

Inspection of Crab Lane Primary School

Crab Lane, Higher Blackley, Manchester M9 8NB

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 October 2024

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and settled at this friendly school. They told inspectors that they enjoy spending time with their friends. Pupils know that they can freely express themselves while at school. Caring staff support pupils well if they have any worries.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Pupils appreciate recognition for their efforts, such as by receiving house points, raffle tickets and prizes.

Pupils typically behave well during lessons and around the school. They understand that by following the school's 'LEARNERS' values they help to make classrooms purposeful learning environments. Pupils also try their best to observe the school's 'golden rules', which include working hard and being kind and respectful.

The school provides pupils with rich experiences to enhance their learning. For example, pupils enjoy trips to farms, art galleries, museums, a recycling centre and an observatory. Visitors to the school help to develop pupils' understanding of important issues, such as being safe online and while outdoors. Pupils attend a range of clubs, including sports, gardening, cookery and art. They take part in talent shows and compete in sports events with other schools.

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

The school and the governing body work closely to provide pupils with a broad and ambitious curriculum. Starting from the early years, subject curriculums identify the small steps of knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which teachers should introduce subject content. In 2024, pupils' attainment in some subjects at the end of Year 6 was significantly below national averages. A substantial number of pupils joined the school during the year. The school has acted swiftly to address gaps in learning, and most current pupils are achieving well.

Staff benefit from training and support, which helps them to further develop their subject knowledge. They design learning activities well and provide clear explanations when delivering curriculum content. Staff use a range of strategies to check how well pupils progress through the curriculum. They use this information to adapt future teaching.

The school has focused on developing pupils' spoken language. This work has been largely successful, with pupils being able to articulate their learning well across a range of subjects. However, in the early years, the school has not made sure that staff are consistently clear on the specific vocabulary that children should learn and when this should happen. This means that some children do not learn the breadth of language that they could.

Staff identify pupils with SEND as quickly as possible. They work with external professionals, parents and carers to help pupils with SEND to follow the same curriculum

as their classmates. Staff provide tailored support for pupils with complex needs to enable them to be ready to learn.

Pupils begin to learn phonics from the beginning of the Reception Year. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme with fidelity. Pupils practise reading from books that match their current phonics knowledge. This helps most to develop into confident readers. Staff provide effective support for pupils who struggle with learning to read.

The school has identified high-quality texts across the curriculum. It has established new reading areas, including a library and outdoor 'reading sheds'. Pupils can earn 'reading tokens' to exchange for books. However, it is too early to see the intended impact of these initiatives. Some pupils do not read widely, and they are not enthusiastic about reading. These pupils have limited knowledge of different books, texts and authors.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. From the beginning of the early years, children learn to share and take turns with others. They settle into school life quickly. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They understand the importance of attending school regularly. Most pupils have high attendance rates. When this is not the case, the school works tenaciously with parents and with local agencies. This has had a positive impact on reducing levels of absence.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about responsibility by taking on leadership roles in school, for example as school councillors, playground buddies and science ambassadors. They visit the local church and the local home for older people. Pupils collect food to help people who are less fortunate. They learn how to protect their physical and mental health.

Staff value working as part of a team. They described the school as being 'like a family'. The governing body and the school ensure that staff have the time and support that they need to fulfil their roles well. Staff said that their opinions are valued and considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Until recently, the school has not placed enough emphasis on fostering pupils' love of reading. This means that some pupils have limited knowledge of different writers and texts, which makes it difficult for them to talk with enthusiasm about reading. The school should ensure that these pupils read more widely and often so that they develop their understanding of a broader and varied range of literature.
- In the early years, the school has not fully determined the precise vocabulary that children should learn and when this should happen. As a result, staff do not

consistently introduce and revisit enough new words during learning time. The school should help staff to broaden children's vocabulary so that they know and remember more.

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	105465
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10347962
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Beard
Headteacher	Philip Hughes
Website	www.crablane.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the North Manchester Primary Federation. Leadership and governance are shared across the two schools in the federation.
- Since the previous inspection, a new executive headteacher and a new chair of governors have taken up post.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour during lessons and around school, including at playtime, at breakfast club and during lunchtime. They spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school and considered the responses to Ofsted’s online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics, geography and religious education. In each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. Inspectors considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and documents pertaining to pupils’ behaviour and levels of attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the responses to Ofsted’s online survey for staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector met with some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alex Farrow	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Crompton	Ofsted Inspector

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