

Christ Church CofE Aided Infant School, Virginia Water

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125175
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359856
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2011
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Cariss
Headteacher	Lisa Wallage (Acting Head)
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited nine lessons taught by four different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and with staff and pupils. They looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to questionnaires completed by staff and 79 parents and carers were also considered.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How rapidly and consistently pupils make progress, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
- How well staff use assessment information to plan work which challenges pupils to make good progress, particularly in writing.
- The effectiveness of the leadership of the school, given that the school has been without a substantive headteacher for several terms.
- The extent to which the governing body has fulfilled requirements in relation to community cohesion.

Information about the school

Christ Church is an average sized infant school with four classes. Most pupils are White British. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The majority of these pupils have speech and language difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The school has been led by an acting headteacher since September 2009. Governors have, over an extended period, made several unsuccessful attempts to appoint a permanent headteacher.

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

3

Main findings

This is a good school, which serves the needs of its community well. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils attend regularly, have very positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Parents and carers feel that all the teachers are very committed to the school and to their children. Staff successfully ensure pupils' safety and well-being and provide good support for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, pupils feel safe and have great confidence in adults. Pupils' contribution to the school is good. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and enjoy taking exercise. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

Children benefit from good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well across the areas of learning, generally reaching levels above those expected on entry to Year 1. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good overall, although slightly stronger in reading and mathematics than in writing. Progress in the majority of lessons seen and in pupils' written work was good. Attainment by Year 2 is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, a targeted focus on writing is securing more rapid progress in embedding skills in writing and in handwriting. The recently reorganised curriculum engages pupils' interest well.

Rigorous identification of needs, good specialist guidance and effective support staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils who are gifted or talented benefit from additional opportunities to extend their interests through activities organised by the local cluster of schools.

Teaching and the use of assessment are mostly good, although, occasionally, the pace is a little slow in lessons. Although the implementation and impact vary between classes, individual target setting is having an increasingly positive effect on progress. In writing, pupils have more opportunities to evaluate their own work. Teachers' marking, while mostly thorough, does not always give pupils guidance as to the next steps in their learning. However, staff generally analyse data on pupils' progress well so that they can respond promptly to any dips in performance. Overall, assessment information is used effectively to match work accurately to individual needs and ensure that pupils are challenged to do well.

Despite the lengthy delay in appointing a permanent headteacher, and the resulting uncertainties for parents, carers and staff, the school has generally maintained its momentum of development. Pupil numbers continue to rise. Leadership and management are satisfactory at present. Current leaders know the school well and self-evaluation is realistic. However, all parties are keen that the situation should be resolved. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body provides good support and professional knowledge, although it accepts that it needs to do more to ensure that school leaders are rigorously

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challenged. Not all aspects of community cohesion are fully in place. The vision for improvement articulated by the governing body and acting leadership team, the positive commitment of parents and carers, the school's inherent strength as a community, pupils' good progress driving above average attainment, together with secure monitoring procedures, all indicate that the school has satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that, before the end of the current school year, suitable arrangements are put in place to secure the permanent leadership of the school.
- Build upon current initiatives to raise standards in writing further by:
 - developing more opportunities for pupils to using writing in subjects across the curriculum
 - fully implementing the new handwriting scheme so that pupils achieve a more fluent and legible writing style.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' skills on joining the school vary but are typically above average. Good learning was evident in most lessons observed, leading to well above average attainment in Year 2. The school is particularly effective in developing children's speech and communication skills and good learning habits which prepare them well for later life.

Examples of the impact of good teaching abound. In a good Reception/Year 1 lesson, with a mathematics focus, a wide range of activities supported children's understanding of sequencing, doubling, adding and recording, at levels appropriate to each group. A high level of quality discussion between children and staff supported effective learning, as children were encouraged to articulate what they were doing, and to think about how they could check their work, embedding a sense of independence in their learning. In a very effective handwriting session for Years 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher used technology effectively to bring life to a potentially routine handwriting lesson. The lesson had considerable pace and variety, as pupils followed a screen presentation of movements drawn initially in the air, and then on the back of a friend. This instilled an awareness of the shape and structure of key letters and pupils were highly motivated to get both shape and letter joins right as they attempted to improve their writing. As a result, learning was both memorable and effective.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are enthusiastic, have mature attitudes to learning, enjoy challenges and work well cooperatively. The school council is an effective forum for pupils to share their views about the school. It meets regularly, discussing current issues and organising fund-raising activities. Older pupils willingly undertake community work. Pupils' contribution to the school and, to an extent, to the local community, is good. Spiritual, social and moral development is outstanding, although opportunities for pupils to engage with diverse ethnic and cultural groups beyond the immediate area are relatively limited. However, social and moral development is a significant strength across the school and links with the church community are strong and creative. Pupils show great respect for each other and for staff and have good

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interpersonal skills. Together with good basic skills, this means that they are well prepared for future study and later life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Good relationships and high expectations in most classes contribute significantly to pupils' good learning and progress. Other strengths of teaching include the effective use of resources and the skilled deployment of support staff. The stronger aspects of assessment, when supported by rigorous analysis of data, ensure that activities are generally well matched to pupils' needs. Where progress is occasionally less secure, this is usually because planned tasks do not take sufficient account of the needs of pupils in different year groups or because the pace of learning in lessons is not brisk enough. Most marking provides good guidance for pupils on the next steps in learning. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work, though not yet widespread, are becoming more common.

The curriculum supports the development of pupils' basic skills well, particularly in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing has typically been slower. Pupils find that the planned topics are engaging and motivating. Enrichment activities successfully enhance pupils' learning and the good extra-curricular provision is well supported by pupils. The weekly 'creative workshops', run by learning support staff, provide a diversity of much enjoyed activities, including cookery, sculpture and bird-watching. Personal, social, health

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and citizenship education is carefully planned and contributes well to pupils' good personal development. Pupils make some use of their writing and information and communication technology skills in other subjects but this aspect is underdeveloped. External partnership activities contribute well to extending pupils' learning, particularly the provision for gifted and talented pupils in mathematics.

Staff care for pupils well. They are very responsive to pupils' needs and to those of their families. There is consistently good practice in supporting the health, social, behavioural and transition needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Transition arrangements are good. The school works closely with support agencies, particularly for pupils with specific needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support from designated support assistants.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has not had a substantive headteacher since September 2009 and the extended interregnum has made it difficult to plan ahead with confidence. However, the acting headteacher and senior staff have worked together effectively during that period so that the school has functioned smoothly and issues which might have a negative impact upon pupils' good learning and progress have been resolved. Management roles have been reorganised on an interim basis so that all staff take a share of responsibilities across the whole school. As a result staff feel that they have a stake in the school's development. The school development plan accurately identifies aspects, including minor inconsistencies in teaching quality, which need to be resolved, in order to sustain the trajectory of improvement. Currently, the leadership team embeds ambition and drives improvement satisfactorily and has a clear understanding of the immediate priorities so that this can be achieved. The school has well-established strategies for engaging with parents and carers.

The governing body has continued to make progress, having appointed new members, and is taking a more strategic role in monitoring the direction of the school. Governors have an accurate view of the main issues facing the school and are ready to hold it to account. Statutory responsibilities are met. By visiting and carrying out checks, governors ensure that there is good, effective practice in safeguarding. Discrimination is tackled rigorously and the promotion of equality of opportunity is good. The school is a cohesive community in itself. However, while the governing body has ensured that community cohesion is effectively promoted in relation to the church and the local community and, in part, globally, there are not yet enough planned opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and communities in the wider national context.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception from a wide range of pre-school settings, reflecting the school's extensive catchment area. Although there is some variation from year to year, children's skills and knowledge on entry are typically above those expected for children of this age.. Number recognition and counting are almost always very strong elements on entry. Good induction arrangements, including visits to each pre-school, establish a secure bond with parents and carers and ensure that children feel safe when they enter school. Welfare matters are a priority. Children are well cared for and build good relationships. They are assured, behave well and engage confidently with adults and other children, quickly developing independence in their learning. Overall, they make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development, in speaking and listening and in the development of vocabulary. Although progress in emergent writing was slower than in reading in 2010, the school has reacted promptly to boost progress in that area. As they enter Year 1, children's skills and knowledge are above those expected in most areas. The drive to improve skills in writing is well supported by an effective programme for teaching sounds and letters. Focused teaching ensures that children successfully extend and develop their skills. Sessions of direct teaching provide good challenge, successfully meeting children's needs across the ability range. A good balance of activities chosen by children and those led by adults ensures that learning sustains a good pace. Children have good opportunities to make choices, both indoors and outside. The classrooms provide a stimulating learning environment. However, while the outdoor area is mostly used well, some resources are a little tired. The extensive grounds offer considerable potential for enriching learning still further. All areas of learning are planned for appropriately. Detailed assessments provide good information on children's progress. The highly committed Early Years Foundation

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Stage leader has a good oversight of the strengths of the provision, while recognising that the analysis of available data could be more rigorous.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Of those parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, a very large majority are pleased with the school and the way in which it provides for their children. For example one said, 'A wonderful school, with a completely child-centred approach. My child is making amazing progress socially, morally and academically.' Parents and carers greatly value the strong sense of community, the quality of care and the high level of commitment of the staff. Two issues, however, concern several parents and carers. One relates to traffic issues on the main road outside the school. However, most parents and carers recognise that any resolution to this matter lies outside the school's control. Several parents and carers are also concerned about the school's inability to appoint a permanent headteacher and feel that this has had an impact on the ethos and development of the school. The inspection team found that, despite this uncertainty, good outcomes have been sustained, in both pupils' academic and their personal development.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ Church Church of England Aided infant 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 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 115 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	80	15	19	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	81	14	18	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	41	44	56	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	51	36	46	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	62	29	37	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	56	34	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	75	20	25	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)	38	48	31	39	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	54	34	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	51	31	39	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	44	35	44	5	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	44	34	43	8	10	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	66	24	30	1	1	1	1

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



31 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Christ Church Church of England Infant School, Virginia Water
GU25 4PX**

Thank you for making us so welcome during our visit. We were glad to have the opportunity to meet you and hear your views. We found that yours is a good school. These are the things we liked best.

- You work hard, enjoy lessons and behave well.
- You make good progress and attainment is well above average.
- You undertake lots of jobs and make a good contribution to the school, and there are some links with the local community.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- You feel safe, and know how important it is to eat healthily and stay fit.
- The curriculum is good and the school works hard to make it interesting for you. You really enjoy the after school clubs and activities.
- School leaders set a clear direction and ensure that you are well looked after.

We are asking the governors and teachers in the school to make some changes to help you do better:

- to continue to do the best they can to find you a permanent headteacher
- to help you to improve the quality of your writing and handwriting and to produce even better quality written work.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead Inspector

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