

Christ Church C of E Infant School

Victoria Street, Newark, NG24 4UT

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not achieve well throughout the school. They do not make fast enough progress because the quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- Activities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not always encourage them to be curious or want to explore and investigate.
- Work in all year groups is not consistently set at just the right level to enable pupils to learn as well as they can and to keep them interested.
- Lessons in a range of subjects, especially in numeracy, do not regularly give pupils the opportunity to practise particular reading, writing and number skills.
- The quality of support for those pupils who find some aspects of learning difficult is variable and slows the pace of their progress.
- Not all pupils behave well in lessons because they do not find learning interesting and engaging. The behaviour policy is not always used promptly enough to ensure that behaviour stays good.
- Attendance from Foundation 1 onwards is not good enough to enable pupils to achieve well. Pupils and parents are not all aware of the link between attendance and good learning, and pupils do not have individual attendance targets that are celebrated weekly when achieved. Checking of attendance and actions to improve it for all pupils are not always prompt.
- Subject leaders do not have full responsibility and accountability for improving the quality of teaching and progress in their areas, through regularly checking pupils' achievement and acting on their findings.

The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching is improving and recently the pace of pupils' progress has quickened.
- Pupils feel safe and secure.
- From Foundation 1, pupils enjoy having responsibilities, which help them to develop their personal and social skills.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector watched eight lessons of which six were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector listened to pupils read, observed pupils at break and lunch times, and attended an assembly.
- She held meetings with senior and subject leaders, two groups of pupils, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The findings from the nine staff questionnaires were taken into account in conducting the inspection. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) to be taken into account.
- The inspector looked at the school's work, including its information about the achievement of groups of pupils in each year and their attendance. She checked the records of the quality of teaching and looked at samples of pupils' work and policies to help ensure pupils' safety, including the behaviour policy.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is much smaller than the average-sized infant school. The number on roll continues to fall.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after pupils, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above the national average.
- Since the last inspection, the staffing of the school has changed significantly, with two teachers being appointed.
- The school is part of the Newark 'Closing the Gap' project. It also works with eight local schools through the Raising Achievement Network to share strengths and resources.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is at least consistently good throughout the school and speeds-up pupils' progress, by making sure that:
 - activities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage always promote their curiosity and desire to investigate and explore
 - work throughout the school is set at the right level to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they can
 - opportunities for pupils to practise specific literacy and numeracy skills, such as vocabulary and number, are planned in other subjects
 - teaching assistants provide carefully planned support throughout lessons for pupils who find some aspects of learning hard.
- Make sure that pupils always behave well by ensuring that:
 - teaching and learning involves and interests pupils
 - the behaviour policy is always used promptly to remind them of the school's expectations.
- Improve the attendance of pupils from Foundation 1 onwards and sustain the improvements by making sure that:
 - pupils and parents understand the importance of good attendance and its link to good learning
 - pupils have achievable targets to aim for, which are checked and celebrated weekly
 - the school ensures its checking of attendance rates is always rigorous and actions to improve attendance are prompt.
- Strengthen the impact of leaders and managers in quickening the rate of pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - subject leaders have responsibility and accountability for improving the quality of teaching and progress in their areas through regularly checking, and acting promptly on their findings.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils do not make quick enough progress throughout the school because too much teaching is not regularly good.
- As a result, most pupils make expected progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Not enough make better than expected progress. However, recently, progress has been quickening, matching the growing proportion of good teaching. Improving standards in writing and mathematics reflect the school's much greater focus on developing pupils' writing and number skills. While below average, they are not significantly so.
- Children's levels of knowledge and skills when they join Foundation 1 vary from year to year in the small numbers. Overall they are below average, especially in mathematics and understanding of the world. Children make expected progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage in all activities because not enough teaching supports good progress. Some activities do not encourage them to be curious or make them want to explore and investigate and therefore to learn more.
- The school ensures that from Foundation 1, children have many opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills and to write in detail. Many of the children are able to say and read accurately the sounds made by letters and groups of letters (phonics). Some children are able to discuss the pictures in stories and give their views on what they see. They get regular practice in forming letters accurately.
- Many pupils progress at a similar rate. Pupils supported at school action, however, achieve less well than other groups of pupils who are disabled and who have special educational needs, in writing in sentences and in understanding what numbers mean, because the quality of support throughout lessons is variable. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, particularly in speaking, due to lots of opportunities to practise speaking and because the teachers ask them lots of questions to help them practise words.
- The school divides up the pupil premium funding it receives to support a range of activities, such as extra teaching assistants and ways for pupils to learn electronically. Not all of these activities, however, are just for the pupils eligible for the money. In 2012 pupils eligible for free school meals were four terms behind other pupils in reading, and two terms behind in writing and in mathematics. The school's information about individual pupils indicates that the gap has narrowed further this year.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is variable and because of this, pupils make expected, but not good, progress. However, the proportion of good teaching is increasing.
- Both in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, work is not regularly set at exactly the right level to enable pupils to make the best possible progress that they can, so progress slows.
- Some teaching assistants do not provide support from the start of the lesson or ensure that it is

a good match to pupils' individual needs. However, others quicken pupils' progress through their well-planned intervention, particularly in their skilful questioning that help pupils to think more carefully about their work.

- Although pupils have opportunities in several other lessons to practise their reading and writing skills, they have fewer chances to practise their numeracy skills, and particularly to practise writing and mathematical skills that they have just learnt. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy lots of indoor and outdoor activities, although numeracy activities attract them less.
- Teachers teach phonics accurately and most children use their skills in breaking up words when they are reading independently. A group of less able pupils made good progress in pronouncing words through the interesting stimulus of a puppet because the teacher's expectations of their learning were high.
- In Year 1 and 2 lessons, pupils know what they have to be able to do by the end of the lesson. Teaching made good use of the children's visit to a theme park in an effective Year 1 literacy lesson. The children knew exactly what they had to be able to do and pupils of all abilities made good progress in writing sentences that were interesting and which included connecting words to do with time.
- Marking is good in literacy, from Nursery onwards, because it tells pupils, in a way that they can understand, what they have done well and what to do next. The school knows that marking in numeracy is more variable in its regularity and helpfulness to pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Not all pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. When teaching and learning are not interesting, and do not involve pupils, some become restless and do not pay attention. The behaviour policy is not always used promptly enough to remind pupils of the school's expectations of conduct.
- The attendance of many pupils is not regular enough to support their good, rather than expected, progress over time. The school has introduced more incentives recently to reward good attendance and are taking strong action to deal with pupils who are persistently absent. However, pupils do not have short-term targets to aim for, or very regular celebrations when targets are met.
- From Foundation 1, the school provides a welcoming and supportive environment for all groups of pupils. Many children learn quickly the right way to behave and treat other children. They are always attentive in lessons and behave sensibly and considerately towards others. Pupils know what good and kind behaviour is because the teachers make it clear.
- The staff support exceptionally well those pupils who find it very hard to behave as the school expects and helps them to start to better manage their feelings. At lunchtime, group activities help them to cooperate as a team.
- All pupils feel safe in school. They say that the staff look after them and keep them safe. The youngest children know the sound of the fire alarm and what to do if it rings. They know it is dangerous to talk to strangers and show an appropriate awareness for their age of the risks posed by water.

- Since the last inspection, pupils have more planned opportunities to take responsibility around the school. In particular, the school council has made a good start to its work. It consults pupils about activities and events and has taken over the running of the library. Classes have time each week to select books. In Foundation 1, the children enjoy having jobs and carry them out proudly.
- Through lessons and assemblies, pupils are developing appropriately their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, including through a topic about Africa which has given them some knowledge of how people can be treated differently for no fair reason. Year 1 and 2 pupils were very clear that we should all be treated the same.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because not enough teaching is good and several staff are developing their teaching and leadership roles.
- The headteacher knows how teaching needs to improve. Her judgements of teaching during the inspection were almost always accurate. The school improvement plan confirms that the school has the correct priorities to raise the quality of teaching to good.
- Teachers' performance targets are appropriate and measureable, although targets could be more specific in a few cases. They have to be achieved for a pay increase to be awarded. The staff feels that they get the training and support to help them improve their practices, including through the school's partnerships with other local schools.
- Subject leaders are developing their knowledge and skills in leading and managing their areas. Although they check pupils' achievement, they do not have full responsibility and accountability for improving the quality of teaching and progress in their areas and acting on their findings.
- The school values parents and invites them in at the start of each school day. Its own survey shows parents support the school's work. Parents like the family learning activities which take place termly, and the workshops and consultation evenings. Arrangements for pupils to join Foundation 1, Year 1 or their new school are planned for carefully so that pupils and their parents feel confident about what to expect and their individual needs are known by the staff.
- The new Early Years Foundation Stage framework is being implemented appropriately. The leader knows that teaching styles need to be more varied and activities must broaden to enable children to exceed their goals. Throughout the school, there is a focus on literacy and numeracy. Most other subjects are taught as part of topic work and provide balance and breadth to learning. Pupils enjoy the after-school clubs, such as the choir, and chances to go on visits. All groups of pupils have equal opportunities to succeed because all pupils are treated fairly.
- The local authority checks the school's performance in detail each year. The school makes good use of the wide range of services provided by the authority to improve teaching and to work in partnership with other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors help to ensure that the school keeps its pupils safe and its safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements. The governing body organises itself well, so that it is involved in a lot of the school's work. Several governors support pupils' learning, observe teaching and link with subject leaders. Therefore they find out a lot for themselves about the

school's performance. Governing body minutes show that the governors challenge the school's work, including the rate of pupils' progress and the level of attendance. They understand what national information about the pupils' achievement is saying. The governors understand the procedures for managing staff performance and will not award pay rises unless the targets set have been achieved.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122792
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	412713

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Hawthorn
Headteacher	Gill Maguire
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2010
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