

Inspection of Crich Junior School

School Lane, Crich, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5DF

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since May 2013.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a family feel to this school community. Everyone feels welcome. Pupils, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), quickly settle in. The adults get to know them very well indeed. Pupils feel safe and secure in the knowledge that adults are always looking out for them.

Pupils' happiness is really important here. When pupils arrive each morning, they complete the 'mood tracker'. If they are sad or angry, pupils know that someone will check in on them. Pupils select their own trusted adult. If they prefer not to talk, they put their worry in the 'bother box' and still get help.

Pupils are kind and considerate. Playtimes are harmonious and occasional disagreements are soon resolved. Older pupils look out for the younger ones.

Parents typically say this is a 'wonderful' place where 'children thrive'. While pupils achieve well academically, the school's high ambitions stretch to growing confident and responsible citizens. Staff encourage pupils to be reflective and independent thinkers. Pupils play an active role in their village community. They look after the school's animals and tend to the garden. They sing to local residents and help to serve lunches at the community centre.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and, for the most part, well considered. It sets out the important content that pupils should learn in all subjects. The school is creative in organising teaching for its mixed-age classes. There is a subject-expert approach to the teaching of most subjects. Teachers know their subjects, and what pupils have already learned, well. This helps them lead pupils to connect new knowledge with prior knowledge.

The way the school has designed and implemented the curriculum works well in most subjects. For example, pupils of all ages produce artwork of a high quality. Over time, they develop a sound understanding of artistic style. Older pupils can talk about how they apply this in their work. In a few subjects, the school's approach to the curriculum is less effective. Sometimes, pupils have fewer opportunities in these subjects to revisit areas of knowledge over time. Consequently, they find it hard to remember important concepts and build on or connect ideas in the same way.

Pupils who need extra support are quickly identified. The school puts together precise support plans for pupils with SEND. Teachers use assessment information well, particularly in mathematics, to address weaker areas of these pupils' knowledge. They create smaller steps in learning to make sure pupils with SEND can access the same content as their peers.

The school instils a passion for reading. Pupils enjoy visiting the local bookshop to buy books for the school library. Pupils read to themselves and each other every day. Through

a range of activities, staff encourage pupils to read boldly, with the right intonation and entertaining expression. Most pupils grow to be confident and fluent readers and achieve well. There are a few pupils who arrive at the school at an earlier stage in their reading. The school recognises this and has recently introduced a phonics programme. However, some staff are not trained to deliver this programme effectively. This includes when adapting activities that involve reading in other subjects.

The school makes sure that pupils learn why it is important to behave well and treat others with respect. The school is committed to developing pupils' understanding of multicultural life beyond their village. Refugee guest speakers, who talk to pupils about their experiences, enhance this. Pupils understand fundamental British values and respect cultural diversity. They told inspectors they were looking forward to visiting a mosque soon. However, some pupils' knowledge of the religions that they have studied is limited.

Staff feel like one of the 'family'. They are well supported by the school and each other. Staff value being trusted to follow their ideas in the subjects they lead. They find their workload manageable. Governors champion the school's culture and vision. They take the role of 'critical friend' seriously to ensure the school does its best for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is not well organised. There are sometimes long periods before areas of knowledge are revisited. The approaches used to help pupils remember what has been taught before are not as effective as they are in other subjects. As a result, pupils' knowledge in these subjects is not as secure as it should be, and they find it harder to connect their learning. The school should ensure that the curriculum is designed effectively, in a manner that supports pupils to remember well what they have been taught.
- Staff are not well trained in supporting pupils at the very early stages of learning to read. This means that a few pupils do not get the right help to become fluent readers as quickly as they could. Their learning across the curriculum is also hindered because staff do not appropriately adapt tasks that involve reading. The school should make sure that staff have the expertise to support the few pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read effectively.

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	112534
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10324052
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jo Twelves
Headteacher	Christian Orridge
Website	www.crich-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up his post in January 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 and/or sixth form provision). 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.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body and also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders of the school and considered a range of documentation.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into the subjects early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors: held discussions about the curriculum; visited a sample of lessons; spoke to teachers; spoke to some pupils about their learning; and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened as pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered evidence and spoke with leaders about some other curriculum subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during breaktime.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Stylianides, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Amanda Greaves

Ofsted Inspector

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