

# Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Croft Infant School

Marshall Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7BW

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 October 2024

## Outcome

Croft Infant School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming school where pupils are happy and safe. Parents and carers value the school's nurturing ethos. Many parents comment that the school is not just a school, but like a family.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve well, and many pupils do. They enjoy learning.

Pupils are good friends with each other and they socialise together well. They enjoy taking part in a wide range of energetic activities during social times. Engaging activities, such as disco dancing, building assault courses and playing with hoops, make breaktimes fun.

The school is a calm, caring and orderly environment. Pupils respond well to routines, such as lining up to get their lunch. They follow adults' instructions well. Pupils understand the school's high expectations for positive behaviour and respect. They have confidence that they can talk to adults about any worries they might have.

The school's inclusive vision for education celebrates 'a rainbow of possibilities where everyone can shine'. Pupils agree that everyone is welcome here and they 'can be their own unique self'.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The early years provides a caring and supportive environment that nurtures children's independence well. The curriculum promotes children's curiosity and their engagement

with learning. Teachers design learning activities that reinforce the important information that they want children to learn. For example, teachers use 'The Enormous Turnip' story to help children understand the concept of 'one more'. Children sustain their concentration and achieve well.

The school's curriculum is well ordered and outlines the key knowledge that pupils learn. In some subjects, the curriculum is quite new. How the curriculum is taught in these subjects does not always help pupils learn as well as they should. Pupils are sometimes unclear about the purpose of the activities they do. At times, teachers do not design learning activities that focus on the important information. Pupils sometimes struggle to secure their knowledge and deepen their understanding in these subjects.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They explain new content clearly to help pupils understand well. Teachers revisit important information to help pupils remember. They use appropriate strategies to check pupils' understanding. However, at times, teachers do not address pupils' misconceptions quickly enough. Some pupils develop errors or misconceptions that are not corrected in a timely way.

Reading is prioritised. The school inspires pupils to enjoy reading with visits to the local library. The school's phonics programme is effective. Staff use their strong subject knowledge to help pupils understand and practise new sounds. Typically, pupils develop into confident and fluent readers. However, at times, teachers do not identify and resolve gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge quickly enough.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Pupils with SEND are fully included in school life. They learn alongside their peers and benefit from tailored teaching support when needed. Staff are knowledgeable about the needs of these pupils and select the most appropriate resources to help these pupils learn successfully.

The school provides high-quality pastoral support to nurture pupils' confidence and build their self-esteem. Effective character development opportunities help pupils to learn to be responsible. Pupils are proud of the roles they have, such as 'tiny teachers' and 'happiness heroes'. They value the opportunity to make others happy and to be helpful in class. Pupils are proud of the contributions they make to charity work, such as cake sales or food collections for harvest. These experiences help pupils blossom into confident and thoughtful individuals.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. In the main, they sustain their concentration on their learning. Pupils respond well when reminded to focus or listen. They use impressive independent learning behaviours to help them organise their own learning. Positive support for pupils' behaviour, as well as their mental health and well-being, ensures that the environment is calm and orderly. This helps pupils to thrive.

School leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of the curriculum. Staff appreciate actions to reduce their workload, such as removing unnecessary jobs.

Governors undertake some checks of the school's work. However, they do not hold school leaders to account as rigorously as they should.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects where the curriculums are quite new, teachers do not always choose suitable pedagogical approaches to teach new content. When this happens, pupils struggle to secure their knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers deliver the curriculum effectively so that pupils learn new information and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers do not always resolve pupils' misconceptions or knowledge gaps in a timely way. As a result, some pupils perpetuate small errors or mistakes in their understanding. The school should ensure that teachers use appropriate strategies to check pupils' learning and remedy any gaps or misunderstandings swiftly.
- Governors' checks of leaders' work to improve the school sometimes lack rigour and consistency. As a result, governors are not always confident about what is improving and what needs more work. Governors should ensure that they hold leaders to account effectively.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112493
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10366944
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mary Kerry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Swain
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.croftinfant.co.uk">www.croftinfant.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with senior leaders from the school. She met with governors and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also considered the support provided for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector discussed pupils' attendance and behaviour with school leaders. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.

- The inspector considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted’s survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also reviewed responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff. She held discussions with staff and pupils.
- The inspector considered a wide range of evidence, including the documents published on the school’s website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Donna Moulds, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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