

Church Hill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	119955
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379920
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2012
Lead inspector	Lois Furness

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Tadman
Headteacher	Jayne Willetts
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2009
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lois Furness

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 25 parts of lessons and eight teachers. These observations included short visits to a range of phonics (teaching of letters and sounds) sessions taught by teachers and trained assistants. They also sampled pupils' work and heard a number of pupils read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, two members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, minutes of the governing body meetings, pupil progress information, safeguarding documentation, teachers' planning and marking of pupils' work. Inspectors took account of the questionnaires completed by 72 parents and carers and those completed by staff.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average-sized infant school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are nine different ethnicities represented within school but the majority is White British. Approximately one fifth of pupils are of Indian heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average. There are a few pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. The school has attained Healthy Schools status and Activemark. Since the previous inspection there have been significant staffing changes including a new deputy headteacher. The present headteacher is retiring at the end of the summer term and in October 2012 the school is to become an academy.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The school is not yet good because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, and in leadership and management which result in pupils' satisfactory achievement. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Attainment is above average in reading. The regular systematic teaching of phonics ensures that pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. Mathematics and writing attainment are broadly average. There is insufficient evidence available, including that in pupils' books, to support some of the assessments made of pupils' abilities, especially those of the higher levels in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and high expectations of pupils' behaviour. However expectations of what pupils are able to do are occasionally not high enough and assessment information is not used rigorously by all teachers to ensure work matches the range of pupils' needs. Marking does not consistently improve learning. Simple errors in handwriting, spelling and punctuation are at times left uncorrected.
- Pupils tackle all activities with enthusiasm and consistently show positive attitudes towards learning. Their behaviour is typically good and pupils show a good awareness of how to keep safe.
- Leadership is satisfactory. Leaders have created a positive ethos for learning but although satisfactory, the performance management of teaching has not been rigorous enough to ensure consistently good teaching and the good achievement of pupils. Senior leaders have not checked thoroughly enough that agreed policies and procedures are followed by all. The governing body is enthusiastic and supportive, but its role of challenge is underdeveloped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By December 2012 increase the proportion of good teaching to 80% by
 - ensuring assessment information is used carefully to plan appropriate

- learning for all pupils
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do including their handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills
 - ensuring more-able pupils especially in mathematics are given regular opportunities to independently record their ideas
 - providing regular opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum
 - improving marking so that pupils know how well they are progressing and consistently use targets and teachers' written comments to improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
- implementing the agreed monitoring and evaluation timetable for rigorously checking planning, observing teaching and analysing termly progress information and pupils' books
 - ensuring that all agreed policies and practices are adhered to by all staff
 - the governing body actively fulfilling its role of challenging the school's work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and abilities below those expected for their age. Progress is satisfactory and on entry to Year 1 their attainment is slightly below average apart from in their personal social and emotional development where attainment is broadly average. Pupils say they enjoy reading and a daily programme to teach phonics is in place. A good start in learning to read and developing language skills is made in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children make good progress in acquiring the letter-sound knowledge they need to read and write. This good progress continues and by Year 2 pupils show a good knowledge of how to read unknown words, and speak enthusiastically about the books they have read. Parents and carers effectively support good progress with most of them regularly hearing their children read at home. Reading attainment is above average by the end of Year 2.

Although over time assessment information shows that mathematics attainment is above average, pupils' current work does not reflect this high attainment. There is too little recorded work and insufficient evidence of pupils' developing a secure understanding of how to independently record their work and use different strategies to solve a range of calculations. There is a strong emphasis on practical work as was seen in Year 1 when pupils used a range of resources to consolidate their understanding of addition. In Year 2 pupils used large number lines to record number order. However, as this work was not written in pupils' books, the teacher was unable to check that each individual had formed numbers correctly and identify if further support was needed. More-able pupils are not expected to record their learning on a regular basis. Attainment in mathematics from the evidence seen is broadly average, and progress is satisfactory. Writing standards are also broadly average and have been so over time. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to write

independently, but marking does not consistently pick up simple errors in handwriting, spelling and punctuation, so pupils do not learn from their mistakes.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have appropriate tasks set for them. As a result, they are making progress similar to that of their peers. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are provided with additional literacy support that is well focused on their particular needs. As a result they are quickly included and make satisfactory progress. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are also achieving in line with other pupils. There were no marked differences in the attainment of boys and girls noted during the inspection.

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are pleased with the progress made by their children. Inspectors found that pupils make satisfactory progress and achievement is satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory although good features of teaching were seen in all year groups. The questionnaire returns show that almost all parents and carers think their children are taught well. In the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers plan activities that interest children and there is a good balance between indoor and outdoor learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and behaviour management is positive and encouraging. There is targeted and competent support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.

In good lessons, learning objectives are shared and these objectives form the title of pupils' written work. Teachers clearly identify to pupils the good features of their work and how they might improve. However, although this and pupils' targets available on the front of their books is agreed practice, it is not consistent in all year groups. Marking does not clearly identify why work is good and how pupils can improve. At times teachers' subject knowledge in writing and mathematics is insecure, as for example when pupils were asked to write a diary, when they were actually writing a letter. In mathematics, pupils were asked to count back from 50 when solving a problem involving money. This was complicated and 'counting on' would have been a more efficient strategy to use. However the teaching of reading is good and all teachers and other adults have a secure knowledge of the teaching of reading and comprehension skills. In reading lessons adults skilfully interact with pupils to reinforce their understanding of blending sounds together to read new words, and tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities.

Teaching and the curriculum support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils are successfully taught to reflect on the impact their actions have on others, and to realise the importance of getting on well with each other. Educational visits, such as those to the local church and visitors to the school enrich pupils' learning and support the planned curriculum. Pupils' work is celebrated in a wide range of good quality displays around the school.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. Attitudes towards learning are positive and, as a result, lessons proceed without disruption. Pupils are keen to participate and contribute well to their own learning. Most parents and carers believe their children are safe and the school deals effectively with any challenging behaviour. Good behaviour was evident in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. Pupils clearly know what is expected of them and are keen to live up to these expectations. They share and take turns well and show care when moving around inside and out. They climb equipment carefully, and unprompted wait their turn to use different resources, demonstrating good moral and social development.

Staff share a consistent approach to behaviour and as a result, pupils say they feel safe. They show a good awareness of different types of bullying including name calling and fighting. There is no evidence of any bullying, including bullying related to disability, special educational needs, race, religion or gender. Pupils say that everyone is kind. They are clear about what to do if any incident does arise. Pupils from many different backgrounds happily play and work alongside each other and enjoy sharing their experiences, such as when the Early Years Foundation Stage children eagerly and excitedly went on a 'bear hunt'. Attendance is broadly average and improving. The punctuality of most pupils is good, but a few parents and carers do not ensure their children are at school promptly at the start of the school day.

Leadership and management

A detailed monitoring and evaluation timetable is in place and all with leadership responsibility are clear about their roles. The school improvement plan focuses on the right priorities. However over the past year the leadership including the governing body, have focused their efforts on the academy conversion process rather than ensuring consistently good teaching and learning. The headteacher recognises this distraction, and self-evaluation is overly generous. Recently subject leaders have only been satisfactorily involved in monitoring and evaluation activities including the checking of planning, pupils' progress data and pupils' work. This said, the English subject leader has effectively introduced a programme for teaching phonics which has resulted in consistently above average attainment. The governing body provides good support but its role of holding the school leaders to account for the school's performance is only satisfactory. Even so, the improvements noted since the previous inspection with middle leaders being aware of their responsibilities and until this year being actively involved in monitoring and evaluation activities, alongside good leadership in the teaching of reading indicates the capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets the needs and interests of pupils. However although it provides pupils with good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills, through drama activities for example, it only satisfactorily promotes pupils' use of writing and numeracy skills. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of presentation and the amount of recorded work. However they are effective in their development of the social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of pupils' learning.

The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. It tackles any form of discrimination robustly and ensures that all pupils have equal access to all activities. However, not enough has been done to ensure that all groups of pupils make consistently good progress in their learning at all times. Safeguarding requirements are fully met. Parents and carers agree their children are kept safe.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



21 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Church Hill Infant School, Leicester LE4 8DE

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school, for making us so welcome and for talking to us about your work. We think your school is satisfactory with some strengths. It was good to hear that you enjoy school. We agree with you and your parents and carers that the school looks after you well, and that your behaviour is good. You told us everyone was kind at your school and that you feel very safe and secure there. You say adults will always help you if you are upset or worried and this is good to know. We saw that you also like to help each other, for example trying to find 'bears' that were hidden in the garden or sharing resources to help you with your counting.

We noticed you are good at reading and by the time you leave school the standards you attain in this subject are higher than those found in most schools. Well done. Now we want you to attain as highly in mathematics and in writing. To do this we have asked leaders to make sure there is more good teaching happening every day. To do this, teachers must plan work that helps you all to learn as well as you can and always expect you all to do your best work. We think you should have more opportunities to record your ideas in books, and teachers should give you helpful advice about how you can make your work even better. Also we want leaders to check regularly that you are all learning lots of new things.

We hope that you will help the school to do these things by continuing to work hard, and attending regularly. You can also remind your teachers to give you clear instructions about how to make your work better and to give you time to follow up on their suggestions. Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness
Lead inspector

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