School report

Immanuel Christian School

Rodford Tabernacle, Westerleigh Road, Westerleigh, BS37 8QG

Inspection dates	2–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Governors, the headteacher and staff have created a warm and friendly school where pupils feel safe and enjoy learning.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers know their pupils very well as individuals. This contributes well to pupils' good achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. This reflects the importance the school puts on fostering good relationships between staff and pupils, and between the pupils themselves.
- Parents are very pleased with the care and education provided by the school.
- Children in the early years make good progress because of careful planning, effective teaching and some stimulating activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by the interesting range of subjects they study, including trips and special events.
- The school is well led and managed. Leaders, including governors, have successfully established a new school which meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards.
- Pupils are very positive about the school. They feel safe, enjoy learning, and their attendance is excellent.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Sometimes teachers do not set work at the correct level for older or most able pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always successfully encourage pupils to act on the advice in marking on how to improve their work.
- The narrow range of equipment in the early years outdoor area limits the activities that children can choose from.
- School leaders have not yet developed a rigorous enough system for setting targets for teachers to improve their performance.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons. Two of these lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. The inspector also observed two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and with other staff. The inspector met with a small number of parents and with a group of Key Stage 2 pupils.
- The inspector listened to pupils read, and looked at pupils' written and other work. He also observed pupils at break and lunch times.
- The inspector took account of 12 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire and the views of four members of staff, in survey questionnaires.
- The inspector reviewed key documents and policies including the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress, and how the school keeps pupils safe.

Inspection team

Michael Phipps, Lead Inspector	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Immanuel Christian School is an independent non-selective day school which occupies a former chapel building on the edge of the village of Westerleigh, in South Gloucestershire. It caters for boys and girls aged from four to 11 years.
- The school is registered for 35 pupils. It opened in September 2013 with two pupils. Currently, there are nine pupils on roll, including one Reception-aged child who attends full time.
- Most pupils were educated at home before joining the school.
- There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils are of White British heritage, although there are a number from other minority ethnic groups. All speak English as their first language.
- The school aims to provide a Christian-based education and 'to support parents in their task of preparing their children for a place in society'. It is open to pupils of any or no faith whose parents accept the school's underlying Christian ethos and teaching.
- The school provides part-time education one day a week for a small number of pupils who are otherwise educated at home. One of these children is in the Reception class and the other is in the Nursery class.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement still further by:
  - making sure that teachers consistently plan work which is difficult enough for older or the most able pupils in mixed-age classes, especially in mathematics
  - encouraging pupils to act on the advice given when teachers mark their work
  - providing a wider range of resources and activities in the outdoor area for early years children to choose from.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - making more systematic checks on the quality of teaching
  - setting teachers clear targets which are based on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have successfully established a new school which meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards. It provides a good standard of education, where effective teaching enables pupils to behave and achieve well.
- Leaders have a clear, shared vision of how they want the school to develop. They have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their plans for improving the school are well organised and focus on the right areas.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' love of learning. It makes an important contribution to pupils' good academic progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and their personal development. The interesting and well-planned range of subjects and topics that pupils study is enriched by a good range of trips, visitors and special events.
- The school makes sure that pupils are well prepared to live in modern Britain. Pupils learn about different beliefs, and visit places of worship from different faiths. They are taught the value of tolerance of others, and they raise funds for local, national and international charities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the work of the school, and is promoted well. Pupils learn to think about right and wrong through their study of the Christian faith. As a result, pupils develop well as sociable, thoughtful and responsible young people.
- School leaders make regular checks on the progress that pupils make. If pupils start to fall behind, teachers plan carefully to give extra help. This means pupils catch up quickly.
- Leaders make sure that pupils are kept safe and that the school meets current safeguarding requirements. This includes the safeguarding and welfare statutory requirements of the early years provision. All staff have been appropriately trained in safeguarding procedures and are aware of their responsibilities. The school follows rigorous procedures for the recruitment of staff.
- The school's premises and accommodation are well maintained and clean. Classrooms are bright, well-resourced and stimulating places to learn.
- The way that any complaints from parents are handled meets the Independent Schools Standards.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and its leaders. They receive all the information to which they are entitled. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, feel the school is well led and managed, and would recommend the school to others. One parent, speaking for many, said, 'The teachers' caring attitude, the varied activities offered at the school and the overall atmosphere have impressed us greatly.'
- The headteacher has rightly identified the strengths in the quality of teaching and the areas for development as a result of informal, but accurate, checks. Teachers reflect on and improve their practice by observing each other teach. There are plans for this to be developed into a system for setting targets for staff. This will involve regular lesson observations, and targets being set, based on pupils' progress. Despite these procedures not yet being fully in place, the quality of teaching remains high.
- **The governance of the school:**

  Governors and other school leaders work closely together. Governors are fully involved in running the school, and often see for themselves the quality of teaching and learning. They understand the school's performance information and, as a result, are well informed about pupils' progress.

  Governors make sure that financial resources are well managed, and that staff are deployed effectively. Governors understand how good teaching is rewarded and how any underperformance is tackled.

  Plans have been made to strengthen governance by expanding its membership and by introducing procedures to gain an independent, external view of how well the school is performing compared to similar schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy coming to school, and thrive in its warm and friendly atmosphere. There is no litter or graffiti around the school site. Pupils' attendance is very high.
- The school successfully fosters warm and respectful relationships between adults and pupils, and between the pupils themselves. The small class sizes mean pupils develop very positive attitudes towards

learning. Pupils are polite and courteous to staff, visitors and each other.

- Pupils enjoy the rewards they get for working hard and behaving well. There have been no exclusions since the school opened. Parents are unanimous in saying that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- School records show that there have been no serious incidents of poor behaviour since the school opened. This was confirmed by pupils, who told the inspector that disruption to learning caused by poor pupil behaviour is very rare. On the odd occasions when the level of challenge in lessons is not well matched to pupils' abilities, their motivation slips. This is why behaviour is not outstanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The required safeguarding policies and checks on adults are in place to make sure that pupils are kept safe. The school site is kept safe and secure.
- Pupils say they feel safe and happy. They know about different types of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying. They told the inspector that bullying does not happen in school. If it did, pupils know how to report it, and they are confident it would be stopped.
- Pupils are taught well how to keep themselves safe. As a result they are aware, for example, of the dangers posed by using the internet.
- Racism is unknown in the school. Pupils are taught to appreciate and promote diversity, and to challenge prejudice and discrimination. One pupil told the inspector, 'No-one really judges other people here.'
- All parents strongly agree that their children feels safe and are well looked after in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school is typically at least good, and checks on pupils' work made by the inspector showed that the learning and progress of pupils are sometimes outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and they plan accordingly. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan a good range of activities which interest and inspire pupils.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. This ensures pupils have a sound grasp of key concepts as a basis for their learning.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm, friendly and respectful. This helps pupils to enjoy learning. Teachers praise pupils for working hard and for contributing to lessons. Pupils appreciate the way that staff encourage and support them to try and achieve their best.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding by posing questions which keep pupils interested and make them think hard. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately.
- Homework is used well to support pupils' learning. Parents are happy with the frequency and content of the homework that their children receive.
- The school makes good use of a number of adult volunteers who help to support pupils' learning, and who bring a range of skills to the school.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and in great detail. This gives pupils very clear advice on how they can improve their work. However, teachers do not always successfully encourage pupils to act on this advice.
- Teachers usually plan tasks at the right level of difficulty for most pupils. Sometimes, however, the older or most able pupils are not given work which is difficult enough to make them think hard, especially in mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils generally enter the school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. Most pupils have been educated at home before they join the school, so they have little or no experience of formal education.
- As a result of good teaching and an interesting curriculum, pupils make good progress from their starting points and catch up well, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence in pupils' work indicates that many are now working at the level expected for their age, with some achieving above this level.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils are taught phonics (the sounds letters make) systematically. This means they can work out how to read unfamiliar words. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often, and teachers suggest books that pupils might enjoy. By the time they reach Key Stage 2, pupils are keen

readers who can talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors.

- Pupils learn to write well. Teachers plan interesting opportunities for them to write about, so they enjoy writing and develop their skills well.
- The small number of pupils in the school means that each pupil is very well known as an individual to all members of staff. Those pupils who need extra help receive effective personalised teaching and support. This enables them to make good progress and achieve well.
- School records and inspection evidence confirm that there is no significant difference in the rates of progress of different groups, including boys and girls, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
- Most pupils make good progress in mathematics. Basic skills are taught well, and pupils have good opportunities to apply these skills to solve problems.
- Sometimes the older or most able pupils in mixed-age mathematics classes are not given work which is difficult enough to make them think hard. This means they sometimes make slower progress.

The early years provision is good

- Children make good progress in the effective early years setting. Good provision and effective teaching ensure that children settle happily into the daily routines of school life. The small size of the school means children in early years are fully involved in the daily life of the school. They often have the chance to work alongside older children. This helps to build strong relationships across age groups.
- Children are happy and relaxed as they learn and play. Purposeful, well-focused tasks and activities foster children's independence and help to develop their confidence. There is a strong emphasis on early reading, writing and number work, which helps children make good progress in these areas. This progress is accurately checked and recorded by teachers.
- Children feel safe and are confident in learning about right and wrong, and the importance of respect for each other and for the adults around them. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere which ensures that children enjoy learning and behave well.
- The early years setting is well led. Parents are well informed about their children's learning. Leaders have an accurate picture of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement, and they have suitable plans for improvement. They know, for example, that the early years outdoor area needs a wider range of resources available. This would give children a wider range of activities which they could choose for themselves. Leaders are already planning how to improve this aspect of provision.

What inspection judgements mean

School Grade	**Judgement**
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	140206
Inspection number	443033
DfE registration number	803/6010

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Primary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	9
Number of part time pupils	4
Proprietor	Immanuel Christian School Limited
Chair	Jonathan Gulliford
Headteacher	Carol Cruickshank
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,600
Telephone number	01454 311710
Fax number	N/A
Email address	info.immanuelschool@gmail.com

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