



# Croft Infant School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 112493  
**Local Authority** DERBYSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 289298  
**Inspection dates** 30–31 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Roy Bowers HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Marshall Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Alfreton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7		Derbyshire DE55 7BW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 832307
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	152	<b>Fax number</b>	01773 832307
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr K Newton
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Walls
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2002		

---

<b>Age group</b> 4–7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 30–31 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 289298
-------------------------	-----------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Croft Infant School is smaller than average size and serves an area of some socio-economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals are both higher than average. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin and there are no pupils who have English as an additional language. The attainment of pupils on entry is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

It is easy to see why the school is so popular with parents and why pupils enjoy coming. It is an outstanding school. 'I love it here - we do really exciting things and everyone looks after us,' said one of the pupils. Not only do pupils enjoy their time at school, their achievement is exceptional. When they enter the Reception class, pupils' skills are below average for their age. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2, standards are significantly above the national average.

There are several reasons why the school is achieving its many successes. The most important of these is the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher. She has created a common sense of purpose among the staff and has inspired them to pursue higher standards year upon year. Leadership and management are outstanding. An excellent self-evaluation process is in place and, as a result, the school has developed a very detailed understanding of how well it is doing and how to make improvements. A rich and exciting curriculum together with outstanding teaching, contribute towards the high quality education provided for all the pupils.

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support and, as a result, personal development and well-being are outstanding. Very good skills in reading, writing, mathematics, good use of computers and a teaching style which promotes independent learning ensure that pupils are well prepared for their future education. 'My child loves the school. It will be a sad day when she has to leave but at least I know that she has had the best start,' said one parent. It is a vibrant school where pupils are confident and have very positive attitudes. Although attendance is better than at the time of the last inspection, it is still not high enough and is slightly below the national average.

Excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils feel safe and secure, and behave very well. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. They talk confidently about how fruit, vegetables, milk and water are essential for a healthy diet. One pupil in Reception said, 'Exercises keep you healthy,' and another added, 'Smoking is bad for you - it makes you unhealthy.' A very good range of activities is provided at lunchtime so that the pupils can take part in and enjoy physical activities. 'It's good fun,' said one pupil as he raced from one activity to another. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities offered to them and many perform tasks for their class such as collecting and distributing the fruit. Some of the older pupils act as 'playground friends' and help others if they are hurt or lonely.

In nearly all aspects of the school's work improvement since the last inspection has been excellent. The school offers excellent value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the level of pupils' attendance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards have risen steadily since the last inspection. Children enter school with below average skills in literacy and numeracy. However, they quickly settle and soon start to make outstanding progress. By the end of Reception, most are exceeding the standards expected for their age. The momentum continues in Years 1 and 2. By the time they leave the school, pupils have achieved extremely well and have attained above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Because of the excellent support and attention to individual needs, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, do as well as they possibly can.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. 'My school is fun,' said one pupil, which is typical of the comments made. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school because their work is suited very well to their interests and abilities, and the strong relationships in the school make them feel safe and secure. From the day they enter school, high quality teaching enables pupils to become confident learners who have the ability and attitudes to focus on their tasks and work independently. They are eager to learn and take an active part in the lessons. This is helping them prepare for their future learning. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils play and co-operate together extremely well especially when playing with the variety of resources during the lunch break. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils show a good understanding of racial tolerance. They make very good contributions to the wider community through, for example, sending gifts for children in Africa and visiting the local care home. Despite the efforts of the school and the involvement of the welfare service there is a small number of pupils who fail to attend regularly.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Outstanding teaching contributes greatly to the enjoyment and achievement of all pupils. High quality planning based upon accurate assessments ensures that pupils are challenged very well. There are times when pupils are so motivated by their learning that they continue their discussions about their work into the lunchtime break. Star charts help all pupils understand what they can do and what they still need to learn. Teaching assistants make an outstanding contribution to the learning of all the pupils.

Classrooms are vibrant places where the very good range of resources allows pupils to engage in a variety of planned learning activities. For example, Reception and Year 1 pupils were absorbed in activities such as role-play, painting, handling materials and

writing a menu for a giant. Excellent interaction between the pupils, teacher and teaching assistants enabled pupils to develop their spoken and written language skills very well. Parents make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning by working with their children as they bring them into the classroom at the start of the day.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding curriculum provides all pupils with a high level of challenge, and a rich and exciting range of experiences. The emphasis placed upon learning through activity and creative arts makes learning enjoyable and exciting, and contributes very well to pupils' academic achievement and personal development. Role-play, dance, music, art, drama and experimentation are planned to support the high emphasis that the school places on literacy and numeracy. Very effective use is made of visitors, which supports learning very well. For example, when studying The Great Fire of London, pupils worked with actors and engaged in role-play activities to help them understand the events and provide a stimulus for their writing. The wide range of visits to places such as the National Space Centre, White Post Farm Centre, Sherwood Forest and local travel agents supports learning very well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Parents rightly speak highly of the care, guidance and support given to pupils. It is outstanding and is evident in pupils' high achievement and excellent personal development. One parent said that since her child had started at the school 'her behaviour at home has settled down which is due to her being happy and stress free at school.' All the staff know the pupils very well and keep a careful eye on their safety and development. The exemplary way in which pupils' progress is monitored, and challenging targets set, ensures that they receive the guidance they need to achieve extremely well. There are very effective links with external agencies, for example, to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Risk assessments are carefully attended to and child protection arrangements are secure. Parents are kept well-informed about their children's progress and are very pleased with all aspects of the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is relentless in her pursuit of excellence and there is no room for complacency. The senior leaders, curriculum leaders and Foundation Stage leader support her exceptionally well and provide outstanding leadership at all levels. They carry out robust checks on teaching and learning and have very high expectations of themselves and each other. The rigorous self-evaluation systems enable the school to check carefully its performance,

celebrate its achievements and identify what it needs to do to improve. The school improvement plan provides a very good framework for improvement. The governors monitor the school's performance very well and show excellent support for the headteacher and staff.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

31 January 2007

Dear Children

Croft Infants School, Marshall Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 7BW

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed watching your lessons and talking to you about your work. We could see that you were very happy and enjoyed your time at school very much. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and how you got on well together. You are growing into very responsible young people. Well done!

You go to an outstanding school and make excellent progress with your work. The teaching is excellent and the teachers give you many exciting things to do in your lessons. The other adults who work with you look after you very well and make sure that you learn all that you should.

You have an outstanding headteacher who makes sure that the school improves each year. I have asked her to carry on improving the school for you all. I did notice that a few of you do not go to school as often as you should. I have asked your headteacher to make sure that those children come to school more often.

We shall take away many good memories about your school and have very much enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Lead Inspector