds.
- The school is focused securely on helping improve further pupils' attendance by helping families understand the importance of a continuous education for their children.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, including six which were seen jointly with the acting headteachers. All nine classes were seen, involving 11 teachers and their teaching assistants. Some sessions were observed where teaching assistants worked with small groups of pupils. In addition, inspectors attended daily registration times.
- Meetings were held with groups of Year 2 pupils selected at random by the lead inspector. These included those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils from across all year groups.
- Inspectors heard a sample of pupils from Year 2 read and explored the pupils' reading records.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, information provided for families and governing body documents.
- Discussions were held with the acting headteachers, subject coordinators, class teachers, teaching assistants, administrative staff, the school's family worker, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took into consideration the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and individual letters sent to the inspection team by parents. Inspectors spoke personally with a number of parents and carers at the start of the school day. The 30 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Michael Miller, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Thakur

Additional Inspector

Shela Rowan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized school, serving families mainly from its local area.
- The headteacher was forced, unexpectedly, to resign through ill health at Easter 2013. Consequently, the governing body has appointed the school's two assistant headteachers as joint acting headteachers until a full-time appointment can be made.
- There are three classes in each of the year groups, from the Early Years Foundation Stage (the Reception year) to Year 2. Almost all children who join in the Reception class continue their education at the school until they leave at the end of Year 2.
- Most pupils come from a range of minority heritage groups, the largest being Asian or Asian British, and Black or Black British. The largest single heritage group is White British.
- The large majority of the pupils speak English as a first language, but 22 different languages are currently spoken at the school. About a third of the pupils are known to speak English as an additional language; this is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- Links are established with Eastern Area Partnership cluster of schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Complete the school's work to promote its excellent practice by creating more opportunities for pupils to develop their reading work, and to make an even greater sense of letters and the sounds they make.
- Build on the school's excellent partnership with parents and carers by working with families:
 - to ensure fewer absences, particularly in Reception and Year 1 classes, therefore promoting the value of continuous education and enhancing the pupils' opportunities to make progress
 - by providing parents and carers with specific information on attendance in newsletters, and linking this with the school's regular news about attendance awards.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- When children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage their levels of knowledge and skills are typically below those expected for their age. When they leave at the end of Year 2 their attainment is above average. Attainment on entry can vary from year to year, and is sometimes well below expectations. However, when this is the case, pupils make equally excellent progress to gain average standards for their age by the end of Year 2.
- In terms of their individual points score (the measure by which all pupils are assessed nationally at the end of each stage of their education), the school has a long-standing track record of ensuring all groups of pupils make outstanding progress in both literacy and numeracy. The school is also successful in enabling a much higher than national proportion of its more able pupils to gain well above average levels by the time they transfer to junior school.
- Reading is taught particularly well; this aids significantly pupils' success in English and literacy, particularly for those who start school with little or no English. Right from the start in Reception, children are taught systematically about letters and sounds (phonics). With a well above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, the key to the school's success lies in its promotion of pupils' speaking, language and literacy skills.
- The school's record of outstanding achievement results from the excellent ways it identifies opportunities for pupils' learning; right from the Reception year, teachers plan and build activities and experiences around these. There is an impressive approach to the ways children are encouraged to look, listen and share their experiences. This reflects the school's underlying commitment to making sure all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and develop.
- Data show that those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make much better than expected progress during their time at the school, and that this is very similar to other pupils in their year groups. The standards they attain are typically higher than similar groups nationally in both English and mathematics. The additional pupil premium has an important impact, not only in providing additional teaching support but also through ensuring eligible pupils can take part in extra-curricular and enrichment activities which widen their horizons.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as those for whom English is an additional language, are supported extremely well. They make outstanding progress in terms of their individual starting points and difficulties because of the expert provision from both teaching and support staff. The skills of many of the teaching assistants are a strength of the school.
- The school uses the splendid environment it has created to excellent effect in the promotion of pupils' senses. Excellent learning was seen in the outdoor activities for groups of Reception children. Their knowledge of the world is enriched significantly by discussions about the plants being grown on the allotments on the school's grounds. Children's understanding of safety is demonstrated by their awareness of dangers around the school pond. Their observation skills and scientific knowledge were developed through observing insects and butterflies in a nettle patch.
- The ability of pupils of all ages to explore creatively is strengthened by the high quality of the school's outdoor environment. The school's everyday use of its grounds as an outdoor classroom not only enhances learning but is also very effective in developing children's interaction with each other, and their social and spiritual development.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- A letter from a parent explained exactly why pupils' attitudes to learning are so good when the parent wrote, 'Crawley Green holds in high regard the individual feelings of each child, and works hard to make each child feel special and of great worth.'
- Staff think very carefully about how best to encourage children's development and do a great deal to foster their independence in learning. They understand thoroughly the processes of child development. Records of daily observations by both teachers and their assistants are suitably detailed. There is a strong focus on the all-round personal development of pupils and not simply their academic achievement. The teaching helps pupils to understand and appreciate whatever they are learning. Teaching and non-teaching staff alike provide fine role models.
- The school has extensive assessments of its children's and pupils' attainment, progress and development. It works closely with other education partners and the local authority to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate; this is supported by the inspection evidence. Teachers use this information very effectively to plan lessons to meet the pupils' individual needs. It is also used to ensure that extra element of challenge which enables consistently rapid progress.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven naturally into everyday learning and teaching. This strengthens and develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are given regular opportunities to work together and to reflect on and share their thoughts and ideas with others.
- Pupils learn to question and explore so well because their teachers' questioning skills are of consistently high quality. Teachers and support staff resist 'telling' and constantly use questions to check pupils' knowledge and understanding before feeding in that extra snippet of information. This enables pupils to think carefully about, and enhance, their learning. Marking is very regular, similarly supportive, and guides pupils towards that 'next step' in learning.
- The school's in-depth analysis of its children's learning has led to a recent review of reading across the school. This is not only to ensure that the teaching of reading continues to be effective, but also to secure its systematic approach to the teaching of letters and sounds. This review is still being completed, but it has already identified extra opportunities to promote reading and enhance its assessment. Some aspects still remain to be implemented, but as one governor commented, 'This is not a school which rests on its laurels.'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Central to the school's approach is the belief that during the early years of development, children become who they are as individuals. Children thrive in this environment and their appreciation of the importance of the similarities and differences of people from different backgrounds is particularly well-developed.
- One of the first activities of the day in Reception classes is to allocate responsibilities, whether as register monitors or helping look after the school's chickens. Pupils throughout the school take on such responsibilities readily. They also take great pride in the environment they have helped to create. Pupils are inspired by eco-awareness, and the composting group wear their 'Little Rotters' T-shirts proudly.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding because pupils develop self-confidence, trust the adults at

the school, and are enabled to develop very well both their independence and social skills. Pupils show high levels of persistence and concentration on their work throughout lessons. Learning is exciting, because activities are imaginative, interesting and made fun. Pupils are simply too interested and involved in their work to become distracted.

- A notable aspect of school life is the way pupils develop a love of books and reading. This is reflected in their imaginative responses to storytelling. A number of the staff are highly skilled at this art. This promotes pupils' creative imagination, which forms a vital part of their play. There are 'Friendship Stop' signs in the playground for those who may find themselves at a loss at break and lunchtimes. Discussions with pupils show these hardly ever need to be used.
- Parents and carers recognise the school as a very friendly community within which pupils can work and play in safety and confidence. There is a very sensitive approach to behaviour management; pupils respond very quickly to this.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- It is a testament to the quality of the headteacher's leadership that the focus of the school has not wavered under the interim leadership. When talking with inspectors, parents emphasised the school's teamwork approach as a major strength, and spoke about how this encouraged their children, making them feel valued and developing their self-confidence.
- Minutes of meetings of the governing body show not only that there is an established culture of challenge and support, but that this is also undertaken with good humour. The headteacher is minuted as pointing to the humble teabag as a major educational resource. Inspectors find the school works exceptionally well on the simple equation: professional teamwork + a cup of tea + fun in teaching and learning = rapid progress on the part of the pupils.
- Self-evaluation is accurate, and the joint observations show the acting headteachers have a thorough understanding of what makes effective learning. The consistently high-quality teaching underpins this very securely. Discussions show there is a firm understanding of the importance of keeping teaching skills up-to-date. Teachers and their assistants have high expectations of each other; this is reflected in the targets they set themselves for improvement.
- There are close and well-established links between the school and its local authority school improvement advisor. The school is not considered to be one at risk, therefore the local authority provides only 'light touch' support. However, this working relationship is standing the school in good stead as it begins its search for a new headteacher.
- The governing body's creation of a 'family room', and the employment of a 'family worker', has had a major impact on the links with the school's wider community and the support provided for families. As one parent wrote: 'Our first contact with the school came through the family room. It was the welcome we received there that made us want our children to attend the school.'
- An important part of the school's work with its local community and families is to encourage the pupils' regular attendance. There are a few families where there has not been a tradition of early education outside of the family. Attendance does improve year-by-year, but an important part of school improvement planning is focused on ensuring all families appreciate the value of a continuous education for their children. The school is now looking to provide additional information for families concerning this in its regular newsletters.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is an integral part of the school's 'team'. It is well informed about the school's performance. Governors are able to compare and contrast the school's performance with others nationally. There is a clear understanding of how and why pupils make progress.
- The governing body knows how the pupil premium is allocated, produces a statement showing how it is spent and monitors carefully the impact of this spending.
- Governors make an important contribution to the school's everyday life and work; good use is made of both their personal and professional skills.
- The governing body ensures that all safeguarding requirements are met.
- There are systematic checks on the effectiveness of teaching and teachers' targets for both their personal and professional development. Governors recognise the importance and value of rewarding good teaching and professionalism.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 109702 |
| Local authority | Luton |
| Inspection number | 412488 |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 267 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Stephen Stephens |
| Headteacher | Gillian Major |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23 January 2008 |
| Telephone number | 01582 724267 |
| Fax number | 01582 487908 |
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