

Archbishop Cranmer Church of England Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123824
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327999
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Joanna Pike

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	312
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Brooks
Headteacher	Shirley McBride
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cranmer Road Taunton TA1 1XU
Telephone number	01823 272553
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Age group	2–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average-sized primary school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Nursery and Reception classes. There is also a privately run pre-school group and a breakfast and after-school club on the school's site. These were inspected separately at the same time as this inspection. The majority of pupils are of White British origin. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school is higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than in most schools. The school has gained the Activemark award, Healthy School status and Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

- Archbishop Cranmer is a good school. Outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to a really good start. The school's excellent pastoral care, the good provision for pupils' personal development and the positive ethos result in pupils being extremely eager to learn. Pupils' behaviour is good around school and in lessons, where they work very hard. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and enthusiastically take part in the wide variety of opportunities to exercise. Children enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are well below expectations, with a significant proportion having very limited personal and language skills. Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but until recently their progress slowed during Years 1 and 2, before picking up in Years 3 to 6. As a result of the school's efforts to boost achievement, especially in reading and writing, pupils are now making good progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards in Year 2, which had been significantly below average for a number of years, have been rising over the last two years and are now in line with the national average. This trend of improvement is continuing in Years 1 and 2. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average. This represents good achievement given the pupils' starting points in Reception, and the school has sustained this good achievement over several years.

Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating activities which capture pupils' interest, so that they hugely enjoy lessons. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils could hardly wait to start their retelling of the Pied Piper. Teachers usually tell pupils what they will learn. Opportunities are often missed to explain to pupils the small steps they need to make to reach the lesson's aim and to evaluate their success during the lesson.

Pupils' wider interests are catered for very well, with a good range of enrichment activities which they greatly appreciate. The curriculum is constantly adapted to better meet pupils' needs, especially in boosting their skills in reading, writing and mathematics, and this is having a positive impact on their rates of progress.

Pastoral care is excellent and results in pupils feeling safe and ready to learn. Support for children and families is extensive. The family support worker provides outstanding advice and help. Partnership with parents is actively encouraged, and increasing numbers of parents are volunteering in the school. All pupils have targets in reading, writing and mathematics, but teachers do not use these often enough in lessons to help pupils know how to reach them.

The headteacher provides strong leadership and, together with the governors and staff, has worked very hard to raise standards and achievement and to improve pupils' personal development. Senior and middle leaders are now playing an increasingly influential role in improving pupils' achievement, particularly by monitoring pupils' progress more closely. This is enabling them to take prompt action to tackle signs of underachievement. The school is not yet making enough use of aspirational targets as a strategy to raise achievement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Excellent leadership and management have resulted in greatly improved provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children settle very quickly and gain confidence because of the highly effective arrangements to ensure their health, safety and well-being. The outstanding curriculum is carefully planned to make extensive use of the superb resources.

Children are totally absorbed in exciting activities inside and outdoors, which build their independence and ability to work with others really well. Adults are extremely adept at maximising children's learning, and there is a very good emphasis on developing children's language and number skills. Progress is carefully tracked and used to plan each child's next steps in learning. This outstanding provision results in children making huge leaps forward in their development. Over the last two years, most children have made good progress during the year and reached average standards in most areas, though reading and writing have been weaker. The current Reception cohort are making faster gains, especially in reading and writing, as a result of the improved provision. Partnership with parents is well promoted, such as through the 'stay and play' activities every morning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Excellent leadership and management have resulted in greatly improved provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children settle very
- Develop pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and the small steps they need to make in lessons to reach their learning targets.
- Set more challenging targets to help raise aspirations in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

National test results have been broadly average in Year 6 for several years, and pupils have made good progress since the Early Years Foundation Stage. This trend is continuing with current standards in Year 6 being broadly average and progress good. Standards in writing have lagged behind reading, mathematics and science, but are now catching up.

Year 2 results have been significantly below average for several years, especially in writing. Pupils' progress from the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been satisfactory. The school has taken determined steps to improve pupils' progress, with a particular emphasis on reading and writing, across the school. This is beginning to pay off with the current Years 1 and 2 making faster progress, so that Year 1 are on track to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. Current Year 2 pupils, especially the more able, are making good steps forward in their writing and more pupils are on track to reach the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. They look after each other well. They have a very good understanding of the diversity of cultures in Britain because of the effective way the many different cultures are celebrated within the school. Pupils' understanding of the similarities and differences between their own and global cultures is not so well developed. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to reflect on their own and others' beliefs, values and feelings. A small number of parents expressed concerns that bullying is not always tackled effectively. However, pupils feel safe and secure, and express confidence in the way in which bullying is dealt with. The school council gives pupils an effective voice in the school. Pupils also benefit from the good range of opportunities they have to contribute to the school and local community. Projects such as the youth enterprise programme help develop pupils' teamworking skills. This, together with their average attainment in literacy and numeracy, prepares them satisfactorily for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Because of the positive atmosphere in classrooms, pupils feel confident to explain things even if they may be wrong. Tasks are well matched to pupils' needs, and teachers and teaching assistants provide good one-to-one support, which helps pupils learn well. Pupils benefit from the frequent opportunities for independent work. Good use is made of resources such as interactive whiteboards and computers to further enhance pupils' learning. Often, pupils do not know the key steps that will help them reach the lesson's aim, because teachers do not make these clear. As a result, opportunities are missed for pupils to evaluate their own progress. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' learning through small group work. This enables pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make the same good progress as others. Pupils who have English as an additional language also make good progress because of the well tailored support they receive. Marking gives good advice on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and has good breadth. Art has a high profile around the school, and the current focus on drawing is developing pupils' skills well. Pupils really benefit from the good range of enrichment activities, including special events, trips, visitors and opportunities for the gifted and talented. The school often makes flexible use of groups of similar age or ability. This approach has helped improve achievement, particularly in reading and writing, and especially in Years 1 and 2. Catch-up programmes are constantly evaluated and adapted to better meet pupils' needs. The school is at an early stage of developing projects that link several subjects together so that pupils can apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are robust. The school makes very effective use of a wide range of services and organisations to provide excellent support for children and families. Pupils new to the school settle very quickly because of the extremely good induction arrangements. The headteacher has introduced a rigorous approach to improving attendance and this has had a positive impact, so that attendance has now risen to broadly average levels.

Pupils have targets in English and mathematics, but these are not often referred to in lessons. As a consequence, pupils do not have a clear understanding of the small steps they need to make to reach their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has developed a clear vision for improving the school, in which all staff and governors share. The school development plan is a useful tool for helping to drive the school forwards. The headteacher has strengthened senior and middle leadership. Leaders have clear

roles and are rapidly becoming more skilled at evaluating the school's performance in order to improve provision. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well because of regular and thorough monitoring. It uses the information gained effectively to adapt provision and boost pupils' progress. A recently introduced system to track pupils' progress is helping teachers to identify and tackle underachievement. All these developments have helped to improve provision and raise standards in Years 1 and 2 and the Early Years Foundation Stage. These improvements demonstrate the school's good capacity to continue improving. The school does not always make the best use of challenging targets as a tool to raise aspirations and achievement. Community cohesion is promoted well. Pupils have a very good understanding of diversity within the school and the local community. A thorough audit of the school's provision recognised the need to extend pupils' awareness of the global community. The school has developed a good range of strategies to encourage partnership with parents, such as parent workshops. As a result, their involvement is increasing. Governors are kept well informed about the school and are rigorous in holding the school to account by asking searching questions.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Archbishop Cranmer C of E Community Primary School, Taunton TA1 1XU

It was good to come and see you at your school! Thank you for making us so welcome, talking to us and helping us during our visit. We especially enjoyed the good discussions we had with some of you, when you gave us lots of information. Your school is giving you a good education. It also has some outstanding features. Here are some of the most important parts of the inspection report that we thought you might like to know:

- You work hard in lessons, make good progress and reach average standards.
- Those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes do really well because the adults help you to learn using a wonderful range of activities.
- Teaching is good because your teachers make lessons interesting and fun.
- You really enjoy your time in school and your behaviour is good.
- Your teachers work hard to give you a good curriculum, which has exciting events such as trips out.
- The school makes sure that you all feel safe, settled and secure.
- The school is led and managed well and your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard so you can all do even better.

To improve further, we have asked the school to do the following:

- Make sure you have a really clear understanding of how well you are getting on and that you each know precisely how to reach your reading, writing and mathematics targets during lessons.
- Set more difficult targets to give you more of a challenge and help you make even better progress.

Thank you again for all your help.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Pike Lead inspector