

Crawford Village Primary School

Crawford Village, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 9QP

Inspection dates	4–5 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is a shining example of inspirational and knowledgeable leadership, driven by the highest aspirations for each pupil to achieve to the best of their ability. Governors, staff and parents give this vision their wholehearted support and are focused on continuing to improve and develop the school.
- Parents are full of praise for the school, and all say they would recommend it to others. 'My child can't wait to go each day and comes home bubbling and bouncing to tell me all she has done', 'brilliant social and academic progress' and 'committed, caring and approachable staff' were typical comments.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff have risen to the challenge of improving their skills through training and rigorous performance management. They provide work very well matched not only to the different age groups in their class, but to each individual pupil's ability.
- Outstanding early years provision, including the new Nursery, gives children the best possible start in school and they make rapid progress.
- All groups of pupils achieve well, including those who have special educational needs or disability and those who are disadvantaged.
- Standards have risen rapidly since the previous inspection. Progress is accelerating securely, and many pupils exceed the progress expected of them. Older pupils' occasional spelling errors and sometimes slow recall of times tables facts mean that outcomes are good rather than outstanding.
- Excellently planned curriculum activities really capture pupils' imaginations and enthusiasm.
- Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and appreciation of British values are promoted extremely well. This is shown by their exceptionally keen attitudes to learning, respect and consideration for others and willingness to accept responsibility, such as values champions or school councillors.
- Pupils are very happy in school and their behaviour is outstanding. In lessons, they are unfailingly keen, persevere and do their best.
- Governors offer high levels of challenge and support, ensuring that each pupil has equal opportunities to access the best possible education the school can provide.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate progress, particularly for older pupils, by:
 - ensuring that pupils have an accurate knowledge of how to spell common words
 - speeding up pupils' mental recall of times tables facts.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The strong improvement in every aspect of provision is due to the headteacher's very clear vision. Her resolute commitment to making the school the very best it can be is based on her deep understanding of teaching and of the best ways to help pupils learn. Governors attribute the 'immense' and 'massive' improvement since the previous inspection to the headteacher. All staff who responded to the Ofsted survey agreed, saying they are proud to work at the school.
- Ensuring there is no discrimination and providing equal opportunities so all pupils do well both academically and socially are of the highest importance. Very carefully matched work, small-group sessions or one-to-one support meet individual needs very well. Excellent provision for pupils who have special educational needs means that they are given the support they need, and pupils who find learning easier receive extra challenges.
- Leaders constantly consider what works well and what must be improved. Very carefully measured plans are evaluated regularly, ensuring that actions are effective and improvements are happening rapidly.
- Rigorous staff performance management and appraisal strategies include focused lesson observations and informal 'drop ins', scrutiny of pupils' work and analyses of progress information. Staff have to act on the outcomes and meet targets if they wish to move to the next salary level. Staff have valued and benefited from professional development and their enhanced skills have contributed strongly to the rapid acceleration in pupils' progress.
- The headteacher is an excellent role model for teaching, leadership and management skills. In such a small school, staff hold several middle leadership roles. Professional development and training provided by the local authority, often undertaken in conjunction with other small schools, has successfully enabled them to make a very strong contribution to rapid school improvement.
- Outstanding leadership in the early years gives children an excellent start so they progress rapidly.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a core strength. Pupils feel safe, behave very well and all ages mix harmoniously. Pupils become increasingly responsible, understand right and wrong, and know and appreciate British values. The pupils who act as 'values champions' are keen to spot others putting values into practice, such as being kind to others. They respect different religions and cultures and are well prepared for life in modern British multicultural society.
- The rich, well-balanced curriculum is suitably adapted for all pupils, and a 'rolling programme' in this very small school ensures that pupils do not repeat work. Curriculum information is on the school website for parents so they can support their child's learning at home. Raising standards in English and mathematics has priority, with other subjects taught through topics, such as 'Where I live', which extend pupils' knowledge of their rural environment. For example, Year 6 mathematics activities were based on the local potato harvest.
- English and mathematics skills are put into practice across the curriculum. Pupils enjoy activities such as writing up science investigations, creating timelines in history or measuring items in design technology.
- Pupils relish all the activities that enrich their time in school and support class work, such as the trip to Liverpool's World Museum, and the wide variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs.
- Pupil premium funding provides additional support such as small spelling, mathematics and reading groups or friendship club. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils progress as well as their classmates and better than other pupils nationally.
- Sports funding provides regular lessons and activities with specialist coaches, often through the local school sports partnership. Pupils and staff have gained new skills, and participation in physical activities such as dance is high, helping pupils lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Parents commented that staff are 'open, friendly and approachable' and several volunteer to help in school. They say they are well informed through newsletters, messaging, the website, meeting staff informally when they bring their children to school each day and parents evenings. They praised the innovative 'brain builders' homework where pupils follow up class topics at home and select how they present their work in imaginative ways that really extend their learning.
- The local authority has provided high-quality support for the school, particularly during the period of temporary leadership. Leaders and governors have made full use of this for training and development. The local authority has used the school as a model of good practice in mixed-age teaching.

■ The governance of the school

- Following the previous inspection, a full review of skills was held and a significant number of new members were appointed to strengthen the governing body. They drew up an action plan and underwent training and now have a thorough knowledge of all aspects of the school and their role in school improvement.
- Knowledge gained through regular monitoring visits and headteacher's reports enables governors to offer very high levels of challenge and well informed support. They interrogate data to compare the school's performance with others locally and nationally and ask searching questions about the teachers' work to raise standards. Targets and goals for staff are based on national teacher's standards, ensuring salary rewards are appropriately given. Staff performance management leads to further professional development to improve both teaching and management skills.
- The use of pupil premium funds is carefully monitored and questioned, for example 'How much time does a teaching assistant spend working with a pupil premium child?' Governors know additional support for disadvantaged pupils is effective because they perform as well as their classmates and better than others nationally.
- Governors ensure that sports funding provides a variety of activities that increase pupils' skills and enjoyment while helping staff acquire new skills to pass on to their pupils.
- Governors ensure that pupils gain a firm foundation of traditional values, such as respect, democracy and equality, ready to contribute in their future lives. Governors were impressed when most pupils in school applied to join the eco council, showing a real sense of concern for their environment.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff training in child protection procedures is fully up to date, records are scrupulously maintained and any concerns are followed up rigorously.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Since the time of the previous inspection there has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, confirmed by school's monitoring records and inspection evidence. This is due not only to the introduction of rigorous and valuable performance management and professional development, but also to the willingness of all staff to improve their skills and knowledge. The impact is clear: standards have risen and progress has accelerated for all pupils.
- One particularly strong feature is the way staff plan learning at an individual level so each pupil receives work and tasks extremely well matched to their particular needs and abilities so they always learn well. This is based on very clear systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, enabling staff to analyse the performance of different groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, boys and girls, and use the information in planning next steps.
- Very focused training has enabled staff to ask perceptive questions that really make pupils think hard and explain, such as asking Reception children, 'How did we turn **younger** into **youngest**?'
- Excellent relationships between staff and pupils mean they cooperate happily, waste no time, are very keen learners, listen well and always work hard, and consequently make good or better progress.
- Pupils' independence is promoted very well. Older pupils are encouraged to self-assess their work, or debate their answers with others. Teachers check carefully that pupils' assessments are correct and that feedback they give to their peers is accurate.
- Staff have high expectations for what their pupils can achieve. They ensure that learning is always meaningful and builds on pupils' interests. 'Work is fun' and 'We learn lots of new things' were typical pupil comments. Favourite lessons include mathematics, design and technology, English, physical education, history and topic, showing enjoyment of all subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupil's work is marked meticulously, in line with the school's policy. A simple marking system, used consistently by all staff, ensures that pupils know exactly how well they have done. Useful feedback gives them clear guidance so they understand how to improve their work. Pupils respond thoughtfully to their teachers' verbal and written comments.
- The teaching assistants are well trained and skilled, provide knowledgeable support and make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, especially those who are vulnerable or who need extra help with their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The harmonious environment helps pupils mature as sensible, trustworthy individuals. They eagerly undertake roles and responsibilities, such as values champions who distribute certificates to pupils who they spot putting values into action, including kindness, perseverance or friendship.
- Pupils understand there are many religions and cultures in modern British society and that everyone deserves equal respect.
- Pupils relish being school councillors or prefects which teaches them traditional British values of democracy and being fair to everyone. Many were keen to apply to the governors to be members of the new eco council and three pupils represented the school to make a bid for equipment to the parish council.
- Pupils, parents and staff agree that bullying is not an issue. Pupils know that bullying takes different forms and can happen in different ways, such as by text or cyber bullying, and they would know what to do if it happened to them, saying, 'We had a whole day's lessons on staying safe online.'
- The comment, 'If you have a problem, tell a teacher and they sort it out' shows that pupils trust staff and feel very safe, and their parents agree. Road and water safety activities teach pupils how to look after themselves and care for their own and others' safety.
- Pupils who may be vulnerable, and their families, receive extra support from staff and external agencies, so they can participate fully and progress as well as their classmates.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Inspection evidence and school records show this is typical over time. There is no record of any discrimination, racism or bullying and there have been no exclusions.
- Excellent learning behaviour has helped accelerate progress. Pupils show genuine pride in their work. They mix happily, are unfailingly smiling, polite and helpful and show real consideration for each other, both inside and when playing outdoors, and are keen to earn their 'golden time' each week.
- Pupils are sure that behaviour is managed fairly by all staff. They have a keen sense of the difference between right and wrong and know that they are responsible for their actions.
- Since the time of the previous inspection, attendance has improved and is now above average, with no persistent absence. Bronze, silver and gold badges reward 100% attendance and staff work hard to ensure that pupils and families understand and value regular, punctual attendance.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- The number of pupils in each year group is very small and varies considerably from year to year, making it difficult to identify specific trends and variations in performance and outcomes. Most pupils start school with skills that are typical for their age but there is often a wide spread of ability.
- Immediately after she took up post, the headteacher acted swiftly to raise staff expectations of what their pupils could and should achieve and made them accountable for pupils' progress. Consequently, attainment has risen and progress has accelerated rapidly.
- Inspection evidence, pupils' workbooks and current school assessment records show that progress is accelerating securely for all groups of pupils. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability and those who are disadvantaged make the progress expected of them and a significant proportion exceed this.

Pupils progress rapidly in key stage 1. In 2015, attainment at the end of Year 2 was a little above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Those currently in Year 2 are on track to match the previous year which represents excellent progress from their starting points Progress is good in key stage 2 and is often outstanding in mathematics. At the end of Year 6 in 2015, attainment was above national averages in all subjects at both the expected and the higher level. These pupils made better progress than others nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion that exceeded the expected progress was higher than national figures in writing and much higher in mathematics.

- School data shows that almost all pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain the expected standards in every subject. Half are predicted to exceed this and be working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. Better teaching and support is swiftly overcoming small remaining weaknesses in the work of older pupils, such as occasional spelling errors and slow recall of times tables facts, which can marginally lower the quality of their work.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was just below the national figure, but all pupils met the standard by the end of Year 2. Early reading skills are taught well with daily practise of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) ensuring that pupils know how to 'sound out' new words. Year 6 pupils have the skills they need for future learning; they read fluently with good expression, comprehension and enjoyment and say reading helps them with writing, spelling and ideas for stories. They discuss favourite books and authors, and several are aiming to read all the Harry Potter books after enjoying one used as a class reader.
- Basic number facts are covered well and pupils understand a wide range of mathematical concepts. Year 3 pupils confidently use pictograms to interpret data. Older pupils competently multiply proper fractions by whole numbers. The class 'maths zone' is packed with regularly changing extra challenges for all abilities. Pupils enjoy daily times tables practise against the clock, but some are still slow to recall times table facts.
- A strong focus on developing writing, including the weekly 'pride' award and displays of pupils' quality work to inspire others, has successfully raised standards. Pupils write confidently and at length, present their work neatly and write in different forms. For example, reporting on science investigations into solids, liquids and gasses. Older pupils occasionally misspell common words, such as 'correct'.
- Extra challenges for pupils who find learning easier enhance their thinking and reasoning skills. Talented writers attended a sports journalism day held by the local sports partnership, and the local high school arranges mathematics challenge days.
- Excellent provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability ensures that they receive skilful support and learning tasks closely matched to their individual needs to help them progress as well as their classmates.
- Very effective use of pupil premium funds provides extra support or intervention, including spelling and reading programmes, activities to develop mathematics skills, friendship groups and curriculum enrichment. As a result, disadvantaged pupils progress as well as their classmates and more rapidly than other pupils nationally. The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates has closed over the last three years, due to leaders' sharp focus on raising the quality of teaching.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Children start school with broadly typical skills for their age, although the very small numbers of pupils in each year group means that skills profiles vary considerably from year to year. Exciting activities quickly capture their interest and they are soon very busy investigating and exploring the setting, moving happily between the indoors and outside learning areas. They make rapid progress and the majority reach a good level of development by the end of Reception class.
- Children are very well prepared for Year 1 because they are used to working in the same class so transition is seamless, with no interruption to learning. Exceptionally strong relationships between adults and children, together with high-quality care and welfare ensure that children are kept safe and feel very secure. They rapidly gain confidence and independence, happily make choices; they behave very well, look after themselves and use equipment sensibly.
- Outstanding teaching ensures that activities are very carefully planned for the different and varied needs of each child, including those who have special educational needs or are disadvantaged. Staff have high expectations for the children and constantly keep a very close eye on their progress so they can plan learning activities, challenge them to move on quickly if they are able, or let them take more time if they need to.
- Daily phonics activities prepare children well for early reading and writing. Nursery children enjoyed a story outside in the sunshine, wearing 'listening ears' to remind them to listen carefully for different letter sounds. Reception children retold the story, then wrote simple sentences, such as 'She went to the well', correctly using capital letters, full stops and leaving 'finger spaces' between each word.

- Mathematical skills develop well through varied practical activities, such as measuring out ingredients for pancakes in the mud kitchen, or filling different sized containers to water the herb garden. Staff take every opportunity to extend children's thinking skills, using carefully phrased questions, such as 'What might happen next?' to elicit children's ideas and develop their communication skills.
- Most children have good oral skills, and put these to very good use when discussing and organising their activities. The rich range of creative possibilities really stimulates ideas and extends learning in all areas. Children made a house inside a large bush and animatedly discussed how to arrange the interior. Others created an ice cream parlour, offered a wide range of flavours and used an imaginary computer to check their stock.
- Parents are extremely positive about the early years provision. Staff make every effort to involve them, meeting them informally when they bring their child each day or at 'stay and play' sessions and sharing the 'learning journals' that record children's work and activities as well as parents and children's comments.
- The outstanding leadership of the early years is based on the teacher's thorough understanding of how children at this age learn, and on the constant evaluation of how to meet the needs of the children even better and how to further develop the setting.

School details

Unique reference number	119224
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10012120

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Wilson
Headteacher	Gillian Wilton
Telephone number	01695 622333
Website	www.crawfordvillageprimary.uk
Email address	bursar@uphollandcrawfordvillage.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the averaged-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium has decreased and is now below the national average. Pupil premium is additional government funding to support those known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- Numbers in each year group are very small so the school's performance is not comparable with government floor standards.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes.
- The Nursery opened in January 2016, and the school offers breakfast club and after-school provision.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2014, after a long period of uncertainty when the school was led by a number of temporary headteachers. A number of new governors have been appointed since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in both classes, visited small-group sessions, observed pupils outside and at lunchtime and listened to readers from Years 1, 2 and 6.
- The inspector talked with some parents and met with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and two representatives from the local authority.
- Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised and school documents examined, including records of the monitoring of teaching, current achievement data and systems used to gather an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe were inspected.
- The inspector looked at the 27 responses in the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire, the 27 comments on free text, the 10 responses in the staff survey and spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.

Inspection team

Kathleen McArthur, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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