

# Croft Junior School

Northumberland Avenue, Stockingford, Nuneaton, CV10 8ER

**Inspection dates** 11–12 September 2014

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Strong and well focused leadership has made sure that the good quality of teaching found at the school's previous inspection has been maintained.
- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well and attain standards that are above average.
- Rigorous checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, and prompt attention paid to emerging weaknesses, ensure a good quality of education is sustained.
- Pupils behave well in and around school. They find lessons interesting and enjoy learning.
- Pupils are kept very safe. They are fully confident of their safety while in school and recognise and deal with any potential risks.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes an important contribution to their good behaviour and positive attitudes to school and each other.
- The newly implemented curriculum enables pupils to develop good learning skills and use them to extend their knowledge well.
- Governors have good levels of involvement with the school. They challenge senior leaders effectively to provide a good education for all pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that the most- and least-able are fully challenged to reach the standards they are capable of.
- The school's marking policy is not consistently applied by all teachers, including the correcting of spelling mistakes.
- Pupils do not follow up teachers' comments for improvement well enough.
- The performance of support staff is not managed as thoroughly as it is for teachers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons. Eleven lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with governors, teachers and other adults with responsibilities, and pupils. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils' progress. An in-depth scrutiny of last year's work in pupils' books from across the school was conducted as well as pupils' current class work. Documents detailing the school's arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed.
- Questionnaire responses from 21 members of staff were analysed.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, they looked at the results of the school's most recent questionnaire, giving the views of 152 parents. An inspector met with parents collecting their children at the end of the school day.

## Inspection team

|                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| David Speakman, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Christopher Minton             | Additional Inspector |
| Jenny Edginton                 | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are White British. A few come from a range of minority ethnic groups. A below average proportion speak English as an additional language.
- About a third of pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium. This proportion is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll is about a quarter. This is higher than found in most schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher is an LLE (Local Leader of Education). The deputy headteacher is a SLE (Specialist Leader of Education) for the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers and for assessment. Two other senior staff have SLE status, one for English and one for mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
  - providing more challenge for the most-able and the least-able pupils to ensure they reach their potential
  - all teachers consistently and rigorously applying the school's marking policy, ensuring pupils follow up any points for improvement
  - paying greater attention to improving pupils' spelling.
- Further enhance the performance management process by including teaching assistants.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leadership at all levels is strong. Senior and subject leaders work together to promote a culture of challenge, high aspirations and team work. The headteacher and governors have made sure that any one taking over a new responsibility role is well skilled to step in and that teachers new to the school or profession develop their expertise quickly.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching have helped to maintain the good quality of teaching since the school was last inspected. Through regular observations, senior leaders provide feedback to teachers and follow up any improvement areas. They use checks on pupils' progress well at regular review meetings to hold staff accountable for pupils' progress and to identify those pupils in danger of falling behind. Leaders set rigorous targets for the work of teachers and records show a clear link between effective performance and pay rises. Although the work of teaching assistants is monitored, they are not included in the school's robust performance management procedures.
- The good achievement of all groups of pupils demonstrates the school's success at promoting equal opportunities and the capacity for further improvement.
- The school has made good preparations for the implementation of a new curriculum. They have already trialled a pilot curriculum, evaluated strengths and weaknesses and are now working with a refined version. They are well placed to check pupils' progress through implementing a new assessment system that records whether pupils are working towards a target, have achieved it or exceeded it.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the pupils' interests. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing literacy skills and mathematics, including opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and in different subjects. The curriculum makes good links between subjects so learning is meaningful and enjoyable. There is a good extra-curricular offer with a wide range of sporting and other activities. This is key in promoting pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, both in lessons and at other times during the school day. Pupils take on responsibility well to develop their social skills. They learn about democratic processes through the election of school council representatives and voting on areas for charity support. Pupils have set up their own 'good citizens' charter' which helps pupils recognise the importance of rules within a society. Good social and moral development is shown by the way pupils of different backgrounds get on well and by their good behaviour. They develop a sense of fairness through taking part in a wide range of out-of-school activities. The school celebrates a range of cultures, encouraging a healthy respect amongst pupils for those from different cultures.
- The school has made effective arrangements for spending the primary sports funding to improve and widen its already strong sporting tradition. It is directed to engaging all pupils from across the school in sporting and outdoor adventurous activities, providing more high quality opportunities for pupils to play games at lunchtime and to increase teachers' skills and confidence in teaching gymnastics. The school has noted greater participation in physical activity and confidence levels.
- The local authority carries out regular evaluations of the school's performance through end of key stage test results and occasional visits. Croft is classed as a low risk school and as such receives minimal intervention. The local authority does use the 'leaders in education' status of the senior leadership team to support other less effective schools. The local authority reports that this senior leadership team has had significant success in this area.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors systematically challenge senior leaders over the effectiveness of the school. Through keeping their training up-to-date, they are knowledgeable and able to ask searching questions to hold senior leaders accountable for the school's effectiveness.

- Their work is central to promoting good levels of equality. Wise spending of pupil premium funding, for example, ensures full inclusion of disadvantaged pupils. They encourage the promotion of positive attitudes and respect for different cultures. This is important in a school in which most pupils are White-British.
- Governors visit school regularly and take part in activities such as trips or visiting classrooms. They have a good knowledge of how well teachers are doing their jobs through first-hand observations, through discussions with senior staff and through headteacher's reports. They are therefore in a strong position to judge for themselves how well the school is doing and how well it is dealing with new requirements of its work.
- Governors develop their own skills well in order to support and strengthen leadership and management. They have commissioned an external review of their work and acted on the recommendations so, for example, they are fully aware of how the achievement of pupils in school compares with that in other schools.
- Governors set clear targets in managing the performance of the headteacher and staff, making sure teachers' pay increases link to competence.
- Statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding, which is of a high quality.
- Governors engage well with parents and pupils themselves. They regularly seek parents' views, fully analyse results and act on findings. They communicate effectively through an informative website.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have positive attitudes to learning and evidently enjoy the opportunities to succeed. As a result, they approach their learning with enthusiasm, which contributes well to effective learning. However, they do not always respond to comments in teacher's marking of their work.
- Pupils are proud of their school and speak highly of it. Pupils respect the school buildings and site, which are kept tidy and free from litter or graffiti. They say they enjoy learning through the many opportunities to find things out for themselves, through the many trips and visitors to school, and through the 'themed' weeks such as the art week.
- Pupils speak positively about behaviour and say that lessons are very rarely disrupted. They say staff will listen to them, talk to them and help them deal with any problems should they require help. They fully understand how rewards and sanctions work and these have a positive impact on behaviour in school and pupils' achievement. They say that bullying is very rare, but, if it does occur, it is dealt with effectively.
- Attendance has improved in recent years and is now broadly average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is below average and there are justifiable reasons for their absence. Pupils are punctual to school so lessons can begin on time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school and feel very secure while there because school leaders ensure their safety as the highest priority. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the different types of bullying and know what to do if they ever need help. They have a very good understanding of how to stay safe while using the internet.
- Safety arrangements in classrooms and outside areas are regularly assessed for safety and pupils are well supervised at all times. Entry to the school is very securely managed and full checks are made on all adults coming into contact with pupils.
- Vulnerable pupils are cared for exceptionally well. Child protection processes are fully in place and effective. Training for staff and governors is up-to-date and senior staff are experienced and highly skilled in implementing child protection procedures at all levels. Senior leaders show high levels of concern that pupils are kept safe in and out of school and all adults working in school see safeguarding as their responsibility.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, say their children are happy, safe and well looked after, and that behaviour is good. They are pleased with the progress their children are

making. These views are reflected in the school's own recent survey of parents' views. Inspectors agree with parents' views.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teachers make learning interesting. They combine different subjects into interesting activities that are effective in helping pupils gain a range of learning skills. They encourage pupils to ask questions and are skilled at asking questions to make pupils think things out for themselves.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to use and apply the skills they have learned in lessons and consolidate learning. They have good opportunities to use their numeracy skills and devise their own strategies to solve problems in mathematics. Year 4 were given excellent opportunities to use the internet to find out independently about rationing during and after the Second World War. Opportunities such as these provide pupils with secure skills for learning in the next stages of their education.
- Teachers know their subjects well. They provide clear explanations and they are knowledgeable enough to answer pupils' questions clearly. While pupils are working on their tasks, teachers often circulate to check pupils' learning. Where there are problems, teachers give support or re-shape learning when needed. They are good at picking up on pupils' errors and rectifying them to make learning secure.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. They support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs effectively so most make the same good progress as other pupils. Those observed were skilled in supporting pupils' reading and competently lead small groups to make sure borderline pupils reach their potential.
- Expectations of pupils' learning are generally high. Pupils at different levels of ability are given tasks that make them think hard and which move their learning on at a brisk pace. Pupils are aware that teachers expect them to do well and therefore try hard. For example, questions of varying difficulty are set for different groups and challenge most pupils effectively. However, there is further opportunity to provide greater challenge for the most-able pupils capable of the very highest attainment. Similarly, those who are really struggling often need more support.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly but comments are not consistently effective in helping pupils improve. Whilst marking supports good progress generally, teachers do not always make sure that pupils respond to the comments about what to do next or to their advice on how to correct mistakes, including spelling.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- The school's detailed analysis of pupils' progress, lesson observations and samples of pupils' work, show they achieve well. In the end of key stage tests and assessments in 2013, attainment dipped due to an unusually high number of pupils who found the work exceptionally challenging. However, from their varying starting points, the school's data show pupils achieved well in reading writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, test results improved so attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was again above average. Assessment information shows that achievement for this cohort was good; the proportions making nationally expected progress and more than that nationally expected matched the national average. The judgement of good achievement is consistent with evidence from the work in pupils' books retained by the school for scrutiny.
- Pupils' starting points at the beginning of Year 3 are not as high as validated data indicates. Senior leaders work in close collaboration with the infant schools to gain a more detailed and accurate picture of each pupil's attainment. In addition, the pause in learning during the long summer break places attainment on entry lower. This supports the school's tracking data that show good achievement from the different starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding do well. They achieve better than other pupils

in school and nationally in reading and mathematics. In writing, achievement is similar to other groups. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is about a term ahead of other pupils in the school in mathematics, just over a term ahead in reading and is similar in writing. When compared to pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in mathematics and reading was similar, and in writing was just under a year behind.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language do particularly well. They achieve better than similar groups nationally and other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils through close monitoring of their progress and well-targeted support. However a few of the very lowest-attaining pupils sometimes struggle and their progress is slower than others in reading and writing.
- Pupils develop learning skills well through the recently revised curriculum. They use and apply numeracy skills competently to solve mathematical problems. They are competent in using computers and use their computer skills well to search web sites in order to build a good level of knowledge in geography and history for example. A few pupils do not have strong phonic (letters and the sounds they make) knowledge to help with their fluent reading and accurate spelling. Themed weeks, such as one for art, have a significant impact on standards. High quality art work produced by pupils is on display throughout the school.
- Although the more-able pupils made similar good progress as other pupils in 2013, the number of most-able pupils reaching the very highest level in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. This year, the profile has improved with more than the national average of most-able pupils making accelerated progress in mathematics, but just below in reading and writing.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School | 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

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 125605       |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Warwickshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 449771       |

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

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Junior                   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 7–11                     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 321                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body       |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Andrew Wright            |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Belinda Bollans          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 17 June 2010             |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 02476 387319             |
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| <b>Email address</b>                       | admin2601@welearn365.com |

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