

Crosshall Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110891
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	310455
Inspection date	9 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Mrs Sheelagh Barnes

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 - 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Amanda Reeve
Headteacher	Mrs Deborah James
Date of previous school inspection	24 - 25 March 2003
School address	446 Great North Road Eaton Ford St Neots Cambridgeshire PE19 7GG
Telephone number	01480 475980
Fax number	01480 404792

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the ways in which the school uses information and communication technology (ICT) and practical activities to make lessons interesting, outdoor activities and provision for children in the Foundation Stage and the induction of new members of the senior management team. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. Evidence was gathered in a range of ways. These included; discussions with the headteacher, chair of governors, pupils and members of the senior management team, scrutiny of documents and pupils' work, analysis of parental questionnaires and of data, and observations of teaching and learning, lunchtime and assembly.

Description of the school

Crosshall Infant School is larger than most schools. Well below average proportions of pupils are eligible for free school meals and fewer speak English as an additional language than nationally. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry to the Reception year covers the full range and is broadly in line with that expected for children's ages. There have been a number of changes to staffing since the previous inspection. The school has the Healthy Schools Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, and Investors in People. It is part of the national scheme for outstanding primary schools taking part in school-based initial teacher training.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an excellent school. It provides an outstanding education for all the boys and girls who attend. Pupils enjoy school and, as a result, they come to school happily and attendance is extremely good. In questionnaires, nearly all their parents confirm this. They say, 'This is a fabulous school!' and, 'I am always impressed with the standard of teaching and care!'

The main reason for the very high standards the school achieves is the very strong leadership of the headteacher. This leadership very effectively links the evaluations of the school with setting targets for improvement. Outstanding management ensures that well-laid plans come to fruition. Regular evaluations of strengths and areas for improvement are made in all aspects of the school's work. These are used in continuous and determined efforts to aim for the very highest standards in an extremely well planned programme of development. The inspection agrees with the majority of the school's own evaluations, but shows that some features, which are outstanding in relation to the national picture, are modestly judged by the school to be only good.

Children in the Reception classes settle quickly and easily into school because of the excellent provision. As a result, they have a very good start to their formal education. This start is built upon extremely effectively in Years 1 and 2. In speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science standards are consistently well above average, and boys and girls achieve equally well. Results in tests at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were significantly well above the national averages. Progress is outstanding and pupils from all groups achieve exceptionally well. Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage in their education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers plan each lesson together extremely well to build steadily on previous lessons. They use information from assessment exceedingly carefully in this and share with pupils what it is they need to learn next. Because relationships are so good and routines so effectively established, pupils quickly settle and are happy. They concentrate exceptionally well and try to do their very best at all times. The curriculum is outstanding and is based very strongly on providing pupils with practical, memorable and in many cases outdoor experiences. ICT is used extremely effectively as a teaching aid.

Personal development is excellent, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a very high standard. Pupils develop high levels of self-assurance and communicate with other children and with adults with confidence. They develop an exceptionally good awareness of others, both in school and in the wider community. Pupils learn how to keep healthy and to stay safe through an exceptionally well-planned programme of activities. Regular physical exercise forms an important part of the curriculum. The care, guidance and support that the school provides for its pupils are excellent. Very good care is taken to ensure that pupils know who to turn to if they need help with a problem and this makes them confident and happy. The ability to make wise choices is emphasised at lunchtime, during playtimes and in lessons. Pupils' contribution to the community is excellent.

The partnerships the school has developed are outstanding. Many of these significantly enhance the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are potentially gifted and talented. The school provides a wealth of good information for parents in a range of formats, including e-mail, which they appreciate. Parents are very positive about the school, although a significant minority say they would appreciate even more opportunities to express their views and have them taken into account.

The outstanding resources, including the well-equipped grounds, are used very well. In particular, excellent use is made of the outdoor areas as a teaching resource in all weathers. Governors are very well informed about the school and finances are managed efficiently to provide excellent value for money. There has been an exceptionally good level of improvement and maintenance of the highest standards since the previous inspection. The newly formed middle management team are already very knowledgeable about their aspects of the school. They have swiftly formed an extremely cohesive team. The school has an excellent capacity to continue to maintain exceedingly high standards and improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children enter school with skills and experiences which overall are in line with those that are expected for their age. Because of the extremely good systems for induction and the welcoming ethos staff create, children settle very quickly and happily into school routines. They make excellent progress during their time in Reception and often exceed the targets expected for their age when they enter Year 1. This is largely because teaching and learning, including curriculum planning, is excellent. Staff work together very well as a team and provide an outstandingly good range of activities with a practical basis. The care, guidance and support of the children are excellent. Leadership and management are excellent. There is a clear and rigorous programme of monitoring which ensures that the teaching and planning for all children is of the highest quality.

What the school should do to improve further

- Seek ways to ensure that parents are given every reasonable opportunity to express their views and have them considered.

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Annex A

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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B



10 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Crosshall Infant School, 446 Great North Road, Eaton Ford, St Neots, PE19 7GG

Thank you for welcoming me to your school when I visited recently and for being so polite and friendly. I really enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you. The things that particularly impressed me were:

- You are extremely well behaved and polite.
- You get on with your lessons very well, and try your hardest to do your best.
- Lessons are interesting and exciting and you have lots of trips, clubs and visitors.
- All your teachers teach you extremely well so that you make excellent progress.
- Your headteacher, senior teachers and governors know the school very well and work extremely hard to make it even better.
- Everyone works together very well to take care of you.
- You learn to be healthy and to stay safe.

The thing I have asked your school to think about improving next is:

- Some of your parents would like even more opportunities to let the school know what they think.

I really enjoyed meeting you and watching you work and play. I especially enjoyed having lunch with some of you in the dining hall. I hope you have a very happy year and wish you all well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barnes
Lead inspector