

Christ Church Ainsworth Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105324
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	377225
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	Keith Bardon

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Max Varnom
Headteacher	David Gerrard
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Keith Bardon
Susan Walters
Pritiben Patel

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 23 lessons, observed 10 teachers, held meetings with staff, members of the governing body, and pupils and talked informally with parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including policies, the improvement plans, pupils' work and the school's records indicating pupils' progress and attainment. Also, they analysed 134 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school situated in a semi-rural village area between Bury and Bolton. A very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils speak English as an additional language, but none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. While the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average, an average proportion has a statement for their special educational needs. The school meets the current floor standard. As well as having Healthy School status, the school has received a number of national awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the International Schools Award, and the Eco Schools Bronze Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school which provides excellent support for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is held in high esteem by parents and carers who describe it as having ‘an atmosphere in which children thrive’. Pupils are extremely proud of their school because ‘it is always welcoming’ with ‘caring teachers who help you to learn’. The school provides pupils with a well balanced and lively curriculum and their learning and achievement are good.

- While the quality of teaching is good overall, it varies in lessons between satisfactory and outstanding. Consequently, pupils’ progress is good but a little uneven across the school as a whole and quickest towards the end of Key Stage 2. In the highest quality lessons, challenging but achievable tasks set in stimulating and realistic contexts promote a fast pace of learning and extends pupils’ knowledge and skills quickly and securely. In other lessons, these strengths are less apparent and the pace of learning slows.

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in and out of lessons and they develop into thoughtful young people with a strong sense of self-worth. They are polite and well-mannered, listen carefully to their teachers and take considerable care over the quality of their work. Pupils of all ages work and play together in complete harmony and feel extremely safe and secure in the school’s warm atmosphere.

- The experienced and well-respected headteacher leads the school with vision and purpose. He is ably supported by a conscientious and knowledgeable group of senior teachers and they form a cohesive and effective senior leadership team. Staff contribute well to the management of the school, although some roles and responsibilities do not make full use of their skills and expertise. The school benefits from a conscientious and well-informed governing body. Members strike an equitable balance between supporting the school in its work and challenging it to perform even better.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To promote a further rise in pupils' attainment and progress, ensure that in all lessons the teaching is at least good and more is outstanding by:
 - sharing fully the most effective practice across the school
 - ensuring that the work set in lessons is matched closely to pupils' different abilities and enables all to achieve well
 - provided regular opportunities for pupils to make decisions and work things out for themselves
 - encouraging pupils to read for themselves at every opportunity.

- Develop the roles of leaders and managers by:
 - involving all members of the senior leadership team in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching in lessons
 - allocating responsibility for monitoring the progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to the teacher who manages their provision.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment is above average and they make good progress. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are reading with the understanding and skills expected of their age with some reading at an above average level. Most read fluently, recognise a good range of common words on sight and use effective strategies to decode unfamiliar words. A small proportion of Year 2 pupils are not yet at this level but effective help is enabling them to catch up. Attainment in writing lags a little behind that in reading but last year's assessments showed clear improvement and the gap is continuing to close. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading and writing is above average. Almost all pupils read confidently and competently. These skills support their learning and ensure they are well equipped for the next stage in their education. In lessons, pupils' learning is good and they write in a wide range of styles with enjoyment and flair. Stories are imaginatively constructed with creative use of language for interest and effect. Factual accounts, often based on pupils' own research, are detailed and comprehensive. Good progress and above average attainment in mathematics has been the norm throughout the school for a considerable period of time and continues to be so. In lessons, pupils show an enthusiasm for number. From a young age, pupils solve number problems with skills and gusto. Using pictures of one and two eyed aliens, Year 1 pupils enthusiastically explored the different ways in which these two numbers could be combined to make a total of nine and arrived at accurate and well-considered solutions. The same application and skills were evident when Year 6 investigated three-dimensional shapes using a wide range of practical strategies.

Children's attainment on entry to nursery is typical of what is expected for their age some years but below expectations in others. Irrespective of their starting point, children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception Year, a large majority of children reach age-related expectations in the different areas of learning.

Throughout the school, carefully targeted provision ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included in lessons and have the support they need in order to make good progress in their learning. Boys and girls, pupils of different abilities and pupils of minority ethnic heritage all maintain a similar good rate of progress. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire or spoke to inspectors agreed with the inspection findings that their children are making good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teachers use a wide range of well chosen and often innovative strategies to engage and motivate pupils. Pupils are encouraged to work together, learn from each other and evaluate each other's work. This makes a significant contribution to their social development. While studying the events of the Second World War, Year 6 pupils were encouraged to express their feelings and thoughts and to empathise with the plight of Anne Frank. These examples illustrate the very close attention teachers pay to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers ensure the curriculum promotes learning effectively. They provide good opportunities for pupils to use and extend their literacy skills in different subjects, although at times they read information to pupils instead of encouraging them to do this themselves.

In the most effective lessons, incisive planning of tasks provides a high level of challenge for pupils of different abilities and results in rapid progress by all. In a very successful lesson in Year 6, pupils were invited to select a level of task based on their ability as writers. They inevitably chose work that required considerable thought and application and produced writing of a high quality. Lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, often contain tasks that are either too difficult for lower ability pupils or fail to move higher ability pupils on quickly enough. In most lessons, teachers ask sharp, open-ended questions which help pupils to develop their ideas. However, in a few lessons too much teacher talk provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to work things out for themselves.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Stimulating activities, often based on children's own ideas and linked cohesively through a common theme, provide enjoyable learning experiences both in and out of doors. The excellent relationships staff forge with children and the nurturing environment they provide has a very positive effect on their personal development and they quickly become confident, enthusiastic young learners.

The teaching of letters and their sounds to younger pupils is good. Activities are matched well to the attainment of the pupils, teachers' pronunciation is clear and accurate and links with writing are spelling are made frequently and securely. Teaching assistants are deployed very well. They show good understanding of what pupils need to learn and make a very positive contribution to their progress. Marking is of a good quality and helpful to pupils. With very few exceptions, parents and carers endorse the inspection findings and are pleased with the quality of teaching their children receive and with the opportunities for learning that the school provides.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is exemplary and pupils identify this is always the case in their school. They are highly motivated to learn and apply themselves extremely diligently to everything they are asked to do. In lessons, pupils concentrate very well until a task is successfully completed

and any targets they have been set are met. Considerable pleasure is gained from the regular contact pupils have with others in various parts of the world and give considerable thought to similarities and differences in their lives. They readily help those less fortunate than themselves and through the 'Our World' club regularly organise fund-raising events in support of a local and national charities. It was a privilege to listen to the exceptional quality of pupils' singing and to share the enthusiasm with which pupils of all ages sing together in assemblies and in music lessons.

Pupils' appreciate what constitutes all types of bullying but report that incidents are very rare, telling inspectors 'it doesn't really happen here'. They explain in detail how they keep themselves safe when using the internet. Through the school's curriculum and regular visits from members of the emergency services, pupils have acquired an excellent understanding of what constitutes safe action. Parents and carers are justifiably happy with the standard of behaviour the school promotes and with the level of safety it provides for their children. Some have provided inspectors with telling examples of how the school has gone way beyond what it was reasonable to expect in support of their families at difficult times.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers check the school's performance continuously and respond quickly to any areas in need of improvement. As a result, the school has maintained a good level of performance since its last inspection. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly and opportunities for professional development provided regularly to aid further improvement. However, almost all the formal observations of teaching are carried out by the headteacher and in this respect the monitoring skills and experience of other members of the senior leadership team are not fully utilised. The teacher with leadership responsibility for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs manages the provision well, but has insufficient overview of their progress. Nevertheless, the overall monitoring of pupils' progress by senior staff is extremely thorough and, despite a little unevenness in the quality of teaching, equality of opportunity for learning is good. Plans for school development are ambitious, well structured and understood fully by staff, providing clear evidence of the school's capacity to continue to improve.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and places due emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Pupils recognise and appreciate the quality of the curriculum stating that it provides 'lots of fun activities' from which they 'learn lots'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and is effectively placed at the heart of the school's very positive ethos. Achievement of the prestigious International School's Award is just reward for the highly effective way in which the school promotes pupils' awareness and appreciation of the diverse nature of world in which they live.

Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and effective. Staff provide good quality pastoral support for all pupils and the member of the governing body with designated responsibility for health and safety makes regular checks of the site and buildings. Any matters requiring attention are addressed quickly and comprehensively. A vigilant, careful watch is kept over pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and sensitive help provided when needed.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church Ainsworth Church of England Primary School, Bolton, BL2 5SQ

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do. Special thanks go to those who talked with us about the school and those in Years 1, 2 and 6 who read to us. Yours is a good school and we understand fully why you enjoy it so much. We were very encouraged by the way you help each other and the care and consideration you show towards for those less fortunate than yourselves. It was pleasing to hear how much you gain from talking with and writing to pupils in other parts of the world. We could see that your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and you can be very proud of the way you grow into thoughtful and responsible young people. Your behaviour and the attitudes you show to school work are excellent.

The progress you make is good because you are taught well and given interesting things to do. You told us you find lessons fun and that you learn a lot from them and we could see this was true. By the end of Year 6, most of you are producing work at or above the level expected for your age. To help you achieve even more we have asked staff to make sure that all lessons are of equally good quality and that everyone has work that challenges them to do their best at all times. We know that you will play your part by continuing to work hard in all lessons. On occasions, teachers read things to you or tell you too much when they could have encouraged you read or work things out for yourselves. We have also made suggestions to help staff increase the role they play in making the school even better. Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Bardon
Lead Inspector

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