

# Christ The King Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110005
<b>Local Authority</b>	Reading
<b>Inspection number</b>	356668
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	335
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carlos Barros
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Cosgrove
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Lulworth Road Reading RG2 8LX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9015434
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 9015435
<b>Email address</b>	admin.christtheking@reading.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eighteen lessons were seen and 14 teachers and practitioners were observed. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff and pupils and from 87 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

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

- Are higher ability pupils progressing well enough in their learning?
- How successful are the school's strategies to boost attendance?
- How well do teachers ensure that work is matched to meet pupils' ability?
- How well does the school's curriculum provide for gifted and talented pupils?
- What role do teachers play in the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures?

## Information about the school

Christ the King is a large inner-urban primary school which serves both the local parish and the immediate community in the Whitley Wood area of south Reading. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage though an increasing number are from a wide number of minority ethnic groups. Currently, about one third of the pupils are from Africa, Asia and Eastern European heritage and over 30 different first languages are spoken in the school. At present, there are 43 pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and the number having a statement of special educational needs is double the national average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Pupil mobility is also high. For example, a third of the current Year 6 pupils have arrived at the school in the past three years. The school has gained the Healthy school award and the Foundation award of International School status.

The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery class which provides part-time provision and two classes for Reception-age children. There is a breakfast club. This is managed by the governing body and is included in this report.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Christ the King is a good school. The school is a happy, friendly community where pupils feel safe and have the total confidence in the adults who care for them. This is because the provision for the pupils' care, guidance and support is outstanding. Throughout the school, pupils behave well, are polite and they show positive attitudes to learning. However, this is not always represented in pupils' attendance. Even though attendance in this school year has risen and is average, this is not consistently the case. By the time that they reach Year 6, pupils develop into mature and responsible young people who are prepared appropriately for their move to secondary school.

There has been a marked improvement in Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Children thrive in their learning. Resources have been improved by increasing the range and also removing out-of-date equipment. However, learning is hampered because some aspects of their outside activity areas are not sufficiently well developed or provided for. In Years 1 to 6, past progress was seldom better than satisfactory with standards being below average. This is not now the case, because the quality of teaching has improved and is consistently good. As a result, pupils achieve well and attainment is at least average at the end of Year 6. Even so, standards in writing are not as high as those in science, reading and mathematics, particularly for the boys. The progress of some boys is held back by weak spelling and presentation skills. In addition, although in many lessons teachers ensure that writing tasks interest boys, this is not always the case. On these occasions, their concentration dips and progress is reduced to satisfactory levels. The school is particularly successful in supporting vulnerable pupils, including those that have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The many pupils that are at an early stage of learning to speak English also make good progress because their needs are catered for particularly well. Furthermore, the school's arrangements to integrate newcomers into the school are good. These pupils say that they are made welcome and soon feel part of the whole school community. Teachers manage pupils well and classrooms all present with a calm and industrious atmosphere in which pupils enjoy their learning because staff usually provide interesting activities.

The very clear vision of the headteacher has influenced the whole school community. He has been pivotal in securing across-the-board improvements since the previous inspection. He is supported well by senior staff and the governing body and there is a deep commitment to the school's continuing improvement. Staff morale is high and teamwork strong. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive. Robust monitoring and evaluation systems are now in use. These help leaders to check regularly on how well pupils are doing and to hold staff to account for their progress. The effective leadership of the school, the good record of pupils' progress and improvements in provision indicate that there is good capacity for the school to improve further.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of boys' writing so that their progress matches that in mathematics by:
  - ensuring that extended writing tasks consistently match boys' interests
  - strengthening spelling and presentation skills.
- Improve the provision for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - providing shade and cover outside the Nursery class
  - extending the hard-surface outdoor areas for the Reception classes
  - improving access and provision for wheeled toys in both year groups.
- By September 2011, raise attendance to above average levels.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are below average, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills. They make good progress in all year groups, and by the time that they reach Year 6 standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Because good attention has been given to extending the achievement of higher attaining pupils, the number of Year 6 pupils on course to attain the higher level is much greater than previously, particularly in mathematics. School leaders have responded well to ensuring that progress has been accelerated. A good range of strategies has been implemented to remedy previous slower progress in English and mathematics. As a result of careful analysis, for example, it was noted that there were weaknesses in using and applying calculation skills in practical problem-solving tasks in mathematics. Changes made to the curriculum have helped to overcome these weaknesses. Furthermore, in the past, the performance of boys was relatively much weaker than that of the girls. This, too, is being corrected and although progress in boys' writing is slower than for the girls, current Year 6 boys are on course to attain higher standards than the girls. In almost all lessons seen during the inspection, pupils' progress was good. These findings support the school's comprehensive data and pupils' current work which show that all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils' personal development is good. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and this is shown in gaining the Healthy School award. They thoroughly enjoy taking on responsibility and they make a good contribution to the school community. The school council is active in supporting improvements in the school such as the development of the new playground equipment and choosing the new school uniform. Pupils are proud of their school and keen to point out, for example, how they enjoy buddying younger pupils and newcomers to the school. Pupils' spiritual development is particularly well developed. Assemblies are reverential and of high quality and, although Catholic in foundation, with weekly masses, the school successfully celebrates the many religions and cultures represented in the school.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and these are based on good assessments of what pupils know and what they need to learn next. Almost all lessons are of good quality as most have high levels of engagement and enjoyment, with paired talk and collaborative group work being a key feature of activities. Teachers question pupils well and frequently develop the pupils' spoken language skills and vocabulary by demanding extended answers that probe for pupils' understanding. For example, in an outstanding Years 5/6 literacy lesson, pupils' understanding of aspects of journalistic writing developed very well as the class teacher's excellent exposition was linked to an exciting writing task about a huge lorry smashing into the school! Occasionally, the pace of learning dips because teachers talk for too long and keep pupils sitting when they could be starting on what are often exciting and challenging activities. The high quality support that is provided for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English enables these pupils to settle quickly into school and to make strong progress in developing their language. Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own learning and they are skilled at recognising when lessons' success criteria are met. Teachers' marking is of good quality. It is invariably thorough and good attention is paid to ensuring that comments relate to lesson objectives. Pupils say that the teachers' marking helps them to learn. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well as support staff provide valuable and timely support in specific activities and class work.

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The curriculum is broad and balanced and there is a good emphasis paid to linking subjects together to give meaning and purpose to the carefully chosen topics. There has been a good emphasis given to extending the curriculum for pupils that are gifted and talented. Lessons provide activities that match their needs, aided by further specific activities for these pupils, both in the school and in partnership with local secondary schools. There is an able writers group and mathematics 'master classes' as well as themed days such as the mathematics challenge days for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is enlivened well by many visitors to the school. For example, a highly engaging specialist who, in costume and role, provided the historical context of life during the great fire of London for Year 3 pupils. The recent emphasis on strengthening provision for the arts is also paying dividends. Year 4 pupils, for example, all learn an instrument and, in combination with another local school, a successful band has been developed.

Excellent care, guidance and support underpin the pupils' good personal development. There is particularly strong provision for vulnerable pupils with many one-to-one sessions using play therapy, speech and language therapy and also support for pupils that have learning needs. Families are supported well and the learning mentor makes a good contribution to their development. Parents commented on how much they appreciate the good quality breakfast club. The school draws well on the expertise of external agencies to devise programmes for those with more complex needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher, supported well by effective senior staff, has worked very skilfully to secure improvements. For example, staff now have a better idea of pupils' strengths and what needs to be improved, such as the way information about pupils is collected and monitored. There is a clear and decisive vision for the school which is based well on a deep commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils whatever their ability or background. The staff say that the pupils' lives and experiences are enriched by pupils with different backgrounds coming into the school. Pupils' well-being and health and safety receive prominent attention. As a result, safeguarding procedures are robust and all vetting and child protection arrangements are of good quality. Even though the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures are of good quality, the monitoring roles of some teachers with subject responsibilities are not as strong as those for literacy, numeracy and science. The school rightly has a priority to provide more time for these middle managers to undertake their responsibilities.

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A number of projects promote community cohesion well. The school reaches beyond the local community and has a close link with a contrasting school in Weston-super-Mare. Pupils' global awareness is developed well and recognised by the International School award. As well as systematically celebrating the many cultures of the pupils in the school there are good links with schools in Harare, Zimbabwe, which includes exchanging topic work, and also another school in Ghana.

Governance is of good quality. Governors have strengthened and improved their monitoring procedures. As well as having robust routines to check and monitor the school's finances, members of the governing body visit the school regularly in order to enable them to challenge the school to further improve.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are low, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills and their communication skills. However, due to good quality induction procedures and the caring and supportive staff, children settle quickly and well and they make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception years. Even so, it is only a minority of pupils that gain the expected learning goals when they move on to Year 1.

Teaching is of good quality and the staff are particularly skilled at promoting the children's language skills by good quality questioning. The indoor learning environment is well developed with a good range of attractive, bright and colourful resources that challenge and stimulate the children well. For example, the role-play area in the Reception area is very creative, currently having an igloo which the children love to explore and this leads to some good quality writing. However, the outdoor learning environment is not so well developed and this limits opportunities for children to learn in all the required areas



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because space is limited particularly in the Reception class area. Provision is enhanced by staff having a good and detailed knowledge of each child and their learning needs. This is the result of good quality assessment procedures which include a wide range of direct observations of children's achievements that are used well to plan future work. Leadership and management are good. The staff work closely as a team and the leader has successfully initiated many positive changes since the previous inspection.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are unanimous in saying that their children are safe and that the teaching is good in the school. Almost all say that their children enjoy school and make good progress and this results in nearly all parents and carers saying that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. Inspection findings confirm these views. A few parents and carers suggested that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. This was investigated as part of the inspection and inspectors could not endorse this view. Behaviour is invariably good both in lessons and around the school. The school's behaviour policy is of excellent quality and is thoroughly and fully implemented throughout the school by all the staff.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ the King 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 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 335 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	62	29	33	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	62	33	38	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	42	48	41	47	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	51	40	46	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	51	42	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	40	51	59	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	43	47	54	1	1	1	1
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)	37	43	47	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	47	45	52	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	40	39	45	8	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	37	51	59	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	41	47	42	48	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	56	37	43	1	1	0	0

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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Christ the King Catholic Primary School, Reading RG2 8LX**

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking with you when we were finding out all about your school. Yours is a good school. We were delighted to see how all the lower juniors were thoroughly enjoying their music lesson and the way in which you are all learning to play an instrument! These are the things that we especially liked:

- you make good progress in your learning in all year groups and so that by the time that you leave the school you attain at least average levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science
- your good behaviour, the way that you get on together and, in particular, how you help the many new pupils to settle into your school and make friends quickly
- your teachers make sure that you learn well by making your lessons interesting and giving you activities that challenge you
- your headteacher and staff are doing a very good job
- the adults look after you really well.

Even in a good school like yours, there are things to do to make it even better. We have asked the adults to do three things. First, to make sure that you attain as well in writing as in other subjects. This is particularly the case for the boys. To enable this to happen, we have said that you need to improve your spelling and presentation skills and for your teachers to make sure that the writing tasks they give you interest the boys. Second, we have asked that the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage is improved. Finally, and you can really help here, we have said that attendance should improve. You can help by making sure that you do not take any time off school unless you are ill!

We hope that you continue to enjoy your education.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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