

Creswell Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112548
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337959
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Hall
Headteacher	Mrs Katie Adamski
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent the majority of their time observing learning and all teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors visited 12 lessons and carried out observations of group reading activities in all classes. They held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including that tracking pupils' progress, samples of the monitoring of teaching and learning, school planning and minutes of recent meetings of the governors. Inspectors also closely scrutinised documents regarding the safeguarding of pupils. Questionnaires from 36 parents, 107 pupils and 16 staff were also scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether all groups of pupils and especially girls of middle ability make enough progress especially in English and particularly in writing
- if the school supports all areas of pupils' personal development well enough, including their behaviour
- whether staff use assessment information effectively to provide consistently challenging and interesting activities for all pupils
- if the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is sufficiently rigorous to identify areas for further improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized junior school in a former mining area close to the Derbyshire / Nottinghamshire border. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There is a higher number with special educational needs and/or disabilities than seen nationally. These pupils have a range of additional needs often related to language acquisition and emotional development. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small number at the early stages of English. Since the previous inspection, there have been several periods when the school has been led by an acting headteacher. A substantive headteacher was appointed in January 2009, having previously held the post of acting headteacher. The school holds Healthy Schools and Activemark status.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. A key feature of recent improvement is that the new headteacher provides good leadership. In the last year she has established a good understanding of what works well and what needs to be improved further. This is enabling the school to become increasingly effective, following a difficult period with several changes of leadership and falling standards. Parents rightly believe the pastoral strengths of a caring school community have been maintained.

Pupils enter the school with skills that are close to the average for their age in mathematics and science but often lower in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Most make satisfactory overall progress but this is not consistent and varies from year to year with some continued gaps in their learning. Many pupils have limited speaking and listening skills which affects their progress in literacy and particularly in writing. This is largely because the teaching of basic and higher level writing skills has not been systematic enough. Standards in mathematics and science are average and pupils show an interest, in particular, in solving problems.

Pupils say they feel safe and recognise that bullying is not tolerated in school. Many pupils enjoy school as shown in the comment of one that 'The school has lots of lovely teachers who care for us and want us to be the best we can be'. Behaviour is satisfactory. Several pupils are keen to learn and readily offer their ideas but some offer little and do not have a very positive attitude to school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with examples of outstanding teaching in Year 6. However, while leaders now have an appropriate means of checking and tracking the progress pupils make as they move through the school, staff do not always make best use of this information to set tasks that challenge all groups of pupils. Curriculum planning is satisfactory, as is the care, guidance and support of pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and the headteacher is driving improvement well although this is too early to have had a major impact on pupils achievement. School self-evaluation is well considered and this is ensuring the school has the capacity to improve further. Nevertheless the monitoring of some aspects of the work of the school could be more rigorous in identifying the sometimes small steps to improve further. Governance is inadequate because the governors are not well enough informed at first hand to be able to challenge the school and they have not ensured that weaknesses have been tackled decisively.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English by:

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- teaching the basic skills of writing, including spelling and handwriting, to enable the pupils to produce extended pieces of imaginative work
- developing further opportunities for speaking and listening to enable pupils to build a wider and more descriptive vocabulary.
- Ensure the quality of teaching and learning are consistently good by:
 - making full and effective use of assessment information to set challenging work for all groups of pupils
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the quality of planning, teaching and learning to ensure the consistent development of key skills.
- Develop the role of governors by:
 - providing more training so that governors have greater understanding of how to develop their roles in order to fully meet their responsibilities
 - extending the programme of focussed visits to the school to ensure a greater first-hand knowledge of the curriculum and standards.
- About 40 percent of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Many of the pupils join the school with a restricted vocabulary and do not speak with confidence. Several also have quite mixed attitudes to learning. National tests at the age of 11 show that pupils reach average standards in mathematics and science, but do less well in English. Lesson observations and the sample of pupils' work confirm that standards are average overall, but lower in English than in other subjects. The new headteacher and recently appointed literacy subject leader are working hard to raise standards in English, with the support of the whole staff team. The school is adopting a range of whole school strategies which are beginning to have positive effect on progress in English. Assessment indicates more than double the number of pupils are on line to achieve the higher levels in English this year than last year. Progress in all subjects, for all groups of pupils, is now at least satisfactory and in Year 6 it is good because pupils learn how to improve their skills in a wide range of areas. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, together with the small number speaking English as an additional language, make similar progress to their classmates. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe although their behaviour at playtime can be a little too boisterous and does not always show a well developed awareness of others. The school has worked hard to improve behaviour and has been successful in cutting the number of exclusions. When pupils are taught well, their behaviour is good and at times it is excellent. However, when teaching is not particularly stimulating, many pupils lose concentration, become very passive, offer few ideas and produce little work. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of healthy lifestyles and like the fruit shop at break

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time. But, the impact of some initiatives is mixed and the school misses opportunities to promote healthy eating more actively. Some school meals are poor with no salad or fresh vegetable options and there is much work to be done to persuade families of the benefits of healthy packed lunches. The pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities including through the school council, roles as head boy and girl and their deputies and as prefects. There are also class roles and growing opportunities to take on responsibilities in the wider community. This helps enable the pupils to develop a growing range of skills that prepare them satisfactorily for their future. Attendance is satisfactory and well monitored by the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, though moral understanding and social skills are not developed to a particularly high level. There are some very effective aspects of spiritual development seen in the inspirational teaching of music and the pupils' great joy when singing.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

While the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, there is some that is

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

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good and examples in Year 6 where teaching is outstanding. Staff have good relationships with pupils and encourage them and praise their efforts. Where teaching is most successful, teachers are particularly enthusiastic and make learning seem fun. This was well illustrated in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where the pupils listened extremely well, were keen to offer their answers in quick fire calculations and were very enthusiastic when estimating and checking the weight of a variety of fruits and converting the units including into decimals. However, in other lessons the planning of activities does not make enough demands on pupils. This is because assessment information about what the pupils know and can do is not used well enough to ensure a high level of challenge for all groups. At times, this can particularly impact on the learning of more able pupils. While the curriculum is now satisfactory, some activities do not capture the pupils' interest.

This is a caring school where staff know the pupils and their families well and try to meet their differing needs. The support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well led and there is a good range of intervention activities that provide extra help for those who need it in specific areas. Teaching assistants are well briefed and make a valuable contribution to the level of support provided. However, at times the staff miss opportunities in verbal feedback and the marking of pupils' work to generate higher standards or achieve more positive behaviour in lessons.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the headteacher is good and a pivotal reason that the school has begun to move forward at a greater pace than in the recent past. Her understanding of strengths and areas for improvement is accurate and well founded. She has a clear vision for the school and is becoming successful in embedding ambition and driving improvement. The staff team is fully committed to improving provision across the school but uncertainty during periods of acting leadership has not helped the drive forward. With new roles, including the well considered appointment of the new literacy leader, the school now has at least a satisfactory capacity to improve further and the potential for this to be good when procedures are more firmly embedded. With falling rolls, the school has challenges to manage the budget and achieves satisfactory value for money. Governance of the school has weaknesses that were identified in the previous inspection. While governors are supportive of the school in the local community, many

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governors are reliant on the headteacher for information. There is no formal programme of training or focussed visits by governors. Therefore, they are not knowledgeable enough about the curriculum to be in a position to challenge the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively.

The school has satisfactory procedures to safeguard the pupils. Checks are made of those who work in school and the school site is managed well to promote safety. The engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory and the school has many plans to extend parental involvement in family learning activities. Partnerships with other organisations are satisfactory and the staff have, rightly, identified the need to extend links with the feeder infant school, especially in joint assessment procedures. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily but occasionally does not prioritise the needs of the potential high achievers well enough. The school also promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. There are strong links with the local community and organisations, but the school has not yet extended these to the wider and global community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

While only a small number of parents replied to the inspection questionnaire, those who did generally think well of the school. Several note comments such as, 'I have found the Head to be extremely approachable and friendly, and very sincere. Also the rest of the staff are very pleasant and caring'. Of the few concerns, these were mainly of an individual nature concerning behaviour and a small number of parents would like more

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help for their children. Inspectors believe the support for those with additional needs is effective. A few also noted their children rightly think 'school dinners aren't very good'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Creswell Junior 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 inspector received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 154 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	56	14	39	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	56	16	44	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	28	25	69	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	36	21	58	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	31	24	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	28	24	67	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	25	25	69	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)	11	31	19	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	33	23	64	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	31	23	64	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	25	22	61	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	33	23	64	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	49	17	49	1	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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 pupil's 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.



21 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Creswell Junior School, Worksop, S80 4JD

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting several of you in lessons and at lunchtime. I know my colleague particularly liked hearing you sing in assemblies. We also enjoyed chatting to several of you including members of the school council who were good at explaining some of the things you like or don't like in school. These are some of the findings from our visit to Creswell.

We think your school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. The staff are working hard to help to improve things and the headteacher has lots of good ideas about how to make things more interesting and exciting. We think there are good opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school for those of you who want to. When you think work is interesting, many of you try hard and those of you in Year 6 are doing especially well.

To improve your school, we have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- raise standards in English by helping you to speak and write more confidently, learn to use more interesting words, to spell more accurately and to produce neater writing
- help to improve teaching by using the information available about your progress to set work that is a little bit harder for you
- encourage governors (who are local people who help to run the school) to attend training and visit the school more regularly so that they know more about what is happening and understand what needs to be better.

You could also help things to improve by trying a bit harder in some lessons and making sure you offer your ideas in discussions. Please remember to be thoughtful towards others when you are moving in and around school and at playtime. Could you also encourage the school and your parents to help you eat more healthily so that more of you will enjoy sport and exercise?

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

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