

# Church Hill Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120165
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358708
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Miller

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Gray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shereen Kirk
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 November 2007
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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	20–21 June 2011
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 15 lessons and 11 teachers were seen. Learning support assistants were observed working with specific groups of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors held meetings with governing body representatives, teaching and non-teaching staff and the school council. They attended assemblies and daily registration sessions. Inspectors looked at pupils' work, heard them read, and talked informally with many pupils throughout the inspection. School documents were examined including policies, development planning, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, curriculum and safeguarding documents. Minutes of the governing body were examined, including the headteacher's reports to the governing body, and information provided for parents and carers. Inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 110 parents and carers, 25 members of staff and 100 pupils.

## Information about the school

This is an average sized junior school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small minority are from Asian or Asian British heritages. Overall, the percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and those who speak English as an additional language, is well-above average. The proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning, or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties; a few have speech and language difficulties, specific learning difficulties or physical disabilities. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. For the last three years, the school has exceeded the government floor targets for the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 in both English and mathematics. The school currently holds the Basic Skills Quality Award, National Healthy Schools status, and the Active Mark and Artsmark awards.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety</b>	<b>2</b>
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

### Key findings

This is a good school. Staff have worked successfully since its last inspection to raise the quality of education from satisfactory to good. Good leadership and management, from year group teams through all levels to the governing body, contribute significantly to the life and success of the school.

Pupils achieve well because they are encouraged and enabled to make good progress. From broadly average attainment on entry, pupils make better than expected progress year-on-year. Standards are average and rising steadily with a growing proportion of pupils gaining higher levels in national tests. Pupils' achievement now compares well with that expected of the top 25% of schools nationally. There is strong focus on literacy, particularly reading. Writing is improving well, but initiatives have had less impact on the progress of those pupils who have been identified with literacy difficulties.

Teaching is good. Pupils appreciate their teachers and learning support assistants alike and agree that they have a great deal to offer them, work hard on their behalf and are always there for them and their families. This underpins the pupils' good enthusiasm and thirst for learning, their above average attendance and good behaviour both in lessons and around the school. Pupils respect each other and keep each other safe. There is good practice in many aspects of assessment, but the pupils' involvement in assessing their own and each others' work is underdeveloped. The school recognises this in its improvement planning, and also that more consistency is required in the use of written marking to help pupils understand the next steps in learning. Oral feedback to pupils is good, but is not always reinforced sufficiently by marking.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and the use of assessment, and accelerate

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further pupils' progress by providing:

- additional, regular opportunities for pupils to become involved in the assessment of their own work and that of others during lessons
  - a more consistent approach to the use of written feedback to aid pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Accelerate the progress being made in writing by those pupils identified as having literacy difficulties, in order to match their improved reading skills.

## Main report

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned their questionnaire are entirely supportive of the school. Significantly, all appreciate their children are safe at school and are looked after well and the governing body fulfils its responsibilities regarding the safeguarding of pupils and ensuring their well-being. The vast majority agree their children are happy at school. The few concerns raised related to individual matters already being dealt with by the school. Typically, parents and carers commented on their appreciation of the school's support for their families, and the approachability and friendliness of staff. They feel their children are encouraged and challenged, that the school is well-managed, and that the range of clubs and extra-curricular activities are excellent. Parents and carers also appreciate the ways the school embraces multicultural aspects of life. Inspectors endorse these views.

There is a strong sense of community which, as the parents' and carers' views indicate, extends well beyond the school's gates. From their questionnaires, and written comments, staff and pupils are equally as positive about the school as the parents and carers. There is very effective teamwork on the part of both staff and pupils. This sense of unity says a great deal for the headteacher's leadership and the way leaders monitor the school's life and work, share a common ambition and drive for improvement. Some aspects of their regular monitoring of teaching and learning are exemplary. They are sharp in their recognition of what is being successful and in encouraging the sharing of good practice; they are quick in recognising where additional support is required and, together, ensure this is provided. Consequently, staff and governors are equally supportive of each other, school self-evaluation is good; development planning is detailed and well-focused. Since the last inspection, the school has established a good track record of improvement. Staff professionalism and the active and supportive contributions by the governing body are ensuring good capacity for continued improvement.

Parents, carers, pupils and inspectors all agree that behaviour in and around the school on a day-to-day basis is good. This is because the staff set a fine example and the school's promotion of pupils' moral awareness and social responsibility is effective. There is a well-established approach to behaviour management. Consequently, any action beyond a verbal warning is unusual, even for those pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour consistently well throughout the day. Pupils show a good sense of honesty; in one lesson where a verbal warning was

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given to a pupil, another immediately owned up to being a party to the issue and both pupils were suitably contrite. Pupils are clear that bullying is very rare, and this is supported by the school's records. The school council is adamant that matters will remain this way and are pro-active in promoting anti-bullying campaigns. Consequently, pupils are habitually polite, courteous, respectful, and the simple words 'please' and 'thank you' often heard around the school. Spiritual development is strong. In a Year 6 science lesson on the birth of a child the pupils were mesmerised by the video, but not phased, and demonstrated their maturity through the sensible questions they asked.

Pupils' good attitudes to learning make an important contribution to their good achievement. Teachers help maximise opportunities for learning by ensuring a consistently good pace to lessons; pupils respond to this by being ready for learning and prompt to settle to work. They are attentive during whole class sessions, cooperative during group work and concentrate well when asked to work individually. The successful use of 'discussion partners' is widespread across all classes. It was also seen used to good effect in an assembly; pupils were asked to turn to their neighbour and explore and reflect on the people and things that mean much to them. There was an air of excitement as the pupils did this, and they showed a strong appreciation of the fact that there is an exciting world out there for them to discover. This spiritual sense of reflection and exploring ideas extends to the questions they pose of each other and the teachers ask of them during lessons. In discussions with inspectors pupils often paused briefly before answering; this was not because of any uncertainty but because their teachers routinely ask them to explain their thinking, ideas and ways of working during lessons. Consequently, pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well because they are used to listening to and considering each others' contributions to learning. Pupils of different abilities and backgrounds challenge each other positively because they are enabled to rise well to the challenges and opportunities offered by the teaching.

The school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all its pupils, and tackling firmly any potential discrimination, is not only shown through the pupils' good personal development, but also in their academic achievement. Good tracking systems have been established which analyse regularly the pupils' attainment and achievement. School data confirm the progress and learning of all groups of pupils is good including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language. Effective monitoring of learning and progress ensures that any potential underachievement is identified early so that support strategies can be put into place. Furthermore, additional challenge for more-able pupils is planned for successfully. The regular setting of appropriate work for the different sub-groups in classes and sets is evident from teachers' planning records. In an outstanding Year 5 mathematics lesson, such approaches enabled top set pupils to make excellent progress by extending their learning on two-dimensional shapes such as triangles to tackle successfully work on quadrilaterals which would normally extend higher attaining Year 6 pupils. There was a similarly targeted approach in a Year 3 and 4 group for those having difficulty with reading. Here, a structured approach to the use of phonics gave confidence to pupils in developing

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their reading skills, including some for whom English is not their first language. They may not have found reading easy, and lacked fluency, but gained a good sense of achievement in sounding out words. This programme of reading support, overseen by the special educational needs coordinator, has been successful in raising reading standards and giving pupils the basic skills necessary to support their work in other subjects. However, the school recognises this is the first stage and there is now more work to be done. This involves developing the writing skills of those pupils with literacy difficulties in order to enable them to apply their language skills in different situations and improve further their attainment in literacy.

Reading skills are average at the end of Year 6. It is clear that a love of books and reading is encouraged. Parents and carers praise the school's promotion of book weeks, visiting authors and a well-stocked library; the adjacent public library provides a valuable resource for the school. Discussions with pupils show they have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. They talk knowledgeably about the books they have read, about the characters and the authors. Pupils of all abilities read with enthusiasm; some may not be especially fluent, but they are able to read for meaning and with feeling. Older pupils, in particular, are able to explain why they like particular genres. This reflects the work they undertake in English which covers a wide range of types of writing for different purposes. The challenge to think and explain things aids well the pupils' individual creative and imaginative approaches when writing. In a good Year 4 geography lesson the pupils enhanced effectively their study of an Indian village and its people by asking to write their work in diary form, a style they really enjoy.

Good teaching underpins securely the increasingly good progress the pupils make. Staff have developed well their skills in the use of assessment during lessons to check pupils' understanding of what it is they are aiming to achieve. The use of questioning and oral feedback to individuals and groups, by both teachers and learning support assistants is usually very effective. However, teachers recognise their planning does not provide sufficient, regular opportunities for the pupils themselves to become involved in assessment during lessons. Marking is very regular, but not all marking notes sufficiently consistently what pupils must do to improve, or set sufficiently clearly what their next step must be to gain a higher level. Nevertheless, teachers have the ability to motivate their pupils, and their enthusiasm is catching. Consequently, good working relationships are established well in classes; praise and encouragement give the pupils the confidence, if necessary, to try, try and try again.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Church Hill Church of England Junior 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 243 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	73	66	36	33	1	1	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	77	70	33	30	0	0	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	68	62	40	36	2	2	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	61	55	42	38	6	5	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	78	71	32	29	0	0	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	72	65	37	34	1	1	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	64	58	44	40	2	2	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	53	48	51	46	3	3	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	64	58	41	37	1	1	2	2
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	67	61	40	36	3	3	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	64	58	42	38	2	2	1	1
Q12 The school is well led and managed	72	65	34	31	4	4	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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"> <li>■ The achievement of all pupils.</li> <li>■ Behaviour and safety.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of leadership and management.</li> </ul> <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</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.**



22 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Church Hill Church of England Junior School, Thurmaston, LE4 8DE**

We were very impressed by your enthusiasm, and the meaning you gave to the words of your school song, when you sang during assembly: 'We take a pride in the things we do. Learning and having fun. Who's for a good day? EVERYONE!' We would like to thank you for showing us that you do indeed live every word of this. Yours is a good school, and the following points highlight some of the things we found are best about it.

- You achieve well and make good progress in your time at the school.
- Your behaviour around school and attitudes to learning are good.
- Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Your personal development is ensuring you are responsible young citizens.
- Your school works well with your parents and carers to help you learn.
- Your headteacher, other teachers and governors lead your school well.

We have asked your headteacher and the other teachers to do two main things to help all of you make even better progress and gain even higher standards. First, they will be continuing the good work, already started, to develop the ways they mark and assess your learning. You will also find you are involved more often in assessing your own work and sharing assessments with other pupils during lessons. Secondly, those of you who find difficulty with your literacy work, particularly writing, will receive even more help in your support groups and from your class teachers.

Finally, please remember that you too can make a vital contribution to the school by continuing to, as the title of your school song says, 'Give it all you've got!'

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller  
Lead inspector

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