

Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104379
Local Authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	355570
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Lowry

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Grinstead (Acting)
Headteacher	Wenda Pearce
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 11 lessons and eight teachers were seen. Meetings were held with a parent governor, senior staff, the School Improvement Partner and a number of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, the school's performance tracking data, information given to parents, safeguarding documentation and the school's self-evaluation information. The inspection team also scrutinised pupils' work and analysed the responses to inspection questionnaires from staff, pupils and 34 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How effective is teaching, learning and assessment in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 to 6, noting any group variations in pupils' performance?
- How effective is the leadership at all levels to drive improvements, raise standards and accelerate progress?
- How does the curriculum, in other than literacy and numeracy, support skill development?
- What is the effectiveness of leadership and the strategies for teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average and the majority of pupils are White British with a very small, but increasing, number of pupils from other minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average although there are no pupils in school with a statement of educational needs. The governing body runs a breakfast club on school days. The school has the Healthy Schools award and is a part of a collaborative soft federation with another Catholic school in the area. There is nursery provision onsite which runs mornings only and children enter the Reception class full-time when they reach school age.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Corpus Christi is a harmonious school where the Catholic ethos is strong and permeates through both the curriculum and the school day. The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and, through the focus and determination of the school leadership, there is improvement evident in some key areas. A focus on basic literacy skills has raised standards in English and the school is now focusing its efforts on mathematics in order to accelerate progress. Year 6 attainment in both writing and reading are now broadly average, although mathematics remains just below average. Over the last twelve months, there has been rapid improvement in attainment in Year 2 from well below average to average. A greater number of pupils in Year 2 are reaching the higher National Curriculum levels in reading and mathematics, but still too few are gaining the higher levels in writing. There is accelerated progress shown in Key Stage 1 which has contributed to the overall improvement. A pattern of improving standards is also evident in Key Stage 2.

Provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery year with skills that are well below age related expectations and by the end of their time in Reception, most children are still below age related expectations in many aspects of their development, although both their physical and creative development are broadly average. Children behave well and move between their activities independently. It is not yet possible for children to choose to move between the outdoor and indoor areas of learning but staff provide children with access to the outdoor provision at specific times each day.

Senior leaders have taken measures to eliminate inadequate teaching and to support staff to improve their practice, so that teaching is now satisfactory. Lesson planning is improved and thought is given to providing interesting activities, although sometimes these activities are not matched sufficiently well to the pupils' needs. Books are well presented and cared for which reflects the pupils' positive attitudes towards their learning. Provision in English and mathematics is satisfactory and the school enhances the curriculum with themed weeks, such as its enterprise week. Good support is offered by the music service, enabling pupils to receive high quality music tuition. Pupils are not yet using their individual pupil targets sufficiently well throughout the curriculum to accelerate their progress.

Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is evident throughout the whole school, leading to good outcomes in these three areas but cultural activities are less well developed. As yet, the school has little contact with pupils from diverse heritages, and the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities to support their understanding of a multi-cultural society. Pupils' behaviour in school is good and any difficulties they face are tackled in a firm but fair manner. All members of staff show a high level of support and care towards the pupils and a genuine desire to enable them to do their best. Attendance is satisfactory and the measures taken to bring about improvement have been effective.

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Pupils are well cared for by the adults within school and they comment that they feel safe and secure, knowing that any problems will be dealt with quickly.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are committed to school improvement, particularly the progress made by pupils. They are clear about the areas for development and have communicated this clearly to staff and the governing body. The senior leaders have restructured the leadership team, including middle managers, and this is devolving responsibility throughout the school. The leadership of teaching and learning remains satisfactory as the monitoring of lessons, while plentiful, has not yet secured consistently good teaching and learning throughout school. However, greater accountability, use of tracking by the leadership team and pupil progress meetings are having a very positive impact on the rate of progress of pupils.

The effectiveness of the leadership team, including the quality of self-evaluation, the rise in attainment, especially in Key Stage 1, and progress throughout school are improving and are much better than at the time of the last inspection. This demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good teaching and learning throughout the school by:
 - improving the follow-up activities of any monitoring of teaching and learning by the senior leadership
 - working alongside partner schools or agencies to provide professional development opportunities to teachers
 - ensuring that the teaching and learning policy and related policies, such as marking, use of assessment, behaviour, are fully understood and implemented by all teachers
 - ensuring that there is rigour present in all monitoring activities.
- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring a thorough and consistent use of pupil targets across classes and subjects
 - ensuring that all pupils know and understand their targets and how they can achieve them
 - ensuring that the teachers use the pupil targets to match more effectively the work planned to the needs of individual pupils
 - Increasing pupils' understanding of different customs, cultures and religions in a multi-cultural society by developing national and global links with other schools and agencies to ensure that these aspects of the curriculum are promoted more strongly to improve pupils' understanding of the wider world.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Nursery class with skills that are well below age-related expectations and by the end of Year 6 standards are currently broadly in line with national averages. Progress accelerated in the last academic year through the improved systems in place to track pupils' attainment and progress. Senior leaders and teachers use this information about pupils' progress to work together to tackle underachievement and this is resulting in improved outcomes for pupils. It is evident that an increasing number of pupils are making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very small number for whom English is an additional language are making satisfactory progress in developing their basic skills. Teaching assistants work alongside teachers in providing support within the classroom. They also offers interventions for lower achieving pupils such as the precision teaching, daily diaries and use of highly structured approaches to learning letter and word sounds, which are leading to better outcomes for these pupils. The school has also introduced a number of interventions for pupils who have some level of social or emotional need and these are benefiting this small number of pupils.

Pupils enjoy school as demonstrated by their comments, calling it 'exquisite' and 'cool'. Pupils say that they feel safe in and around school and feel confident that any playground disagreements are dealt with effectively by the staff that care for them. Pupils contribute satisfactorily to the school community, supporting each other and getting involved in fund raising projects. However, the school council is not involved enough in school decision-making or given responsibility for developing its own projects. The school provides opportunities for developing a healthier lifestyle, including a high impact street dancing club, in addition to other sporting clubs and there is a high take up. Work place skills are developing satisfactorily and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing during timetabled sessions in the ICT suite. The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good because of the strong Catholic ethos which gives emphasis to these qualities. However, their understanding of cultural diversity is limited, primarily because pupils have little contact with those who have lifestyles different from their own.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory, although during the inspection some good teaching was seen. Staff form excellent relationships with the pupils and manage their behaviour well. The school has introduced a number of initiatives to target weaknesses. For instance, the whole school has introduced a scheme for learning letter and word sounds, targeting pupils' difficulties in literacy: pupils engage in daily activities and move between groups as they improve. This is organised well. School leaders have recently introduced a systematic approach to number work which has worked well in other schools, although it is too early to comment on its effectiveness at Corpus Christi. Where teaching is satisfactory, it is mainly because there is a lack of focus on the outcomes for pupils. For instance, pupils have individual targets and know where to find them, but there is not a sufficiently robust approach to the delivery of learning through the use of these targets. Individual pupil targets are most effective when pupils use them to inform all aspects of the curriculum. Activities are interesting and mainly appropriate to the learners, but sometimes these are not pitched sufficiently high, so that learning is consolidated rather than extended. The learning environment offers some supportive features, with classrooms showing how to improve punctuation and vocabulary, and these are positive features. Pupils clearly take care of their books and the presentation of work overall is of a good standard. Where good teaching is observed, the pace is good, subject knowledge is secure and there is an enthusiasm about learning which engages the pupils.

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

The curriculum is satisfactory. The themed weeks, such as One World week, enhance the pupils' learning by teaching all aspects of the curriculum through a joint theme. The pupils enjoy this sense of everyone working together. There is an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities and take up is high. Pastoral care is good and pupils know that their well-being is important to the adults around them. The work undertaken with outside agencies to improve attendance has been effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has worked closely with the governing body to improve provision at this school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have set ambitious academic targets and ensure that these are met. The restructured middle management team supports the senior leadership. Together, they have set systems and procedures to track pupils throughout the school and ensure that teachers take responsibility for securing progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and, as a consequence, has led to acceleration in progress and a positive effect on the standards of pupils' work. Leaders monitor teaching and learning systematically and this has led to improvements overall. However, teaching is not yet consistently good throughout the school.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors understand the challenges the school faces and are directly involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties; ensures the school lives within its budget and holds the staff to account for pupils' outcomes. The school engages parents well through regular newsletters and uses of ICT to enable parents to keep up to date with developments. The majority of parents are positive about the school. Equal opportunity is promoted satisfactorily, with all groups of children making satisfactory progress. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Throughout the school, there is a strong sense of the school as a community and it is a happy and harmonious one, where pupils generally show tolerance and understanding for one another. However, the pupils know little of the wider multi-cultural world. Safeguarding procedures are robust and there a great number of policies written to ensure the whole school has a consistent approach when dealing with safeguarding issues. There are good safety arrangements throughout the school with every class having detailed evacuation schedules available to them.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start with skills that are well below those found typically for their age. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and by the time they enter Year 1, they are working below the expected levels for their age. The Nursery class is well supported with a high ratio of staff to children. Observations by all staff provide information about what children can and cannot do. They have found that many children have very low speaking and language skills and this is a priority for improvement. Transition from Nursery into Reception is seamless as children and staff in these classes work alongside each other, so children are confident in moving between the two rooms. Joint activities, such as song and rhyme sessions, enable pupils from both classes to mix together and helps the youngest pupils in the school settle into their new environment. Children from both Reception and Nursery have access to the outdoor play area during planned times. This is a rather small area and further development of the outdoors has been rightly identified by the school. In Reception, many pupils are not yet able to communicate effectively with each other, although they are happy to play alongside each other and behaviour is good and well managed by staff. Teaching is satisfactory, although some good teaching was seen. Where teaching is satisfactory, there is too much adult-led activity and a mismatch between the activities planned and the needs of the children. Children are well cared for and the emotional needs of children are met by the staff within both classes. Indoor and outdoor areas are adequately resourced. Leadership and management in this phase are satisfactory. The phase leader works elsewhere in the school and time constraints mean that time for joint planning and assessment are restricted. Good links have been established with parents and assessment files, with photographic evidence, are available for parents to see how their children are developing.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers returning the inspection questionnaire was smaller than is usual in primary schools. Some expressed concerns about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour; that the school did not keep their child safe; that their child makes enough progress; that the school keeps them informed as to how to support their child; and that school could be more effectively led and managed. Inspectors investigated these concerns during the inspection. The school deals effectively with incidents of misbehaviour when unacceptable behaviour occurs. Pupils say they feel safe and secure, and safeguarding measures are robust. The school gives parents the opportunity to come into school to discuss progress during parents' evenings and parents are given the opportunity to ask how to help their children progress. The school is effectively led and managed, although the leadership team are looking at ways to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 187 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	62	13	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	59	13	38	0	0	1	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	50	17	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	50	15	44	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	41	20	59	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	41	17	50	3	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	44	19	56	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	38	20	59	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	44	17	50	1	3	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	44	16	47	1	3	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	53	14	41	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	17	50	13	38	3	9	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	53	15	44	0	0	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



14 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Wolverhampton, WV11 2LT

My colleagues and I would like to thank you all for talking to us when we came to visit your school recently. You were all so polite, helpful and respectful. All the adults in school care very much about you: they demonstrate this in the way that they speak to you and in the time and support they give to you.

Corpus Christi is a satisfactory school. We found that you are making satisfactory progress and by Year 6, you reach standards that are broadly in line with those seen in other schools. We were pleased to see that you all had 'I can' targets and that you knew where they were kept, but we think that you need to have these with you all the time so that you know what you are trying to improve. It can be quite hard to remember all the things that you have to do in a day, so having those in front of you will help you.

You have made some improvements to your writing and this has been helped by your daily letter and word sound sessions. We found that you are not doing so well in mathematics although you seem to have made some improvements in the last year, and we have asked the school to think about how teachers approach their lessons and to think about the best ways to support you. Some of your teachers do this well already, but all teachers need to work in the same way to ensure that everyone makes the best possible progress. Your headteacher knows how to help you and has been working towards improving the ways in which you are taught. We have asked her to think about the ways in which you learn about other cultures, places and religions and to offer you opportunities in this area. It is a big world out there and an exciting one to explore.

We have seen that you have risen to some of the challenges that have been placed before you but we think that you could do even more. So, you can help your headteacher by continuing to listen to your teachers and aspiring to attain the very highest standards. Keep looking ahead and we send our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Lowry

Lead inspector

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