

Christ Church Pellon CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107535
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	366194
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Beal
Headteacher	Mrs Helen York
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2009
School address	Sandbeds Road Pellon, Halifax West Yorkshire HX2 0QQ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by nine teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including attainment data, curriculum files, monitoring records and planning. Inspectors looked at the school's assessment and tracking information, minutes of meetings held by the Interim Executive Board (IEB), documents related to safeguarding and the school's action plans for improvement. Meetings were held with staff, two members of the IEB, a local authority officer, two groups of pupils, a group of eight parents and carers and inspectors spoke with some parents and carers at the start and end of the school day.

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

- The quality of learning and progress for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially in writing.
- Whether improvements in pupil behaviour had been sustained.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school.
- The capacity of leadership and management, including the work of the IEB, in ensuring sustained capacity to improve.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size primary school and the roll has declined since the previous inspection. There has been an increase in the proportion of pupils who leave or join the school unexpectedly. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are White British but the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, although still small, has increased. The school provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class.

At the time of its previous full inspection in September 2009, Christ Church School was deemed to require special measures. This was the fifth monitoring inspection of the school; at each previous inspection the school was judged to have made satisfactory progress.

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

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Christ Church Pellon Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and represents satisfactory value for money.

Effective action has been taken by leaders and managers to tackle the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Consequently, stronger aspects of the school's work, specifically the Early Years Foundation Stage, have been sustained; while other key aspects, particularly pupils' behaviour, achievement and the quality of teaching, have improved. Pupils' learning and progress for all groups, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is improving. However, there remains some variability in the rates of progress and attainment in English and mathematics, particularly at the higher levels. This relates directly to the variability that exists in the quality of teaching and learning. While it is satisfactory overall, more is now good or better and none is inadequate. This is why pupils are making better progress. This is especially the case where lesson planning, based on accurate assessment, takes account of the learning needs of all pupils and is supported by tasks that engage and challenge them. However, this is not evident in all classes all of the time. In some cases teachers do not accurately assess pupils' progress or set work that will move them forward in their learning. This slows the rate of progress these pupils make, particularly the most able, who are not always sufficiently challenged.

Many of the pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. They say that they enjoy school and punctuality is improving. Although attendance is broadly average there are indications that it is declining. Although strengths within the Early Years Foundation Stage provision have been sustained and effective leadership has seen the development of a cohesive staff team, there are shortcomings in the outdoor provision. While some of this relates to the layout and the geography of the available space, some aspects of its use to develop children's basic skills are underdeveloped.

Improvements to the delegation of responsibilities and specifically to the effectiveness of the partnership between the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher mean that self-evaluation is accurate and plans for improvement are sound. Leaders and managers are acutely aware of what still needs to be done if attainment is to match and exceed the national average. The improvements secured since the previous inspection indicate the capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Although there have been developments to clarify the expectations of subject leaders some staff are at an early stage of developing this role.

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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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further in English and mathematics, particularly at the higher levels.
- Improve rates of attendance.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is consistently good or better by:
 - - improving the use of assessment so that teachers successfully meet the learning needs of all pupils, particularly the most able
 - - improving the consistency of feedback on work to ensure that all pupils know how to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of subject leaders in judging and influencing both outcomes and the provision within their subject areas.
- Improve the outdoor facilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it is not a thoroughfare, staff time is not taken up taking resources out and in during sessions and it is used more effectively to promote the learning of basic skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' behaviour has improved and is now satisfactory and often good in lessons; consequently, the school is calm and orderly and learning proceeds unhindered. Lessons are now much less likely to be disturbed and learning interrupted. Although pupils have generally positive attitudes to their work and learning, there remains a small minority of pupils who are less motivated to learn and behave well. Learning and progress observed in lessons is now satisfactory so that pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory and improving. Children start the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are mostly below what is typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall and the most recent assessments indicate that attainment at the end of Year 2 is now close to average and that Year 6 pupils are on track to be closer to the average. However, a smaller proportion than is typical reaches the higher levels, particularly in writing. Across the school, rates of progress have improved, and although there are sometimes differences in the attainment of boys and girls, their progress overall is generally similar. The progress of looked after children, those from minority ethnic groups and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory overall. A developing strength is the progress that pupils make when learning about letters and sounds.

Pupils say that they feel safe and they confirm that this is because staff deal with their concerns and behaviour has improved. They understand the value of leading a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the opportunities for exercise during their physical education lessons and at break times. However, although some pupils state that eating fruit is good for you, their understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet is underdeveloped. Pupils contribute to the school community enthusiastically by acting as school counsellors and sports leaders. They understand the difference between right and wrong and older pupils are happy to help younger pupils or pupils who have recently joined the school.

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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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3

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?

The quality of teaching has improved and is satisfactory overall. Some is now good or outstanding and more importantly none is inadequate. However, the quality of teaching varies and not enough is consistently good and consequently not all pupils are making good progress. Although satisfactory overall, many of the observed lessons had good features. For example, all lessons get off to a prompt start and learning objectives, in the form of 'I can' statements, are clear and shared with pupils. The planned use of teaching assistants, for example to support individuals or small groups, is usually effective. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and tasks are carefully planned using the knowledge that teachers have about their pupils' levels of work. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson each group of pupils were set challenges to measure the lengths of various objects and lines at just the right level. The class teacher's very effective use of questioning, very clear explanations and expectations ensured that all pupils made exceptional progress in using and applying their mathematical skills and problem solving. However, these features are not found in all lessons and sometimes the tasks are not pitched at just the right level to motivate all, particularly the most able pupils. The pace of learning within some lessons slows when pupils have too long to complete tasks. Although there have been improvements to the quality of marking there is still some variation in the usefulness of the comments.

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The curriculum has been improved and is sound overall. It is broad and balanced and there is a clear focus on developing pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. For example pupils are given regular opportunities to practise handwriting and reading comprehension skills; scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that this is having a positive impact. Work to make meaningful links between subjects is developing. However, leaders and managers are aware that there is more work to be done to ensure that all lessons and activities engage and enthuse pupils. Visits and visitors are used to add interest and to motivate pupils. A recent focus on religious education saw the whole school devote two afternoons to finding out about the parables. While these activities were not always challenging for pupils, these afternoons did contribute well to developing a positive ethos and a better understanding of Christianity.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school places a high priority on providing support and guidance to those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, such as those in danger of becoming persistent absentees. The learning mentor works with small groups and individuals to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, this has a positive impact on pupils' personal skills and development. Good arrangements are in place for working with other agencies.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The determination of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher, along with their positive 'can do' attitude, has been the main platform for the school's improvements. The accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching means that individual teachers receive appropriate levels of support and guidance. For example teachers from another local school have modelled effective teaching and supported with planning. There are good systems in place to track the progress of all pupils. Regular pupil progress reviews are holding staff to account for the progress of pupils in their care. Although the analyses and evaluation of attainment and progress across the school are sound they do not consistently consider outcomes for the many different groups within the school, for example boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Community cohesion is satisfactory. The variability in provision and in the progress pupils make means that the promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Partnerships, particularly with the local authority are strong; there is a realistic understanding that for the school to continue to improve external support will need to be targeted carefully. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are satisfactory. All required checks are completed on staff working with pupils and risk assessments for the site and educational visits are in place. Although there have been improvements in delegation and in developing the effectiveness of middle leaders, the role

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of subject leaders is underdeveloped. The IEB provides satisfactory leadership; there is evidence of improved levels of challenge and support for the school. There is a clear plan in place to 'grow and train' a full governing body to take over full responsibility for governance from September 2012.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Parents and carers say children settle quickly and happily into school routines as a result of a well-planned programme of preparatory visits. A strong early years team of staff ensure good quality learning experiences, which are well matched to children's needs. Children behave well and listen to their teachers; this helps them to learn. They support each other, for example, one child designed and made a cardboard handbag without prompting and then proudly demonstrated to another child how to do the task. From below expected starting points, children make good progress during the year and the majority meet or exceed the early learning goals. Their progress is monitored and recorded carefully giving staff clear information about the children's next steps of learning. Well-planned home learning tasks give parents and carers the opportunity to be fully involved in children's learning and a clear insight into what children are learning at school. Regular phonics lessons have resulted in particularly good progress in learning letters and sounds. Children successfully apply these skills to their reading and writing. Where staff lead the learning activities, progress is better than in independent learning tasks because there is a sharper focus on learning objectives. The outdoor area, although well-equipped, has limitations in its use because the area is a through route for children and parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day.

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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

Questionnaires for parents and carers are not normally distributed by Ofsted for special measures monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

The parents and carers who spoke to the inspectors were generally supportive of the school's work and identified that clear improvements had taken place, particularly pupils' behaviour. However, a small number noted that they think those pupils who always behave well should receive greater praise. A few parents and carers commented that notice of school events, such as educational visits, could be more timely.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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).

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">■ 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.



23 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church Pellon CE (VC) Primary, Halifax, HX2 0QQ

As you know I have been making visits to your school to see how things have been improving for you. You may remember that I visited your school recently with another inspector. Thank you to those of you who spoke to us, particularly the school council and the pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to meet us.

Great news! We judged that your school is no longer in need of special measures. It is providing you with a satisfactory education. We agree with you that your school is improving. You told us that behaviour is much better and you feel safer and happier in school now. You say your lessons are more interesting and this is helping you to make better progress.

While this is good news, inspectors agree with Mrs. York that there is still much work to be done to make your school even better. Inspectors identified some things which still need to improve. We know you are capable of reaching higher standards. To help you to do this we have asked your school to:

- raise your achievement in English and mathematics
- improve the attendance of those of you who do not come to school every day
- make sure all your lessons are as good as the very best lessons in the school
- help those teachers who have extra responsibilities do their job better
- improve the outdoor area for the children in the Reception class.

You can help your teachers by always trying your hardest, behaving well and coming to school regularly. I wish you the very best for the future and good luck to Year 6 in your new school!

Yours sincerely,

Amraz Ali

Her Majesty's Inspector

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