

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Crest Infant School

Fleet Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 2QA

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 May 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have many happy childhood experiences and a wonderful start to their education in this school. They are greeted warmly by staff every morning. Staff take time to get to know pupils and their families well. They understand every pupil's needs. As a result, the school is a happy, welcoming place where pupils love to be.

The school has exceptionally high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school identifies pupils with SEND swiftly. They benefit from the school's highly inclusive environment and expertly tailored support. Staff are full of encouragement for all pupils to achieve as highly as they possibly can. Pupils strive to meet the high standards. Pupils show immense respect for staff and for each other. They concentrate in lessons and behaviour is calm throughout the school day.

Every minute at this school brings an opportunity for pupils to develop personally, socially and emotionally. Social times are truly joyful, with a rich range of clubs and activities which are designed to promote pupils' communication, co-operation and physical development. The school's bespoke character curriculum is central to the learning. In assemblies, pupils are proud to share examples of how they demonstrate the school values.

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

Pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum which builds logically from Reception to Year 2. The school has recently further refined the curriculum so that teachers know precisely what pupils should understand and when it must be taught. The school has

identified the key technical vocabulary that pupils need to understand to discuss their learning.

The school has recently supported staff to further develop their subject knowledge in English and mathematics. This includes aspects of teaching which help pupils to gain a deep understanding of the curriculum. In these subjects, staff frequently revisit prior learning so that it is committed to pupils' long-term memory. They explain and model new concepts well. Activities are well designed and help pupils to deepen their understanding. Pupils practise new learning before they move on to more difficult ideas. In Reception, children explore numbers and sounds through an effective balance of adult-led and independent activities. As a result, children learn securely and can apply their understanding of English and mathematics to other areas of the wider curriculum. In some foundation subjects in key stage 1, staff subject knowledge is not as secure. As a result, some pupils do not attain as highly as they could.

The school promotes the enjoyment of reading at every opportunity. Pupils learn to recognise sounds right from the start. They eagerly join in songs and rhymes and enjoy staff reading stories to them. They begin learning the phonics curriculum as soon as they start school. Staff check pupils' understanding and give them the help they need. Many pupils struggle to learn to read. The school provides tailored additional support from staff who are expert in teaching reading. Most pupils achieve well and are fluent readers by the end of Year 2.

Pupils feel valued by staff, and they behave well. They show high levels of responsibility as they use the school's extensive playground equipment. Some pupils struggle to come to school due to emotional or physical barriers. The school carries out meticulous analysis of attendance and understands families' needs well. The school does all it can to support families to overcome barriers to pupils' attendance.

The school's excellent programme for wider opportunities enables pupils to develop their interests, self-confidence and character. Pupils frequently learn through school visits, such as to places of worship, the local senior citizens centre and the zoo. Visitors to the school exemplify how the police, fire brigade and military help in the community. Visiting authors and Olympic athletes encourage pupils to be ambitious for their futures. Pupils learn about different faiths and the importance of listening to each other's opinions respectfully. Pupils have a strong understanding of how to stay safe while using the internet and playing outdoors. The school prepares them well to be responsible citizens in modern Britain.

Governors support the school well. They provide the support and challenge the school needs to ensure pupils achieve well, no matter their barriers to learning. The school makes staff well-being a priority and considers workload when making changes. Everyone shares the same ambitious vision to enable pupils to succeed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the foundation subjects, some staff do not have secure enough subject knowledge to ensure pupils understand and remember the curriculum. Sometimes pupils lose concentration and do not learn as securely as they could. The school should develop staff subject knowledge, so they are confident with the whole curriculum, and pupils achieve equally highly in every subject.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2016.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

Unique reference number	118330
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10379793
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	167
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Charlwood
Headteacher	Kerry Seales
Website	www.crestinfants.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met with some pupils to discuss their learning.
- 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' interest first.

- The inspector considered parents' views expressed through Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspector met with groups of staff. She also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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