

Cranwell Primary School (Foundation)

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120674
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380084
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pete Nelstrop
Headteacher	Chris Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 25 lessons taught by 10 teachers. They held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, curricular-planning documents, examples of the ways in which the school supports different groups of pupils, evidence from the school's lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 135 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effectively do the teachers ensure that all more-able pupils make enough progress in writing?
- How well are the new leaders evaluating the teaching and learning to ensure all lessons are as good as the best?
- How good are the systems to assess pupils' skills and knowledge when they enter from different schools?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school where the vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is also below average. Around two-thirds of pupils are from families working at the nearby airbase, and the proportion who leave or join the school during the school year is much higher than in most schools. The school has recently gained national Healthy Schools status and the Artsmark Gold award. The headteacher and the two senior staff were all promoted from within the school in September 2011.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Parents and carers speak very highly of the exceptional care, guidance and support that make their children feel extremely safe and valued. Their excellent partnership with the school means that they are very well-informed about their children's progress and always feel welcome in school. An important strength is the way the school assesses the skills of pupils when they enter during the school year, often from overseas, and provides work that matches their abilities. One comment, typical of many, 'Cranwell Primary should be applauded for managing the high turnover of forces children with such a high level of skill, care and sensitivity.'

Pupils' outstanding academic and personal achievements make them exceptionally well-prepared for the future. They build well on their good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attainment in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is high. This has been the case for some years and represents good progress from their starting points. This is the result of consistently good teaching. Throughout the school, the teaching of reading and number skills is of high quality and gives pupils the confidence to tackle any subject. The teachers ensure that pupils' writing is lively and made interesting for the reader. Across the whole age range, while most pupils achieve well in writing, not all of the more-able ones attain the high levels of which they are capable. This is because teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for them to work independently on challenging tasks, and sometimes accept work that is untidy.

Pupils behave well, enjoy school and attendance rates are high. Pupils think deeply about those in the world suffering hardships. Their very thorough involvement in their school and local community is clearly evident in the way they take responsibility and participate in a wide range of events in the village and military base.

The teachers have developed an excellent curriculum that gives pupils many opportunities to hone their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. They also use the curriculum very skilfully to develop pupils' personal skills. For example, the impact of the extensive work on the need to eat nutritious food and take regular exercise shows clearly in pupils' excellent awareness of how to live healthy lives.

The headteacher and senior staff have made a good start in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses and have quickly gelled into an effective team. They evaluate the quality of teaching and learning regularly but do not focus well enough

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on the progress made by different ability groups in a class. The leadership team is building well on the outstanding partnerships with parents and carers, and with the village community and military base, while setting challenging targets to improve areas such as achievement in writing. The excellent focus on equal opportunities is at the heart of the school's ethos. These many strengths account for the good progress made by the school since the previous inspection, and show why it has a good capacity to sustain this improvement. The funds are managed impeccably and the school provides excellent value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all of the more-able pupils throughout the school attain the high standards in writing of which they are capable by:
 - giving them more opportunities to work independently at tasks that make the most of their skills
 - expecting more of the quality of their presentation and handwriting
 - ensuring that leaders evaluate teaching and learning more rigorously, focusing on the learning of all groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Progress is good. Children enter the school with skills that are broadly typical for children of this age. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy reading and often read for pleasure at home and school. They make rapid progress in learning individual sounds and then blending them to make words. This is helped by teachers making games of 'spotting' sounds. One boy, when looking for items with 'ow' sounds in their name was delighted when he found one. He exclaimed, 'I spotted powder!' Pupils' writing is interesting and full of exciting words. For example, their work on describing the features of a medieval castle was of high quality. However, few write long pieces of work and sometimes the quality of their handwriting lets them down. Pupils count accurately and show excellent progress when learning how to calculate quickly in their head and using their number skills to draw graphs.

At Key Stage 2, pupils read fluently and use their skills well in all subjects. For example, one group did very well in skimming text from the internet when researching aspects of the Viking invasion. They use interesting words in their stories and produce some very good factual accounts of, for example, the town of Lincoln in Roman times. They write long pieces of work when they have the opportunity, but sometimes they have to listen to the teacher for too long and time runs short. This particularly affects more-able pupils, who have too few opportunities to plan their own writing and move on at their own pace. All groups of pupils make very good progress in mathematics. They have very good basic number skills and were seen to use them well during the inspection to solve problems, create line graphs and investigate properties of three-dimensional shapes.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because

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they are supported well while enjoying good opportunities to work independently. They do particularly well in their reading because of the good teaching of word-building skills by teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils’ excellent awareness of how to look after their bodies is evident in the way they always choose healthy options at lunchtime, grow and enjoy vegetables in their garden and take every opportunity to enjoy physical exercise. Their very strong awareness of personal safety is clear as they speak with authority on the need to take care on the roads and the potential dangers of fire, drugs and unsupervised use of the internet. They enjoy extensive opportunities to be involved in the local community and have an excellent reputation for their musical and dramatic performances. In school, they take responsibility readily and older pupils are very good at helping younger ones with their reading. They help organise many events that raise money for poor people in the world as well as for charities that support those injured in active military service. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident as they reflect on issues such as starvation in developing countries, work well in teams and always consider the impact of their actions on others.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In the vast majority of lessons, teachers make it clear what pupils are expected to learn and check carefully to make sure these objectives have been met. Teachers are mostly good at explaining new work clearly and preparing pupils for work on their

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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own or in groups. Sometimes, however, particularly in writing, they have pupils sitting for too long just listening. At such times, they give more-able pupils too few opportunities to organise their own work and move on at their own pace. Their questioning of pupils is very good and teachers make sure that those of all abilities have opportunities to answer. The good relationships and clear rules for behaviour mean that pupils listen carefully to the teacher and each other and get on quickly with their work. The teachers make detailed assessment of pupils’ progress in lessons, and their marking shows pupils clearly how they can do better next time.

The school has developed a rich curriculum that links subjects together in order to make learning interesting. The activities are planned exceptionally well so that pupils new to the school can quickly begin work at their own levels and make good progress. Parents and carers rightly see this as an important reason for their children’s enjoyment of school. The curriculum includes many opportunities for pupils to learn to sing, play musical instruments and paint vivid pictures of things like castles and Viking ships. A wide range of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum and helps to make topics interesting. The many extra-curricular clubs are popular and help pupils develop their skills in sport and the creative arts. The excellent focus on computer skills means that pupils gain a thorough knowledge of how to conduct their own research while enjoying many opportunities to practise their reading and number work.

Parents and carers appreciate the way staff know their children so well as individuals and are always there if any pupil needs support. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable benefit from excellent support, both from the school and from outside professionals. Adults are very sensitive to the particular needs of pupils from military families. Parents and carers say how much it helps their children when family members are on active service. The school has taken effective measures to improve attendance and to maintain it at its high levels.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher shows high expectations of all members of the school community and, in a short time, has helped to set ambitious targets for the school’s improvement. He is supported well by senior staff who share his vision for the school. The school uses data on pupils’ achievements extremely well to track their progress by ability, gender, and eligibility for free school meals and ethnicity. These

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systems support the school’s excellent commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils and resultant action has helped raise attainment to its high levels.

Extensive systems to evaluate teaching and learning include lesson observations and analyses of pupils’ books in all subjects. Senior staff are developing their expertise well in conducting these evaluations and teachers value the identified, clear areas for improvement. However, evaluations tend to focus on what teachers are doing rather than how well different groups of pupils are learning. This explains why expectations of more-able pupils’ writing are higher in some classes than others.

Governance is good. The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. Its members have an astute awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and are not afraid to hold the leaders to account. The governing body has a good involvement in establishing safeguarding systems. These are very comprehensive and provide staff with clear guidance on their responsibilities. Training is thorough and ensures that procedures are updated regularly.

The provision for community cohesion is good. Pupils learn about different faiths, cultures and social backgrounds through the religious education curriculum and extensive links with the local community. Recently-established links with contrasting schools and communities, in this country and overseas, give pupils a clear awareness of how other people in the world live and worship.

The school has developed outstanding partnerships with parents and carers. There is very close contact between home and school, and parents and carers feel strongly that they are part of their children’s education. They have a wealth of information about school life and their children’s progress and are consulted regularly to canvas their views. There are also excellent links with the military base, local schools and businesses that enhance the provision and put the school at the heart of the community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all areas of their development. The good teaching accounts for the fact that nearly all children attain, and many exceed average levels by the end of their Reception year. The excellent quality of the care, guidance and support means that they develop their personal and social skills particularly well. Their behaviour is good, and they soon grow into confident, independent learners.

Parents and carers speak highly of the way all adults make learning enjoyable so that their children look forward to coming to school every day. The teaching of early reading skills is particularly effective because adults employ a wide range of strategies to capture children’s interest. For example, in one session, children used computers, jigsaws and books to practise their word-building skills; they made rapid progress while having great fun. Children have some good opportunities to practise their writing skills but sometimes the tasks for the more-able lack the challenge to make the best of their skills. Staff observe and record children’s progress and involvement in class discussions carefully, and use this information well to plan the next steps in learning.

The curriculum is planned well to provide children with a good balance of work and play. The outdoor area is reasonably stimulating but adults do not always make best use of it to build on children’s learning in the classroom.

The leadership and management are good. The staff work very closely as a team to enable children to develop a love of learning. They have a clear understanding of how to improve the provision, for example, by having higher expectations of the more-able children’s writing.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers think highly of all aspects of the provision. The vast majority appreciate the way their children enjoy school, feel safe and learn how to live healthy lives. They believe the school is well led and that their children are making good progress. Nearly all of those who responded say that the teaching and learning are

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good. They are impressed with the way school keeps them informed about how well their children are doing and how they can help at home. Inspection findings support their views on these issues. A small number expressed concerns about how well the school manages poor behaviour, but inspectors found that rare instances are managed well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cranwell Primary School (Foundation) 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 inspection team received 135 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 296 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total		Total		Total		Total	
My child enjoys school	98	73	36	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	103	76	29	21	3	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	86	64	48	36	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	83	61	47	35	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	91	67	40	30	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	82	61	45	33	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	78	58	55	41	2	1	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)	57	42	66	49	6	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	77	57	49	36	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	44	58	43	9	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	46	62	46	3	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	95	70	36	27	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	100	74	32	24	3	2	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cranwell Primary School (Foundation), Sleaford, NG34 8HH

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we came to your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and sing so beautifully. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how proud you are of your school. You think yours is an excellent school and we agree.

You work very hard and make good progress, so you reach high standards. You behave well, and this helps to make school a happy place. You have an outstanding knowledge of how to keep safe and live healthy lives. Even the youngest ones think a lot about people in the world who are sad or have too little to eat. Your headteacher and senior staff help to run the school smoothly and make sure it keeps improving. You work hard at the activities provided for you and enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school. Your teachers make learning fun and are good at helping you when you find things difficult. They work really closely with your parents and carers to make sure they know how well you are doing at school. All staff at the school take excellent care of you and keep you safe.

- The teachers are always looking for ways to improve. We have asked them to give you all more chances to write independently, to keep a careful eye on how you are doing and to make sure your handwriting is as good as it could be. You can help by doing your very best writing every time.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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