

Christ The King RC Primary School Manchester

Culcheth Lane, Newton Heath, Manchester, M40 1LU

Inspection dates 6–7 February 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From a low starting point, pupils achieve well to reach average levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good and sometimes excellent progress.
- Excellent relationships and strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that help is available for those pupils who need extra help with their learning.
- Pupils behave well. They are very well cared for and feel safe at all times. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.
- The leadership of the school has successfully raised teaching and standards in English, so that pupils achieve very well in this subject. The same rigorous approach is now being applied to mathematics, to good effect.
- Parents are very positive about the school and the direction it is taking.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards of attainment in mathematics, although now average, are not improving as quickly as other subjects in Key Stage 1. Pupils are less secure in applying their skills to solve problems.
- Teachers do not always use information from checking on pupils' progress effectively in lessons, particularly to extend the learning of the most-able pupils.
- Pupils are not always told clearly what next steps they should take to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, but was deemed to be an inspection under section 5.
- This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Due to the section 8 designation, there were no staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed 18 lessons. One observation was carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were conducted with governors, the staff team and groups of pupils. In addition, a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- In order to evaluate the views of parents, 14 responses posted on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed and inspectors met with parents. In addition, an evaluation was made of the recent questionnaire of parents' views carried out by the school.
- Information from the scrutiny of a range of school documentation added to inspection judgements. This included the documents relating to safeguarding, the improvement plan, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance and records of pupils' standards and progress.

Inspection team

Jean O'Neill, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Keith Bardon	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school. It offers full-time nursery provision.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage but there are about 27% from other European and African backgrounds. This proportion has nearly doubled since the previous inspection. A small group of pupils is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs/disabilities who are supported at school action is higher than average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school holds the ICT Mark; the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Leading Parent Partnership Award.
- The school has a close partnership with the linked Roman Catholic High School, which provides additional specialist teaching, for example for the most-able pupils in mathematics.
- There have been several changes in staffing due to unavoidable absences, with five newly qualified teachers currently working in school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding, and therefore further strengthen achievement, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 1, by:
 - sharpening teachers' awareness of information about pupils' progress so that they can plan more carefully to get the very best out of pupils especially the most-able
 - building on the good work already started in mathematics in order to raise standards at Key Stage 1 with a focus on teaching pupils how to apply their skills
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently share with pupils what to do to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From very low levels of development when children start in Nursery, pupils make good progress across the school to reach average standards by the end of Year 6.
- They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, so that by the end of the Reception Year, children have closed the gaps in their skills in reading, writing and aspects of numeracy. Overall attainment is below what is expected for their age especially in speaking, and in personal, social and emotional development.
- Results in the Year 1 screening check in phonics have been below average in previous years, but are rising rapidly in response to better teaching. The large majority of pupils gain the expected level when they retake the test.
- Progress is good in Key Stage 1 and a picture of rising attainment is emerging. In 2013, the results of national assessments in reading and writing were higher than previous years, although mathematics remained low. To tackle this leaders have invested in new resources, appointed additional staff, and applied the teaching approaches used successfully in English to the teaching of mathematics. Inspection evidence and the school's own data indicate significant improvement this year, with many now reaching or slightly exceeding what is expected for their age in mathematics, as well as in reading and writing.
- Progress in all subjects Key Stage 2 has significantly exceeded national expectations over the last two years. Attainment has been broadly average for the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence and school data indicate current attainment is similar, with an improvement in pupils' basic skills in writing.
- Mathematics progress is accelerating as a result of a sharper focus on promoting higher expectations. This is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are rapidly approaching the level expected for their age. Pupils' mathematics attainment in Years 3 and 4 is now recovering from previous low standards. Weaker aspects include applying previously learned concepts to new problems, which slows down progress in lessons.
- Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to read fluently and happily discuss their reading preferences, including poetry. They apply the reading skills taught in lessons across other subjects to good effect. The current Year 6 pupils are confident and fluent readers. They talk enthusiastically about the wide range of support they receive in school, and have exceptionally positive attitudes to reading.
- There has been an increase in the number of pupils from different ethnic groups, with more who have English as an additional language and start school at later than the usual time. These pupils are welcomed and make good progress because of the precisely targeted support they receive in class.
- The most-able pupils make good progress by the time they leave school as can be seen by an increase in pupils achieving higher levels. Specialist teaching provided by staff from the linked Roman Catholic High School also helps to boost their progress. However, in just a few lessons these pupils do not always learn as much as they could because tasks are not always hard enough and they do not move on quickly enough to work that makes them apply their skills and extend their learning.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. Their attainment is very close to non-free school meals nationally. In school their attainment is lower than that of others by two terms in English, where many are now making faster progress. Attainment is the same as that of others in mathematics.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets. This is because of good quality support programmes and effective teaching in lessons. Teaching assistants are skilled at accelerating pupils' progress through small-group work and one-to-one tuition. This reflects the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- Decisive actions taken by leaders to resolve a dip following the previous inspection have resulted in improved teaching. Several teachers currently in school are new to teaching and are sustaining the good teaching which ensures that pupils make good progress.
- Teachers are especially skilled at teaching reading and writing. They maintain an even pace to the learning, ensuring that all can keep up and those who can go faster, do so. Teachers make the learning of the sounds letters make enjoyable with games and rhymes that help pupils to recall these skills when tackling harder words.
- Staff are now beginning to apply these skills more to teaching mathematics, but the pace of change is uneven, being less noticeable in Key Stage 1. In these lessons some activities are repeated too often, especially by the most able, without enough opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they have been taught. Occasionally, pupils are confused because instructions are not sufficiently clear, for example in the use of brackets in algebra.
- In most lessons tasks are set that are not too easy or too hard and support is at hand from teachers and skilled teaching assistants. However, this is not always the case and teachers do not always use the information they have on pupils' progress to set work that is challenging enough for the most-able pupils.
- Pupils say 'teachers make learning fun' and lessons are indeed lively and interesting, for example, when Year 1 pupils are invited to think and write about the feelings of the Little Red Hen, or Year 4 pupils are asked to design an imaginative holiday brochure, with the additional challenge of focussing on a specific letter of the alphabet. Pupils were engrossed in their learning and made good progress.
- Early Years Foundation Stage children benefit from good teaching. They enjoy a wide choice of good quality learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors, which are well suited to their needs, and this is extended to the Year 1 pupils, through thoughtful design of the classroom and outdoor space available. This enables them to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Teachers follow a consistent approach to manage behaviour and gain pupils' attention to learning. For example, pupils know that 'magnet eyes on the board' means 'all stop and look this way' and they respond promptly. This enables all to maintain focus and thus learn well, for example in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, where pupils mastered the skill of plotting co-ordinates in four quadrants.
- The marking of pupils' work is regular, and consistent across all age groups, but teachers do not always make clear exactly what pupils should do to do to improve their work, for example how to set out their work or improve their handwriting.
- Teachers inspire pupils so that they love to read. One pupil said 'when I get home it's the first thing I want to do'. Teachers check that pupils receive very good individual support when it is needed and apply their reading skills across a wide range of subjects.
- The excellent relationships that exist in the school are a key factor in helping pupils to learn well. Teaching assistants are trained well and deployed effectively, so that they make a particularly good contribution to supporting the learning of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to work are nearly always positive, and relationships are very strong. Pupils are unfailingly polite and well-mannered, and show high levels of care for one another. A small number of pupils require extra help to behave well, and this is very effective.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good, including using the Internet safely. Thus, pupils know how to 'click on the dolphin' if they should see anything unsafe on line when in school. Pupils say they feel very safe and that bullying, occurs 'only once in a blue moon', and is then dealt with very well.
- A strong focus on pupils' personal and social development begins in the Nursery and is reinforced as pupils move through school, through constant emphasis on the importance of getting on well together, which pupils understand and appreciate. Thus, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils showed good skills of cooperation, readily helping each other to solve complex number problems.
- The school is supported by strong partnerships with, for example, local police community support officers, who visit the school regularly, and via the 'Paths' project for Years 3 to 6 with Manchester University, which supports successfully the social and emotional aspects of learning.
- Christ the King school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility, from the earliest age. Thus, Nursery children sign into class, and older pupils are keen to contribute to the school community, for example by becoming school councillors who make choices on spending for after-school activities and judged the recent healthy packed lunch competition.
- Attendance is broadly average. This has been a focus for the school, with some pupil premium grant money being used to employ an additional staff member, who works closely with families to promote good punctuality and discourage absence. As a result, the attendance of this group is starting to improve.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher wants the very best for the school, and together with the deputy headteacher, gives clear and effective leadership. Following the previous inspection, standards in Key Stage 1 dipped as leadership took its focus off mathematics. The headteacher has been effective in changing the emphasis to include raising standards in mathematics, and this is now having an impact on raising attainment.
- Key priorities for improvement are identified from the close monitoring of pupils' progress and the school has an accurate view of its strengths and aspects to improve. Spending is linked closely to priorities for example, in the recent appointment of additional staff or the purchase of additional resources to support teaching. These initiatives have strengthened teaching, and led to improvements in mathematics.
- Senior leaders monitor teaching closely by observations of lessons and checks on pupils' workbooks. Following these checks, clear strengths and areas for improvement are identified and followed up.
 - Teachers' performance management targets are based upon the school's key priorities, teachers' performance and the progress pupils make. Achievement of targets is linked to progression. Teachers are now more regularly held to account for the progress the pupils make in their classes.
 - The roles and responsibilities of middle leaders are clearly defined, empowering leaders at all levels to drive improvement. They play a part in monitoring teaching and providing good quality training and effective peer-to-peer support, particularly for the high number of newly qualified teachers and additional staff. This is leading to more demanding teaching and rapid pupil progress, especially in English.
- The curriculum gives pupils a good all-round education. Lessons are enhanced by artists in residence and by special focus weeks such as themed work on Africa (including an imaginary visit!) Pupils perform in the samba band, and at the Royal Northern College of Music. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are key elements of all the school's work, with regular opportunities for prayer, and learning about Christianity and other faiths. The school family gives extremely generously to those in need, and pupils are challenged to think about key figures

whose lives were sacrificed to the service of others – for example Archbishop Oscar Romero.

- The new school sport funding is leading to good participation by all pupils in physical education and sport. The deployment of a skilled teacher from within the existing staff has a very positive effect on promoting healthy lifestyles and good physical well-being.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is very effective and much valued by parents. The school works closely with its partner high school; pupils with additional emotional needs receive additional support at the point of transition, to help them settle well into their next phase of education. A teacher from the high school is supporting a group of five pupils to attain their target of Level 6 in mathematics this year.
- Regular communications with families, including via the school's inviting and informative website, ensure that parents are able to be actively involved in their children's education.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school. This has been helpful in providing training for the staff new to teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body maintains an effective overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The Chair of Governors is a familiar and much-loved visitor and knows the school community well. Governors check the progress of aspects of the school's development plan, and have a good understanding of the way pupil premium funding is raising the attainment and achievement of those eligible for the funding. They are starting to use data more to sharpen their skills to interrogate information and thus raise more challenging questions relating to the progress of pupils. The governing body is aware of the quality of teaching and checks that systems to check on the performance of staff, including the headteacher, are in place and effective.
 - Governors ensure that all safeguarding systems are in place.

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	105514
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	440724

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Denny
Headteacher	Des Burns
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2011
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