

Christ Church C of E Junior School

Pendennis Road, Downend, Bristol BS16 5JJ

Inspection dates	27–28 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership from the headteacher, supported by a talented deputy headteacher and a reinvigorated governing body, is continuing the rapid improvement seen since the last inspection.
- The school's self-evaluation is extremely accurate.
- Teachers are relentless in their drive to help pupils to succeed as writers, readers and mathematicians through the successful teaching of basic skills.
- Almost all pupils make rapid and sustained progress across all subjects, including English and mathematics, and learn exceptionally well in all years. The proportion that makes more than the expected level of progress is high.
- Pupils gain great enjoyment from their learning and from the extremely positive relationships they have with adults in the school.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of exciting and motivating opportunities. It successfully supports access to learning for all pupils, irrespective of their starting points or ability, and effectively promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Pupils not only understand the principles of British values, they live them every day.
- Pupils say that they feel safe, and safeguarding procedures are robust and effective.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small number of the highest-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently to achieve the highest standards in their work. Not all leaders are checking the standards achieved rigorously enough.
- The development of mathematical reasoning is not as strong as other aspects of mathematics.
- On a small number of occasions, pupils' learning behaviour requires improvement. Some teachers do not consistently have high enough expectations. Pupils can be a little noisy and silly. Occasionally their work is very untidy and poorly presented.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of middle leadership so that leaders are more robust in their monitoring to drive improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement within their area of responsibility.
- Ensure that good and outstanding teaching, learning and assessment is built upon further by making sure:
 - the work provided for all pupils, and especially the highest attainers, is challenging and allows them to flourish further
 - that teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils, in all classes, to develop their mathematical reasoning skills
 - all teachers have the highest expectation and there is consistency in dealing with minor incidents of misbehaviour around school and in the presentation and tidiness of pupils' work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher is extremely well supported by an inspirational deputy head. Together they provide outstanding guidance and support for the school team. One parent echoed the views of the inspection team, commenting 'the deputy has been a breath of fresh air and reinvigorated the school since her appointment'. Leaders do not shy away from shortcomings. Weaknesses are spotted and action is taken to bring about change. Priorities for improvement are clear and plans to drive improvement are crafted carefully to ensure actions make a difference to teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors share a clear and aspirational vision for the school. Staff are in no doubt as to what this is. As a result, almost everyone is working as a team towards the same goals. As one member of staff stated, 'The senior leadership team is amazing! All members of staff are helpful and friendly'.
- The impact of other leaders in driving improvement across the school is variable. Some are having a positive influence on improving teaching and fostering pupils' readiness for life as a British citizen. However, not all leaders are matching the best. This is partly due to recent changes in roles and responsibilities. Nevertheless, some leaders are not fulfilling their areas of responsibility to ensure all pupils are able to do their very best in all areas of learning.
- The wider leadership team contains teachers with specific roles for key learning areas, and for care and support. Their monitoring of teaching, pupils' work and marking and planning is generally effective. Findings are used to identify training needs and drive further improvements. As a consequence, teaching across the school is rarely less than consistently good with much that is outstanding. However, some leaders have lacked a little rigour and robustness in identifying a small number of issues. These include not identifying a lack of consistent challenge for the highest attainers and some lapses in pupils' learning behaviours in a few classes.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed effectively. A well-balanced and rich curriculum provides a wide range of experiences that contribute to pupils' thorough understanding of their belonging to a multicultural and multi-faith society. Pupils have recently visited a mosque and gurdwara to learn about how Muslims and Sikhs practise their faith.
- There is a strong emphasis on developing a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. 'Forest school' activities, science, music, art and history all play a significant role in enhancing pupils' knowledge and skills and deepening their understanding. With a wide and diverse menu of after-school and lunchtime clubs and interest groups, the pupils are very well catered for and, as a result, the level of enjoyment and motivation for learning is high.
- Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain and have a deep understanding of British values as well as the Christian values. For example, when considering the value of tolerance, a moving assembly on Holocaust Memorial Day encouraged pupils never to stand by and be silent if they see injustice.
- Twenty school council members are elected at the start of each year and play a key role in developing the school. They have recently considered healthy eating choices at lunch and breaktimes and have contributed to the wider community by deciding on their plans to support various charities, including Children in Need and Comic Relief.
- Senior leaders direct the use of pupil premium funding very effectively. A range of initiatives, including employing an extra teacher, ensures that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Leaders are alert to any barriers that lead to pupils' progress stalling. As a result, funds are also used to support pupils' emotional and personal development so they are ready to learn. The positive impact of this work speaks for itself. Achievement gaps are narrowing year-on-year by the time pupils leave Year 6. In 2015, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was significantly better than that of other pupils nationally.
- Sports funding is used well to promote healthy lifestyles and increase participation in sport. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular sporting clubs, such as fencing, cricket and tag rugby. Additional fitness, sports club activities and competitive sports events are also provided, such as street dance, Zumba, inter-school swimming galas and cricket tournaments.
- The staff response to the Ofsted online questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive. Almost all staff who responded agree that the school is well led and managed. Similarly, the parents' response following the online survey, Parent View, was positive, especially so of late where parents praised the better communication and the improving parent links.

- The local authority keeps an eye on the school but now only offers light touch support. However, the school has been supported well by local authority representatives in their drive to establish improvement since the previous inspection. School-to-school support across a cluster of local schools is proving to be a useful tool in sharing good practice and pooling resources to tackle common issues.
- The school is harmonious and inclusive because racial intolerance, name-calling or prejudice-based bullying is a rarity and equality of opportunity is promoted well.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors share the passion of senior leaders to secure the best possible outcomes for the pupils of Christ Church Junior School. They give of their time generously to ensure that they have first-hand knowledge of what is happening at the school. They are regular visitors to classrooms and speak to subject leaders to gather evidence about the quality of teaching and learning. External expertise is used to further validate the reports that they receive from the headteacher. As a consequence, governors have a very secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ask challenging questions that hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.
 - The governing body takes seriously its responsibilities to keep pupils safe. A number of governors have undertaken training to give them the skills to fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities when recruiting new members of staff.
 - Members of the governing body ensure that they know how the extra funding that the school receives is spent. They review assessment data in great detail with the senior leadership team and as a consequence have a solid understanding of the impact that pupil premium funding is having on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Clear systems, good record-keeping and frequent training for staff mean that everyone is aware of their responsibility to protect pupils from harm. Staff know the procedures and have the confidence to take their concerns to leaders if they spot any signs of abuse or neglect. Leaders are alert to potential risks caused by forced marriage, female genital mutilation and radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of learning is good because, in most classes, teachers have created a purposeful environment where hard work and high expectation is the norm. Learning at Christ Church starts promptly.
- All teachers follow the agreed whole-school approaches to teaching reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils benefit from a consistent approach as they move from class to class. Most teachers ensure that the lessons they plan build effectively and progressively upon pupils' prior skills and knowledge, making sure that almost all groups of pupils are challenged appropriately and consequently make rapid progress.
- However, not all teachers have the skills to promote the learning of the most able with creativity and flair. Teachers sometimes hold on to the reins too tightly, going over old ground, when it is apparent the pupils are ready to move on. This prevents some pupils from thinking for themselves or having an opportunity to learn from their mistakes. It stops the most able from soaring as accomplished learners. On these occasions, the progress of the most-able pupils falters. In addition, when work is too easy or for some too hard, pupils' concentration and interest wanes and they become restless, fidgety and a little too noisy. This affects the general learning in the class.
- Teachers develop reading skills well across the school and a love of reading is nurtured, for example through a reading challenge which rewards regular readers and through library sessions. Those pupils who read to inspectors did so extremely confidently and fluently. Older pupils are able to use inference skills effectively to deduce the meaning from texts and articulate them fluently. In Years 3 and 4, teachers used skilful questioning to improve pupils' comprehension skills and to elicit pupils' understanding of non-fiction texts about teeth. In another lesson in Year 6, pupils skilfully retrieved facts and recognised features in a number of biographies due to the teacher's probing.
- Teachers are skilled in ensuring pupils have the basic skills to write. Consequently, pupils have an appropriate bank of knowledge about spelling, grammar and punctuation. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a wide range of different subjects. Expectations of the quality of this writing are equally as high as in English lessons and contribute strongly to the progress that pupils make. Displays in classrooms and in corridors celebrate pupils' high-quality writing in a broad range of topics.

- Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly, helping pupils to see what they need to do to improve further. They frequently check pupils' work to make sure that learning is secure. Feedback is immediate and incisive, helping pupils to understand misconceptions or take their learning on to the next stage. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, clear feedback given by the class teacher as well as pupils' own self-evaluation helped them to edit and improve their writing. As a result, expressive descriptions such as 'This time the gruesome villain had gone too far. He had summoned his fearsome ancient army of Jack-O-Lanterns' were common place.
- Mathematics lessons are lively because resources are used effectively and teachers are very good at promoting pupils' ability in tackling mental mathematical problems. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons as teachers challenge them to do their best. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, pupils were motivated and encouraged by their teacher to predict what shapes would be created as they located and plotted coordinates on a grid. The buzz of learning and effective use of resources was accompanied by praise which encouraged each pupil to do their best.
- The application of mathematical reasoning skills across the curriculum is not as strongly developed. There are times when pupils are expected to complete numerous calculations without being challenged to apply their learning through problem-solving. School leaders have identified this as an area for development across the school this year.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning across the board because they are well trained and have a good understanding of their role within and outside the classroom. They work effectively in partnership with class teachers and mirror teachers' skilful use of questioning to gauge pupils' understanding. Their good subject knowledge allows them to support pupils who need further support or challenge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Almost all pupils have positive attitudes to their learning because adults' expectations of them are clear, pupils' effort is praised and, in most cases, pupils understand the purpose of each set task. As a consequence, pupils know what they have to do and why. Pupils work cooperatively in pairs or small groups but can also work individually for extended periods of time. However, pupils also added that they recognised that a small group of pupils are sometimes silly and this disrupts their learning.
- Pupils look out for each other. They notice when someone appears to be lonely, sad or upset during school breaks and lunchtimes and, without prompting, show kindness and help. They show mutual respect for other pupils whatever their age or background.
- Pupils develop a knowledge and appreciation of other people's beliefs, cultures and traditions in lessons and visits to places of worship. They are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their views on life in and out of school. They have a good understanding of British values and link these to the Christian values which are held in such high esteem in this school.
- The vast majority of Christ Church pupils have a strongly developed moral culture. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and were very clear in their belief that people should be honest, kind and helpful as well as courageous in standing up against injustice. They understand that school rules are made for their safety and, as a result, they feel valued.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying but asserted that bullying at Christ Church was rare and dealt with promptly when reported to adults.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and Year 6 pupils described with excitement and interest their learning at a life skills course. This included fire safety, safety on the road and first aid. Staff provide regular updates to keep pupils' understanding fresh and to remind them of what steps to take to keep themselves safe online. The pupils know the different types of media and how to deal with a range of concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and courteous and pupils of all ages have well-developed social skills. They work together well in pairs or groups and support each other in their learning tasks.

- No incidents of poor behaviour were seen during the inspection and pupils say behaviour is typically good. They recognise that everyone has an off-day now and then which can sometimes lead to out of character bad humour or silliness. However, they know adults deal with these rare incidents well, applying the behaviour policy consistently and fairly.
- The log of behaviour incidents is kept up to date but only minor misdemeanours occur. On the rare occasion when a more serious event occurs, adults take immediate and appropriate action. Incidents of exclusion are now rare.
- However, it has to be reported that, on a small number of occasions, learning was disrupted by inattentive behaviour. School records confirm that some pupils were acting out of character during the inspection. Their usual good attitudes and respectful behaviour are a feature of school life day after day. The key to pupils' positive attitudes and conduct is twofold. Respect and tolerance underpin all that happens in school and adults equip pupils with the skills to manage their own behaviour. As a result, school is generally calm and friendly.
- Pupils speak with pride of their school and are keen to tell how safe they feel and how much they appreciate their teachers. They have no complaints about the way they are treated or their learning. However, a small number of pupils do not show enough pride in their work and not all teachers show sufficiently high expectation of presentation.
- All pupils spoken with were aware of healthy lifestyles and healthy eating. Pupils contribute well to improvements in the school and the school council and others are invited to identify where things could be better. A group of pupils asked what the role of governors was and governors have responded by attending their meetings to share ideas by which they can help to improve the school.
- Attendance for the past two years has exceeded the most recently published national figures. The school takes effective action to ensure that attendance rates continue to improve.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Prior to the previous inspection the school suffered a rare lapse and standards fell below the national average. This unusual decline was immediately halted and reversed. Pupils achieve well overall, many achieve very well.
- Pupils left school in 2015 reaching standards above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good overall progress given their starting points. As a result, pupils are very well prepared to take on the challenges of secondary school once they leave Christ Church.
- Evidence seen during lessons and in books shows that almost all groups of pupils make good progress in all subjects. Different groups of pupils across the school make good and sometimes better progress in reading. In Years 3 and 4, children use skills effectively to tackle new words with confidence. Older pupils read texts with ease, understanding and enjoyment. As a result, pupils' standards in reading by the end of Year 6 have been, and continue to be, consistently above average.
- Achievement in writing across the school is good. Work in pupils' books is of a high standard. Pupils punctuate accurately and use a range of adventurous vocabulary to enhance their writing. Sophisticated skills are being developed by older pupils to subtly convey meaning to their audience.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. For the past two years progress has been significantly above the national average for pupils in Key Stage 2. Books show that pupils develop mathematical fluency effectively and have opportunities to deepen understanding of mathematical concepts through problem-solving activities. Pupils are not currently given the same opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in all classes.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well at Christ Church. Evidence in lessons shows that progress for this group of pupils is at least in line with that of other pupils in all subjects. The deputy headteacher and a knowledgeable and astute governor keep a close watch on the achievement of this group of pupils through analysis of assessment information and checks on pupils' books. As a result, in 2015 the progress of disadvantaged pupils was above that of other pupils in school and significantly above that of other pupils nationally.
- The progress that most pupils, and especially the middle- and lower-attaining pupils, make is equally good. This is because most teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve. Teachers use what they know about pupils to plan lessons that build upon their knowledge and skills. As a consequence, in 2015 the overall progress of pupils in all subjects was significantly above that

of other pupils nationally. However, in 2015 the small number of the highest-attaining pupils was in line with the national average and work seen during the inspection suggests that teachers do not always provide more challenge for them.

- Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is at least in line with that of other pupils in the school. This is because the leader of the provision for this group of pupils has helped staff to accurately assess the needs of these pupils and plan lessons, ensuring effective support is provided and organising appropriate training.
- The use of specialist teachers in subjects such as music, science and French, as well as the provision for a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, ensures that the achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics is also strong. For example, inspectors observed some high-quality art work around school and enjoyed hearing the choir sing.

School details

Unique reference number	109165
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10009220

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Pound
Headteacher	Alex Wilkinson
Telephone number	01454 866516
Website	www.christ-down-jun.s-gloucs.sch.uk
Email address	christchurchjuniordownend.school@southglos.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	30–31 January 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in looked after by the local authority) is below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes to the leadership of the school with a new deputy headteacher, changes in roles and responsibilities of key staff and a new Chair of the Governing Body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 18 lessons. In addition, inspectors visited lessons to talk to pupils about their work and to review work in pupils' books across a range of subjects. Most of this work was completed alongside a member of the school leadership team.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the senior leadership team and key subject leaders, the coordinator for special educational needs and members of the governing body, and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also took account of questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors met with pupils and observed them during breaktimes, lunchtimes and when entering and leaving school.
- A range of documents was examined, including information relating to pupils' progress and attendance, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents and took account of parents' responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Steve Bywater, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Beeks	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Brookes	Ofsted Inspector

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