

Cromwell Park Primary School

Parkway, Hinchingsbrooke Park, Huntingdon, PE29 6JA

Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good teaching helps all pupils, including those who need extra help, to make good progress in English and mathematics, particularly in reading. There is outstanding teaching in Year 6.
- The standards pupils reach in English and in mathematics are increasingly above national levels by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They are particularly good at working together as 'learning partners' and are very supportive of each other.
- Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after at school and the vast majority of parents and carers agree.
- Pupils say they are happy to come to school. Attendance has much improved in recent years and is now above the national average.
- Senior leaders, including members of the governing body, are ambitious for the school. Staff morale is high and they work together well towards the school's priorities.
- Leaders at all levels have succeeded in improving achievement, teaching and leadership since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to raise pupils' good achievement further
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- In some lessons, teachers' explanations are too long and these limit the time pupils have to work on their own.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking of their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers, and one assembly. Five lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Short visits to observe the teaching of reading were made. Activities related to the teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs were also observed.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and members of the governing body. In addition, the lead inspector talked with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with pupils, listened to them read and observed them at play during break and lunch times.
- The school’s safeguarding policies, improvement plans, notes from meetings of the governing body and records of pupils’ behaviour were reviewed. Inspectors also looked at pupils’ work and records of their progress.
- Inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View), parental telephone and e-mail communications, and 25 replies to the staff questionnaires. The views of parents and carers were sought at the start of the school day as they brought their children to school, and at a coffee morning in support of Red Nose Day.

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Cecelia Davies

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cromwell Park Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- A large majority of pupils are White British. An above-average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and of these, a few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with parents in the armed forces) is below average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is below average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- No alternative or off-site provision is used by the school.
- The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Muntjacs childcare provision and Cromwell Park Pre-school operate on the school site. Both are subject to separate inspections.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils to improve their writing and mathematics skills by:
 - providing more of the imaginative, stimulating experiences that inspire pupils to write
 - extending opportunities for pupils to use their skills in mathematics in other subjects.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching through the school by ensuring that:
 - lesson introductions and explanations are not too long so that pupils get more time to work on their own and find things out for themselves
 - pupils are given time to respond to the marking of their work so that they can improve their skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. Because adults provide lots of opportunities for children to develop their skills, they make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1, attainment is above national averages in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' attainment across the school is rising. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are average overall. The most recent results show that by the end of Year 6, pupils were, on average, two terms ahead of the levels expected for their age. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' current attainment in English and mathematics is on track to be above expectations in July 2013.
- All groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who need extra help, make good progress because teachers set work that addresses any gaps in their knowledge and skills. Particularly rapid progress is made in Year 6 where there is more outstanding teaching. Pupils in the early stages of learning English make good progress because they receive effective individual support, which helps them to learn key words and phrases.
- Pupils do best of all in reading because the regular teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) helps to ensure that they quickly acquire secure basic reading skills. Progress in the development of more complex reading skills is supported by dedicated sessions as pupils move through the school.
- Pupil premium funding is being used appropriately to enhance the progress of the very small number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Support in the form of one-to-one tuition for literacy and mathematics, for example, ensures that their progress is comparable to their peers. Nevertheless, because of other, sometimes more complex needs, the attainment gaps between these and other pupils vary from three or four terms behind in English and mathematics to, in some cases, a term ahead of other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching ensures that all pupils, including those who need extra help, achieve well over time. There is a positive climate for learning in lessons and good relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers make particularly good use of 'learning partners' where pupils talk together to share their ideas. This shared working helps them to clarify their thinking and rehearse their ideas before writing.
- The best learning happens when teachers have high expectations of learning and behaviour. Teachers plan work that is at the right level of difficulty to challenge pupils and move their learning forward. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils worked on improving speeches on, 'Why reading matters', ready for an assembly later in the day. This inspired pupils to write for a specific purpose. They helped each other to bring their writing alive by adding different language features such as similes and metaphors. Such highly effective activities for stimulating writing are not consistently offered to pupils across the school.
- The most effective teaching is where teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that take account of what pupils already know. They make clear what pupils are expected to

learn on their 'learning journeys', a term regularly referred to in lessons by adults and pupils. In a few lessons, teachers' introductions and explanations take too long. On these occasions, progress slows because pupils have insufficient time to work on their own and find things out for themselves.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because teachers break learning down into small, achievable steps. They give pupils clear explanations and make effective use of a variety of resources to make learning practical and interesting.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work lets pupils know clearly what they have done well and sets out what they need to do to improve. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments and learn from the advice given. Work in pupils' books shows that they are not provided with enough opportunities to apply and develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and as they move around the school. They are keen to talk about their work and are proud of their achievements. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning make a significant contribution to the good progress they make in lessons. Occasionally, when lesson introductions are too long, a few pupils become restless and go off task.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school's systems for promoting good behaviour. They agree that behaviour is good and say that they enjoy coming to school because teachers make learning fun. Attendance is above average and most pupils arrive on time.
- Pupils have confidence in seeking help from adults because they say they feel safe and listened to. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe, for example, when using the internet or when near roads. Pupils say that there are a few incidents of bullying, such as name-calling. School records show that these incidents are rare and dealt with promptly.

The leadership and management are good

- Under the determined leadership of the headteacher, the school has moved forward at a good pace. Supported by governors, she has taken decisive action to tackle weaknesses in teaching. Key aspects of the school have improved since the previous inspection. Those in charge of different areas of the school's work are developing their skills well. Consequently, there is a good capacity for the school to secure further improvement.
- Leaders and managers know the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve. Procedures for checking good teaching are rigorous and linked to training to help teachers improve their skills. Training provided for staff matches the needs of the school well. Adults work together as a cohesive team, clearly focused on improving pupils' achievement.
- Systems for checking the progress of all groups of pupils are thorough. Careful attention is given to making sure that all are making comparable progress and have an equal chance to succeed. Steps are taken to ensure that those eligible for the pupil premium are able to take part in all the school has to offer. This reflects the school's commitment to the elimination of discrimination. The school works well with outside agencies to ensure that pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable get the extra support they need.
- Most parents and carers' views are positive. Comments shared with inspectors showed their

confidence in the school. One wrote about her son, 'He comes home full of stories of what he has learnt', and another wrote that her children, 'are thriving and making fantastic progress'. Since the previous inspection, a Parents' Forum has been set up to enable specific issues to be raised. An extensive range of home-school communications is in place to exchange information. A few parents and carers have on-going concerns about the school's leadership.

- The teaching and learning programmes are enriched by visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. Through assemblies and the development of pupils' understanding of different cultures, together with opportunities to appreciate music and to participate in sport, the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school, particularly in terms of developing children's education in the Early Years Foundation Stage, enhancing teaching and in increasing the skills of its leaders.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. The governing body is well organised and the individual skills and expertise of its members are utilised to good effect. They fully support the drive to improve teaching and raise achievement. Governors understand the school's performance data and how it compares with other schools. They benefit from training and are well placed to challenge the school's leaders and hold them to account for the school's performance. Governors make sure teacher's pay and promotion are justified by pupils' progress and achievement. They make visits to school to check on how effective school leaders' actions are and regularly seek the views of staff, pupils, parents and carers. They keep a close check on the school's finances, including the pupil premium, to make sure it is spent in the best interests of the children. They are aware that the extra help is making a positive difference to these pupils. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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

Unique reference number	132071
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	406467

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Wilkes
Headteacher	Stephanie Baldwin
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2010
Telephone number	01480 437830
Fax number	01480 437857
Email address	office@cromwellpark.cambs.sch.uk

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