

Church Langley Community Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 131209 |
| Local Authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 364021 |
| Inspection dates | 30 June 2011–1 July 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Selwyn Ward |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 449 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ann Curnow |
| Headteacher | Stacey Ward |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23 April 2008 |
| School address | Church Langley Way Harlow CM17 9TH |
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Inspection number 364021

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who visited 28 lessons taught by 15 teachers. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, attendance records, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring records, school planning and risk assessments. They also analysed the questionnaires received from 97 pupils, 32 staff and from 153 parents and carers.

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

- What are the reasons for any variation in progress within and between key stages?
- Why have boys done less well than girls?
- How effective have been the school's measures to improve attendance?

Information about the school

This school is much larger than average. The large majority of pupils are White British, with small numbers coming from a wide mix of minority ethnic backgrounds. A below average proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Church Langley has an Activemark award and Healthy Schools status.

A pre-school provision shares the school site. It is independently managed and is separately inspected.

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

This is a good school. Attainment has been consistently and significantly above average by the end of Year 6. This represents outstanding achievement. However, within a picture of pupils making good progress overall, there remains much variation. Progress has been notably faster in some year groups than others, for example, attainment in Key Stage 1 has never been better than average. Children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage improved in 2010 and these hugely better outcomes have largely been maintained this year. Opportunities are missed, however, to further accelerate the start children have in Reception through liaison with parents and carers, and with the main pre-school providers, to ensure continuity of an Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum that maximises children's attainment when they join the Reception Year.

The large majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good, but there is variation in pupils' performance in some year groups due to variation in the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment. School leaders' own evaluations confirm a similar picture. Leaders' observations of lessons are rigorous and they have helped to drive improvements through careful follow-up where weaknesses are identified. Leaders therefore have a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have maintained and built on the school's strengths while successfully tackling key weaknesses, such as those that previously existed in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for continued improvement.

Among this school's many strengths is a curriculum that is stimulating for pupils and motivates them to try hard and, often, to work with enthusiasm. Pupils are unreservedly polite and well-mannered. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, and sometimes excellent. Attendance rates, which had been only average for several years, have shot up this year. Throughout the school, much prominence is given to physical education and art, with pupils eagerly seizing on the many opportunities afforded to them to excel in both. Pupils' very active involvement in sports and the high proportion who walk or cycle to school each day are indicative of pupils' excellent appreciation both of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and of how to go about achieving it. The school has an impressive array of sporting trophies attesting to pupils' many successes, and the art around the school is of a consistently high standard. The school provides excellent value for money because its outcomes for pupils are outstanding. This is not just because of achievement but also because of the exceptional contribution pupils make to the school and wider community. In addition, as parents and carers - and the pupils themselves - confirm, pupils feel exceedingly safe in school, not least because of the good quality of the arrangements for their welfare and support.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the spring term 2012, accelerate pupils' progress in lessons so that it is consistently at least good across all three key stages by:
 - ensuring that work is always matched to pupils' different capabilities
 - not allowing lengthy periods of passive listening to limit the opportunities for boys and girls to get on with writing and practical activities
 - directing questions at those who are slower to volunteer rather than always taking answers from those who put their hands up
 - giving learning support assistants an active role during whole-class teaching
 - ensuring that pupils have time to read and respond to the comments teachers make in their marking.
- By the start of the autumn term 2012, establish closer working relationships with parents and carers and strengthen the school's partnership with all of the main local pre-school providers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Although progress is good overall, pupils were seen to be making markedly more rapid progress in some year groups than in others. In some year groups, boys attain less well than girls. This is in part due to the higher proportion of boys with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but it is also due to sometimes overlong lesson introductions when a few boys' attention drifts. In a Key Stage 2 English lesson, for example, an otherwise well-planned whole-class teaching session started off well, with all pupils eagerly engaged, but a few boys lost interest and their attention waned because there was too long a wait before they could get on with a practical activity. It is such lapses in concentration that make pupils' learning good rather than outstanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those known to be eligible for free school meals and the small number who are learning English as an additional language all benefit from support that is well tailored to their needs. As a result, they make similar progress to their peers.

Pupils are proud of their school, although not all take enough pride in the presentation of their work. Their improved, now above average, attendance and their well-developed key literacy and numeracy skills mean they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils are highly active in taking on positions of responsibility, including as hall monitors, librarians, play leaders, councillors and as captains and vice-captains of the eight 'houses' that compete within the school. They raise funds enthusiastically for local, national and international charities, and they take a keen interest in improving the local environment and keeping it tidy. Pupils' very active involvement in the community in turn helps to build their confidence and sense of maturity. Through the school council, pupils have an input to the school improvement plan and to the governing body, which sends a representative to school council meetings to hear pupils' views.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 1 |
| 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 | 2 |

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

How effective is the provision?

The good relationships that teachers have with their classes help to motivate pupils to work hard and do their best. Lessons are well organised but not all take full account of the wide range of abilities in each class. Most lessons are characterised by good pace, with varied activities that stimulate pupils' interest and with teachers making good use of the interactive whiteboards in each classroom. Despite teaching being good overall, there remain some variations between lessons. There are examples of teachers directing questions at pupils who they 'haven't heard from', but some too readily take answers only from those who volunteer them. This can mean that some pupils become quietly inattentive, with the consequence that their learning slows. Learning support assistants offer well-focused support when pupils are working individually or in small groups but their skills are underutilised during periods of whole-class teaching, when they are sometimes largely passive observers.

There is some variability in the quality of marking but most gives pupils helpful guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. There are examples of some quite exhaustive marking; in some cases, resulting in the teacher writing rather more than the pupil. However, workbooks show that teachers do not always ensure that pupils have read and responded to their comments.

The curriculum is made interesting and exciting for pupils, enhanced through imaginatively themed weeks and special events. These result in some impressive artwork, such as the

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high quality images all around the school of strawberries produced by pupils in a dazzling variety of artistic styles and media. A huge range of clubs give pupils many opportunities to pursue interests, and particularly sport, outside the ordinary school day, with a high proportion of pupils eagerly taking part. However, specific provision for gifted and talented pupils remains underdeveloped. Links between subjects give pupils opportunities to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in lessons other than English and mathematics, but this is not formally monitored and managed by subject leaders in order to maximise its impact in speeding pupils' progress.

Parents and carers attest to the good arrangements for children's care and welfare. These enable pupils in potentially vulnerable circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the same good progress as their peers. Class teachers take responsibility for drawing up individual education plans which set out the practical steps needed to move these children's learning on. These plans are carefully overseen by the headteacher, who coordinates this aspect of provision. The school's systems for discouraging holidays in term time and for promoting good attendance have yielded notable success this year, especially in improving the attendance of most of those who had previously been persistent absentees.

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?

Leaders have been successful in maintaining and building on the school's strengths while improving areas of underperformance. Observations of lessons carried out by the headteacher and assistant headteachers have accurately identified weaker aspects of teaching, with shortcomings appropriately followed up to ensure that teachers take note of the feedback they are given on how to improve practice. The leadership team as a whole is still building its capacity, however. This is because several subject leaders are new to their roles and have had relatively little involvement in monitoring provision and outcomes. The governing body is supportive and provides good challenge to school leaders. Its members each have individual areas of responsibility, including as 'class buddies' developing a relationship with individual classes. They challenge leaders, including over safety issues. They were rigorous, for example, in ensuring the safety of pupils and staff before agreeing to site beehives in the school. All legal requirements for safeguarding are fully met, and the school goes beyond this through its use of home-school books in each key stage, which enable parents and carers to readily share any concerns which might affect their child's welfare, development or safety.

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Equality of opportunity is promoted well, so that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities make good progress over their time at the school, even though progress in individual year groups remains uneven. Boys do less well than girls in some year groups, but the gap is narrowing: it is smaller in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. There are good arrangements to promote community cohesion. The school plays a very active role within the local community. Pupils treat each other with respect and greatly enjoy learning about different beliefs, customs and ways of life. Although there are no formal links with schools in other countries or in other social circumstances, the school has identified this, within its improvement plan, as one of its priorities for the coming year.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 1 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Reception classes are well taught in a stimulating environment. They settle in quickly to this well-run and well-resourced provision, and there are good arrangements for their care and welfare. Children's interest and concentration are especially high when working with adults. As a result of good provision, children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Attainment at the end of the Reception Year in 2010 was above average, as it is for the children currently in Reception. This is a very marked improvement on previous years, when attainment at the end of Reception was below average. The school's estimates of children's communication and numeracy skills when they join Reception are lower than might be expected. Leaders have responded to this by working more closely with the pre-school on the school site, but links with other providers are less developed and there are home visits only for those children known to have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents and carers communicate daily with the school through home-school books. The team of teachers and learning support assistants work well together to assess children's progress and to plan activities that meet their needs.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | 2 |
| 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 express mostly positive views about the school, and almost all confirm how safe their children feel. A very small minority raised concerns in their questionnaires over behaviour, although behaviour seen during the inspection was good and pupils confirm that this is the norm. A very small minority indicated that they are unhappy with the way the school responds to suggestions and concerns. Some explained that this relates to the detail provided to them about the staff changes in some classes and over a simplification of the school uniform.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Church Langley Community 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 153 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 449 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 94 | 61 | 58 | 38 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 102 | 67 | 50 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 53 | 35 | 89 | 58 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 67 | 44 | 75 | 49 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 68 | 44 | 83 | 54 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 70 | 46 | 78 | 51 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 73 | 48 | 79 | 52 | 0 | 0 | 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) | 71 | 46 | 73 | 48 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 69 | 45 | 75 | 49 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 56 | 37 | 77 | 50 | 14 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 38 | 25 | 88 | 58 | 22 | 14 | 2 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 56 | 37 | 86 | 56 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 78 | 51 | 70 | 46 | 5 | 3 | 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).

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.



4 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Church Langley Community Primary School, Harlow, CM17 9TH

As I walked into the school last week, a girl from one of the Key Stage 1 classes asked me politely if I was one of the 'special visitors'. 'Welcome', she said. 'I hope you enjoy your time at our school.' This was typical of the warm and friendly response you all gave us. I am pleased to tell you that all the inspectors enjoyed their visit. We could see that you are proud of your school, and you are right to be because it is a good school. It is well run, staff take good care of you, the teaching is good and the curriculum is made interesting and exciting. You behave well, get on very well together, and you feel extremely safe at school. We were impressed by the large number of responsibilities you take on within the school and wider community. That so many of you take part so enthusiastically in sports is an example of your exceptionally strong awareness of the importance of having a healthy lifestyle. Your attendance is much better this year. Keep it up!

You reach standards at the end of Year 6 that are consistently and significantly above average and you make good progress over your time at the school. Having said that, we would like to see you do even better so we have suggested some ways in which teachers can help to ensure that you make the same good progress consistently in every class. You can help, too, by always taking the time to carefully read and respond to the comments teachers write when they mark your work. Some of you could also improve your work by taking greater care to check your writing and calculations, and to present your work neatly.

Those of you who are in the Reception Year now get off to a good start. We have asked staff to work more closely with your parents and carers, and with the various settings that children attend before coming to this school, so that children are better prepared for starting school.

Thank you for being so helpful on our visit, and our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

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