

# Cronehills Junior and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103923
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	308455
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marion Wallace

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Catherine Fellows
<b>Headteacher</b>	Keith Shilton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Hardware Street West Bromwich B70 8SU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01215 531593
<b>Fax number</b>	01215 252313

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Cronehills is a large primary school. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language are well above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is above average and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is well above average. The pupils come from an area with social and economic disadvantages. Mobility in some classes is high. When children start in the Nursery, they have low levels of skills and knowledge. The school has achieved the Platinum Healthy School award and the Activemark.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enthusiastically take part in all the activities offered. The school is a caring community that values and respects all individuals; consequently, pupils develop confidence and have a positive attitude to their work. 'We like coming to school', said a group of pupils. One parent summarised the views of the parents, 'Cronehills supports its pupils well and offers a supportive, friendly environment where pupils feel safe.'

Good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures children make a positive start to their education. Pupils experience satisfactory teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6, and achievement is satisfactory. The new approach to teaching subjects within themes is effective, but the match of work to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able, is not yet sharp enough to ensure they make good progress.

Standards are well below average in Year 6 and the pupils have made satisfactory progress since they started school. Standards in English are better than in mathematics because in the past, the school has focused strongly on writing skills. Strategies to tackle weaknesses in mathematics are proving effective, and standards are improving. Whilst most pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to achieve their targets in English, mathematics and science by the end of the year, targets are not always high enough for the more able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English make sound gains from their starting points. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being and their progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Relationships are strong and behaviour is good. Pupils know how to stay healthy and safe because there is a strong focus on maintaining healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. Pastoral support is strong and procedures to track academic progress are good. Academic guidance is not as well developed as it might be because the targets set for individual pupils are not always challenging enough.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear direction and a determination to improve the school, which has resulted in raised standards, especially in writing and mathematics. The capacity to improve is satisfactory. School leaders have good understanding of its performance, although monitoring processes are not consistently focused on whether all pupils progress well enough.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good. Children enjoy the activities offered them and this helps them to develop a positive attitude to their learning in the Nursery and in Reception. Good relationships and a good ratio of adults to children are also helping children develop positive attitudes to school because they know their efforts are recognised and celebrated. Consistently high expectations ensure children behave well. Children know that 'good sitting and good listening' are important. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress in all areas of learning, although very few reach the expected targets by the time they enter Year 1. New strategies to help children recognise letters and sounds are

contributing to the improved progress in communication and language. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure target setting is sufficiently challenging so that all groups of pupils make consistently good progress.
- Make sure that work is closely matched to the needs of all pupils, especially the more able.
- Ensure that checks on the school's work are rigorous and focused firmly on the rate of pupils' progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

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From very low starting points, pupils reach well below average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make satisfactory progress and are on course to reach their targets by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In 2007, pupils met their targets in the national tests but no pupils reached the higher levels in mathematics or writing and very few did so in reading. The current Year 2 has high numbers of pupils with LDD and those who need additional support as they are at the early stages of learning English. Writing skills are still weak, but intervention strategies are helping pupils gain confidence in their writing, and standards are improving. The more able pupils do not progress as rapidly as they should because their work is insufficiently challenging.

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## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are eager to learn; they concentrate well and listen attentively. Year 6 pupils are proud of their school and show this with the good quality of their work. Attendance, however, remains below average despite the school's good efforts to encourage and reward regular attendance. Pupils are sensible and responsible; for example, the playground buddies help to maintain a friendly playground. The school council takes a keen interest in the progress of the school. Pupils learn about generosity and fairness in lively discussions. They develop the capacity to think and reflect on what they see and hear. Occasionally, pupils do not get enough opportunity to explore their own solutions to problems. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the school and wider community. They develop an appreciation and understanding of other communities

through activities such as their participation in the steel pan concert in the town centre and fundraising for a variety of charities. Confidence and competence are well developed through participating in school activities such as the residential trips to North Wales. Pupils appreciate the benefits of regular exercise and healthy food, and are well on their way to adopting a healthy lifestyle.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils say, 'We like the lessons'. Lessons are well organised and pupils find them interesting. Expectations for behaviour are consistent and this contributes to a positive climate for learning. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson clearly with pupils. They use interactive whiteboards well to capture pupils' interest and involve them in their learning. Assessment procedures enable teachers to see whether pupils are making the expected progress. Planning takes account of the different abilities of pupils in the class, but the work is not always sufficiently demanding to challenge fully all groups of pupils. Not all pupils, especially the more able, make as much progress as they could. Teaching assistants provide sound support for pupils with LDD, so they make satisfactory gains in their learning. The quality of marking varies between subjects; it is consistently good in English because the next steps are clearly identified but only satisfactory in mathematics and science.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The satisfactory curriculum includes a new approach to teaching subjects within themes that is effective, as pupils enjoy seeing links between subjects. Literacy and information and communication technology are used to enrich learning in other subjects, but numeracy is not used as effectively. The visitors, visits, residential trips and extra-curricular activities are a strength. These events expand pupils' horizons and enrich their experiences. Pupils in Year 6 talked enthusiastically about their abseiling experiences when in North Wales and the trip to Warwick Castle. Younger pupils eagerly described their trip to the seaside. These positive experiences, together with well-planned social and health education give pupils confidence. The curriculum effectively meets the needs of pupils with LDD and pupils new to the school but lacks the ultimate challenge and pace for the more able pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

All those in the school community are kept safe and well looked after. Pupils with specific learning needs, such as those in the early stages of learning English or those with LDD, are identified early and appropriate interventions are provided. Links with external agencies are well established and effective. The school is working effectively to establish regular communication between home and school. Teachers track individual pupil achievement and progress successfully and pupils know their individual learning goals. The induction and transition arrangements for the pupils are robust, and safeguarding and child protection procedures are sound.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The school is well organised because the headteacher ensures it runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. He is clear about what needs to be done to move the school on, and there are signs of improvement in the provision and standards of work seen. Senior leaders support the headteacher well. The new leadership structure gives greater responsibility to the staff. The school improvement plan identifies priorities for improvement clearly and gives strategies to bring about greater effectiveness. The middle managers are building their expertise rapidly. School self-evaluation is accurate, although some improvement to systems to check the consistency of pupils' progress is required. Whilst the programme for monitoring the rate of school improvement is satisfactory, checks on target setting in classes is less well developed. Governors have a reliable understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are becoming increasingly rigorous in questioning whether the school is doing well enough.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cronehills Junior and Infant School, West Bromwich B70 850

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers. We agree with you that Cronehills is a happy school that provides you with a satisfactory education.

These are the things that we found during our visit to your school.

- You make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards for your age.
- When you first come to the school in Nursery, you make a good start to your education and you enjoy the activities offered.
- You are taught satisfactorily.
- You all enjoy school, behave well and like learning.
- You enjoy all the out-of-school activities, trips and visits. These all help to make learning fun.
- Your headteacher and all the staff are working to make sure that the school continues to improve.

What we have asked the school to do next:

- make sure your targets are challenging enough
- set work that is hard enough for all of you, especially those who manage the work easily
- check whether you are reaching high enough standards and making good progress.

You can all help your teachers make these improvements by continuing to work really hard all the time. Thank you for a very enjoyable visit to your school, and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace Lead inspector

14 May 2008

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