

Christ Church CofE (C) Primary School

Christ Church Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 8AY

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the last inspection a new leadership team has been appointed. They, along with the governors, have successfully maintained the good level of education provided by the school. Outcomes at the end of each key stage are above national averages.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and sets very high expectations for staff and pupils. She is extremely ambitious for the school. This ambition is shared by all staff, leaders and governors.
- Children in the early years make very strong progress from their starting points. They thrive as a result of the high-quality teaching and range of opportunities their teachers provide.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils enjoy their learning and actively demonstrate the school's values. They are confident, self-assured and enthusiastic learners who are proud of their achievements.
- Parents are very positive about the school. They appreciate how well leaders run the school, the supportive and nurturing environment staff create, and the good communication they receive.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. Attendance continues to improve and is above the national average.
- Good teaching and assessment ensure that pupils make good progress and learn effectively in lessons. Occasionally, however, teachers do not identify errors or misconceptions quickly enough and pupils continue to make the same mistakes.
- A broad and rich curriculum effectively supports pupils' learning through a 'big question' approach. This engages and stimulates pupils' interests.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very successfully. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and teachers carefully track the progress of all pupils in most subjects. However, not all pupils, especially the most able, are making as much progress as they could. This is because teaching does not focus enough on the depth of learning and skills required for the higher standards.
- In mathematics, teachers use assessments to accurately identify the needs of most pupils and ensure that they make good progress. Sometimes pupils do not have enough opportunity to use and apply their knowledge.
- Progress in reading is not recorded consistently across the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that all pupils, especially the most able, make substantial and sustained progress by:
 - quickly identifying and addressing misconceptions and errors so that pupils make more rapid progress
 - refining the school's systems for recording pupils' progress in reading
 - ensuring teachers make clear to pupils the depth of learning and the skills that they need to reach the higher standards expected at the end of each key stage
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to reason and apply their learning in mathematics in a wider range of contexts and at greater depth.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors are very ambitious for Christ Church CofE Primary School and they are committed to ensuring that pupils are given every opportunity to achieve their potential. They have a shared goal to enable all pupils to 'value themselves, each other and the environment by showing respect, caring and taking responsibility'. The impact of this vision is evident across all aspects of the school.
- Since her appointment, the headteacher has restructured her leadership team and has put in place a team who demonstrate drive and determination. Together they have set high expectations for all staff and pupils. As a result, the school is a vibrant, happy place where pupils are able to grow into confident, articulate, knowledgeable and tolerant individuals.
- Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They are proud to work in the school and feel well supported by leaders. They value the continuing professional development they receive in order to further improve teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Topics are introduced through a 'big question', for example: What makes the earth angry?; Who first lived in Britain?; Would you find a meerkat in your back garden? This approach engages pupils' interest and motivates them to learn. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities including a choir, arts and crafts, and many different sports. These clubs are well attended and pupils appreciate the additional opportunities that they are given to learn new skills. The curriculum is also brought to life through a range of trips and visitors. Recently this included Year 4 pupils visiting a mosque and a Hindu temple while the whole school learned about Sikhism from a visitor during 'World Religion' day.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and fundamental British values, is a strength of the school and elements are threaded across the curriculum. For example, inspectors observed pupils learning about acts of kindness during collective worship and links were made between the pupils' own experiences and examples within the Bible. Leaders create a balance between planned activities and more incidental opportunities arising from current events. For example, democracy has recently been taught through 'The Gunpowder Plot' and the presidential elections in America. This approach helps pupils to apply the school's values in practice and, as a result, they are well prepared for their next stage of education and life in modern Britain.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their starting points. Their specific needs are addressed in a variety of ways including extra support in class, specialist interventions and access to support for emotional or mental health needs. Funding is used effectively to address identified needs and the special educational needs coordinator closely monitors the support pupils are receiving to check that it is having a positive impact. Information is regularly shared with the governing body. Further training for teachers is planned to ensure that they all have the skills to fully meet the needs of their pupils.
- School leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils during whole-class teaching, small group work and bespoke interventions. They track

the progress of disadvantaged pupils at an individual pupil level to ensure that support is targeted to specific needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and diminishing the difference between their progress and that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points.

- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sports premium funding very well. Pupils access a wide range of sports, for example archery, cricket and tag rugby. New equipment and an all-weather playing surface mean that more pupils can now take part in physical activity during, and after, the school day. As a result, the levels of pupil participation in physical activity have increased and several pupils now play sport for a range of local teams. Teachers are benefiting from structured professional development programmes which are improving the quality of PE teaching and helping to maximise pupils' progress.
- Parents are highly positive about the work of the school, commenting on the curriculum, the focus on developing pupils' values and the quality of communication. Several parents comment on how much the school has improved since the appointment of the current headteacher. One parent summed up the views of many by writing, 'This is a warm, friendly school with a family ethos which is shared by all staff'.
- Senior leaders have rightly prioritised improving standards in English and mathematics. As a result, the majority of pupils are making good progress in these subjects. However, not all pupils, especially the most able, are making as much progress as they could. Senior leaders are aware of this and are taking action to address potential underachievement.

Governance of the school

- Governors are effective and they know the school very well. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and are clear about what needs to be done to improve further. The governing body is well led by the chair of governors. Members of the governing body speak passionately about the improvements that they have led since the last inspection and they are clearly ambitious for the school. They are focused on improving outcomes for all pupils.
- Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge to the school leadership team. They use information gathered through visits to school, as well as from reports provided by leaders, to ask challenging questions in order to bring about improvements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff have regular and appropriate training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and are clear about what they should do if they have any concerns. The safeguarding team maintains the required records and information is shared with relevant external agencies. Governors regularly monitor whether there have been any safeguarding issues and check whether school procedures have been followed.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. This includes keeping safe online. Pupils are confident that

any issues raised will be quickly resolved.

- Each class has a pupil health and safety officer who helps to ensure that their classroom is a safe place to be.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and ensure that classrooms are calm and positive environments in which to learn. As a result, pupils stay focused on their work almost all of the time. They are engaged and keen to complete their work to a good standard.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. Pupils actively support each other's learning. For example, inspectors observed a lesson where the teacher asked pupils to work in a group of six. Pupils made sure that everyone was included and had a role to play.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and consequently they teach concepts securely. They work together, sharing their expertise, to plan interesting and exciting units of work to engage pupils in learning. Teachers are motivated and are not afraid to try new teaching and learning approaches to support their pupils' needs.
- The headteacher has developed an assessment system which is being used effectively to track the progress pupils are making, especially in writing and mathematics, but increasingly across other subject areas. The accuracy of the system is checked when teachers from across the local area meet to compare outcomes and standards.
- Individual pupils' progress is discussed at termly meetings. If a pupil is identified as being at risk of not making enough progress, leaders identify barriers to learning and agree specific actions to be taken. Any interventions identified are carefully monitored by the special educational needs coordinator and input is adapted to match each pupil's needs.
- Phonics teaching, especially in Year 1, is a strength. There are clear routines in place and sessions are fast paced and engaging. Teachers model letter sounds clearly and employ a range of multi-sensory approaches to support pupils' learning.
- Throughout the year, there are regular opportunities for teachers' professional development based on identified needs. For example, following the 2016 outcomes there has been a focus on ensuring that all teachers are aware of the increased expectations within the national curriculum for pupils to reach the higher standards. Teachers are putting this training into practice but leaders need to make sure that expectations, especially for the most able, are high enough and that pupils are being given sufficient opportunity to use their skills and apply them in different contexts. Sometimes pupils do not achieve as highly as they could because they have not seen what a good example looks like.
- In mathematics, teachers make effective use of pre- and post-topic assessments to identify the needs of the majority of pupils and ensure that they make good progress. For some of the most able pupils, the post-topic assessments do not provide enough challenge for them to demonstrate what they are capable of. Across the school, pupils are developing their reasoning skills and are encouraged to explain how they have worked out an answer. However, not all pupils are being expected to do this on a

regular enough basis for it to have an impact on their progress. Teachers are including more opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems within their lessons. Pupils really enjoy these challenges especially when they can select their own approach to working out the answer.

- Developing a love of reading is a school priority and pupils in each year group have identified a reading challenge to encourage everyone to read on a more regular basis. In the autumn term, the whole school focused on 'conversational' reading in order to support pupils' written comprehension skills. Pupils' progress in reading, especially at key stage 2, is not tracked as systematically as in other areas and so the impact of this approach is not yet clear.
- The quality of pupils' writing is improving. Pupils have more opportunities to write at length and across a range of subjects. Target sheets are used to support writing. These are effective in ensuring that pupils and teachers know which objectives have been achieved and the next steps required. Regular assessments based on these targets mean that progress is clear for the majority of pupils. Some pupils are not yet reaching the higher standards owing to gaps in subject knowledge, for example inaccurate spelling and the difference between formal and informal writing styles.
- The school's policy for giving pupils feedback is used consistently in writing and mathematics and increasingly so in other subject areas. The approach is clearly understood by pupils and enables them to identify how their work can be improved or what the next step is in their learning. A method recently introduced to support pupils in editing their writing is having a clear impact on improving punctuation. Similarly, in mathematics, pupils respond well to the additional questions and challenges teachers set for them. Occasionally teachers do not identify and correct errors or misconceptions quickly enough, for example the spelling of some common words, incorrect letter formation and 'adding a nought' when multiplying by 10. Pupils continue to make the same mistakes and this reinforces their misunderstanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. From the youngest to the oldest pupils, it is clear that pupils enjoy coming to school. They show great pride in their school and have a love of learning. Almost without exception pupils are polite and friendly. They are respectful to adults and each other, responding quickly to teachers' requests.
- Pupils are confident learners and they demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. This has a strong impact on the progress that they make. Pupils actively follow the school's '5Rs' focusing on relationships, resilience, risk taking, reflection and being resourceful. Pupils are caring and considerate to each other.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They understand what bullying is and the various forms it may take. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and they are confident that any concerns will be dealt with quickly by an adult.
- Across the whole school, pupils are encouraged to take on a variety of roles and

responsibilities. These include play leaders, science leaders, health and safety officers, class ambassadors and representing their class on the school council. Pupils relish these opportunities to support their teachers and their classmates. In the pupil survey, the vast majority of pupils agreed that the school encourages them to be independent and to take on responsibilities.

- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club. Pupils enjoy these times as an opportunity for socialising with each other and adults. The atmosphere is welcoming and relaxed. Adults are friendly and respond well to the pupils' needs, providing support and input or enabling pupils to play freely and make independent choices.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Behaviour in classrooms and around school is of a consistently high standard with almost all pupils being keen to learn and eager to come to school.
- The school's behaviour policy is extremely effective and focuses on motivating the pupils to behave well. Pupils and staff understand the policy and use it consistently across the school. Pupils appreciate this consistency and sense of fairness.
- A group of Year 6 pupils make up the 'Junior Leadership Team'. These pupils work closely with the headteacher and other school leaders to make a positive difference to the life of the school. Last term they were instrumental in the introduction of 'value' tokens which are given to any pupil actively reflecting the school values. All pupils are motivated to receive a token and this approach has created an even stronger focus for pupils on the link between the values and good behaviour.
- Owing to the effective work done by leaders, the vast majority of pupils attend school regularly and on time, so that attendance is above national averages for all groups of pupils. The promotion of good attendance remains a priority for the school with leaders carefully tracking attendance and promptly following up any absence. Leaders are alert to the possibility of children going missing from education and work with external agencies to minimise any risk.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the 2016 key stage 2 tests, the percentage of pupils who met the expected standard for their age was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher standard in mathematics was also well above the national average. In reading it was just above the national average, while in writing it was below. Overall, progress in writing was weaker than in the other two subjects. The school has taken steps to address this with several new initiatives to support developments in pupils' writing.
- In the 2016 key stage 1 tests, more pupils met the expected standard for their age in each of reading, writing and mathematics than was seen nationally but the proportion reaching the higher standard was lower. Many middle- and high-ability pupils did not make as much progress as they could have from their starting points. In 2015, key stage 1 outcomes and progress for all pupils in all subjects were significantly above the national average. Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check were high in both

2015 and 2016.

- School leaders have identified the reasons why progress was not as strong in key stage 1 in some areas in 2016 and are addressing these with current pupils so that they are working at a good standard in all subjects. Pupils who are currently in Year 3 are making accelerated progress.
- School assessments and data analysis indicate that currently, the majority of pupils are working at the standard expected for their age and prior attainment across a wide range of subjects and across all year groups. This is confirmed by evidence in pupils' books and in current displays.
- Although the most able pupils generally make good progress in all aspects of their work, they are not achieving as well as they could. For example, in writing, they write competently and often using a wide range of vocabulary, but they are held back because teachers are not focusing their attention on what high-quality writing looks like. On occasions, the quality of their writing is brought down by simple mistakes in, for example, spelling.
- Outcomes for the small number of disadvantaged pupils vary from year to year but because the funding to support their progress is used well they are making progress in line with other pupils in school. The difference in attainment as shown in the end of key stage test results between them and other pupils nationally is decreasing. In some cases, for example in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2016, disadvantaged pupils did better than other pupils nationally. This is because of good teaching and high expectations. In most year groups, the most able disadvantaged pupils do as well as the other most able pupils in school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. This is because of the effective support they receive in class and through tailored support. Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully and adapt support and intervention according to need.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception Year is above the national average and has been for over three years. This represents very good progress for children from their starting points. Both boys and girls do better than their peers nationally. The children leave the early years very well prepared to start Year 1.
- Teachers' monitoring is thorough and children's progress is carefully tracked through the use of learning journals. Teachers and teaching assistants use assessments to accurately identify those children who need additional help and plan good support to ensure that the children catch up quickly.
- The early years learning environment is highly stimulating but it is also calm and very well organised. Children respond to, and respect, the equipment and facilities. Most children are fully engaged in purposeful activities for the majority of their time.
- The outdoor area is very well used and provides a wealth of literacy and mathematical opportunities as well as activities linked to the current topic. This complements the range of activities available for children to choose indoors. Adults encourage

conversation, prompting children and asking them questions to develop their thinking and deepen their understanding. Technology is used effectively, by both adults and children, to record children's activities.

- The early years leader is confident and knowledgeable, and has high expectations of all staff and children. She is clear on what needs to be provided to help move children's learning forward. The early years leader is ably supported by a strong team who work well together to enable the children to get the most out of the learning opportunities provided.
- The progress children make is strong. The combined teaching of phonics and writing skills is very effective. Children enjoy writing and inspectors observed small groups of children writing independently and taking great pride in their work. In mathematics, inspectors observed children working at a high standard for their age, for example calculating '2 more' or '2 less' than a number smaller than 20 while others were ordering numbers up to 30.
- The children are well cared for and nurtured so that they feel confident, curious and eager to join in activities. Children's behaviour is excellent and they show respect for each other. They play cooperatively together sharing resources and discussing their activities.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and children know how to stay safe in the setting. Welfare requirements in the early years are fully met.
- Early years staff are welcoming and encourage regular communication with parents. This starts in the summer term before the children officially begin school and is effective in building confidence and ensuring children settle quickly.

School details

Unique reference number	124257
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10025408

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally-Anne Smith
Headteacher	Julie Pilmore
Telephone number	01543 510661
Website	www.christchurch-lichfield.staffs.sch.uk/
Email address	headteacher@christchurch-lichfield.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 February 2012

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below national levels, while the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below that found in most primary schools.
- The school runs both a breakfast and after-school club. This provision is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 24 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also made additional short visits to many classrooms to gather evidence on particular aspects of the curriculum or pupils' learning.
- Inspectors met with pupils and listened to some pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with an assistant director of education from the Diocese of Lichfield. The lead inspector also met with eight representatives of the governing body including the chair and the vice-chair of governors.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the school's recruitment and vetting checks and records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information relating to the monitoring of teaching and learning, and school performance data, and checked that the school's website contained all of the required information.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through scrutinising 76 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 55 free-text responses. The lead inspector spoke to some parents on the first day of the inspection.
- Fourteen responses to the staff questionnaire and 27 responses to the pupil questionnaire were considered as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Collette Higgins	Ofsted Inspector
Julie McCarthy	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Maybank	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Broomfield	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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