

Christ Church Church of England Controlled Primary School

Brookhill Road, Waterworks Street, Bootle, Merseyside L20 3JL

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, with her capable and effective senior leadership team and supportive governors, has worked tirelessly to improve the school.
- Senior leaders' concerted efforts have ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are good.
- Governors know the school well. They are committed to ensuring that all pupils enjoy school and achieve well. Governors hold senior leaders to account and challenge the school to improve continually.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to make learning both interesting and memorable. They have excellent relationships with pupils and know them well. However, the learning needs of the most and least able are not always met.
- In 2017, at the end of key stage 2, most pupils made good progress in reading and writing. Their progress in mathematics was in the top 15% of all schools nationally. Pupils' attainment is rapidly improving in all subjects.
- Safeguarding procedures are well established, comprehensive and fully understood by all staff.
- Early years leadership is good. Children's behaviour is outstanding. However, teaching activities do not always meet the specific learning needs of two-year-old children. In addition, outdoor learning and play areas are not as stimulating as they could be.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy school and are eager to learn. While many initiatives are in place to decrease absence, the attendance of a small core of pupils remains below average.
- Outstanding nurture provision is available for pupils when needed. This helps to ensure their emotional well-being.
- Educational trips, visits to museums and local places of interest, and regular visitors, enhance the school's engaging curriculum.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as their appreciation of British values, is very effective.
- Parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school. They say that their children are happy, safe and progressing well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, and in so doing further raise levels of attainment across the school in reading and writing, by ensuring that the learning needs of all groups of pupils, including the most able and lower attaining pupils, are consistently met.
- Improve the quality of early years provision by:
 - developing outdoor learning and play areas
 - ensuring that provision is carefully structured to meet the specific educational needs of two-year-old children.
- Improve the attendance of the small core of pupils who are persistently absent by further enhancing strategies to reduce absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is complemented well by two assistant headteachers. Together they form a highly effective team. Senior leaders, with the support and commitment of governors, have worked tirelessly to tackle the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection.
- The headteacher and governors have not shied away from making difficult decisions in their determination to ensure that teaching is good. Targeted professional development and support have helped to improve teachers' practice and boost pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- While senior leaders are responsible for setting development priorities in English and mathematics, middle leaders are actively involved in improving the quality of teaching and learning in a wide range of additional subjects, including science, history, geography, computing, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE). Typically, leaders keep abreast of developments in their specialist areas and share information and good practice with colleagues. This helps to enhance pupils' learning and progress.
- Senior leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning, offering good advice to teachers on how they can improve their practice. In addition, leaders check the quality of work in pupils' books and ensure that the school's assessment and feedback policy is consistently applied. Such practices help to maintain good teaching.
- Regular pupil progress meetings and close tracking of pupils' performance provide useful information to senior leaders on how well pupils are performing. As part of the school's management of teachers' performance, teachers are set challenging targets linked to the progress of individual pupils and groups, including those who attract the pupil premium funding.
- Staff morale is exceptionally high. Almost all staff were at the school at the time of the previous inspection. All say that the school has improved and indicate that they enjoy working with colleagues. Those new to the profession, including newly qualified teachers, benefit from regular continuing professional development and training, which they say is improving their subject knowledge and teaching practice.
- Additional funding, including the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils, is spent effectively. Such funding is used for targeted teaching activities and to ensure that pupils can participate in all aspects of school life. It is helping to diminish the differences between the performance of this group and that of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating curriculum, which provides many opportunities for them to develop and transfer their reading, writing and mathematical skills from subject to subject. Teachers are skilled at developing cross-curricular themes spanning English, mathematics, science and technology. This enlivens the curriculum and captures pupils' interest.
- The school's work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and promote British values is good. Given the monocultural nature of the school, priority is given to developing pupils' appreciation of the culturally diverse nature of

British society, as well as to their appreciation of the major world faiths, including Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Pupils enjoy visiting museums, going to book fairs, exploring nature reserves and engaging in field trips. They participate in the school choir and enjoy playing various string, percussion and keyboard instruments.

- Pupils regularly engage in charitable acts. Recently, they participated in a 'crazy hair day' and organised a coffee morning to raise funds for worthy causes. Pupils put democratic principles into practice when they give their views on matters such as the purchase of play equipment. Pupils are patriotic. This was demonstrated in key stages 1 and 2 when they celebrated the forthcoming marriage of Prince Harry to Meghan Markle.
- Additional funding for primary school physical education (PE) and sport is used highly effectively to increase pupils' participation in the many sporting activities on offer. The school offers 15 extra-curricular clubs, including those for fencing, football, basketball, Zumba, dodgeball, judo and multi-sports. Detailed records indicate that most pupils participate in at least one after-school club. They are encouraged to do the 'daily mile' and participate in competitive sporting activities, including swimming. Coaching is available to develop teachers' confidence and skills in teaching activities and sports such as gymnastics.
- Parents are exceptionally positive about the school. This includes parents who submitted text messages during the inspection, as well as those who spoke with inspectors. A typical comment was, 'My child has made very good progress since being at the school,' and, 'all staff are approachable – they care about the children.' Most parents are of the view that behaviour is good. They say that their children are happy and safe.
- The school works hard to improve attendance. Pastoral staff keep comprehensive and compelling information which shows the adverse impact of poor attendance on pupils' achievement. This information is shared with parents. However, a small core of pupils are persistently absent. The school is working closely with the Strand Partnership, a collective of 20 local schools, to explore further ways of improving attendance.
- The school enjoys a very productive relationship with the local authority. Most recently, support has been given to ensure that the school's assessments of pupils' performance in English and mathematics are accurate. In addition, the local authority works with the school to monitor the quality of teaching. In turn, the school's assistant headteachers support the local authority's induction programme for newly qualified teachers and share the school's good practice in mathematics teaching with local and regional schools.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. Most are linked to a curriculum area. As such, they spend time in classes and find out about performance data with teachers and senior leaders. This gives them an in-depth understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Quite rightly, governors are proud of the school's successes since the previous inspection.
- Almost all governors met with inspectors to share their views about the school. In so doing, they demonstrated their passion and commitment. Governors hold senior

leaders to account. They can ask pertinent questions because they have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further.

- Governors know exactly how additional funding is spent. This includes the pupil premium funding that the school receives for disadvantaged pupils. Governors know that progress for these pupils was good at the end of Year 6 last year. They also know that funding is successfully diminishing the differences between this group of pupils and others nationally.
- Governors keep abreast of developments in education. This includes governors responsible for safeguarding and special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. All execute their responsibilities diligently and help to ensure that pupils are safe and progressing well.
- Governors set challenging targets for teachers and use appraisal well to acknowledge those who meet their targets.

Safeguarding

- The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy published on its website.
- All staff are trained well to ensure that pupils are safe from harm. Designated safeguarding leads have all undergone local authority training to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and understanding to execute their duties effectively.
- Comprehensive systems are in place to record any concerns raised by staff. All concerns are reported quickly to the appropriate authorities and parents as necessary.
- Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are thorough. All staff know exactly what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's safety or welfare.
- All staff are familiar with the latest government guidance on keeping children safe in education. Their strong and trusted relationships with pupils ensure that pupils have the confidence to disclose any concerns they may have.
- A sizable portion of pupils are vulnerable. Staff understand the potential dangers that such pupils face. All are familiar with the detailed risk assessments drawn up for each pupil, the school premises and educational visits.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and is much improved since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants are trained well and have good relationships with pupils. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils, make learning interesting and provide opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. This was evident in a fast-moving and purposeful Year 1 phonics class, where highly effective teamwork ensured that pupils of different abilities developed their phonic skills and knowledge well. While the teacher focused on tricky words such as 'want' and 'above', the teaching assistant focused on helping pupils to extend words, such as 'stitched' and 'hugged' by adding 'ed'. By the end of the session, some pupils were able to add new words to short sentences, while others enjoyed taking on the role of 'teacher' as they listened to their

peers read.

- All teachers consistently apply the school's feedback and assessment policy. Their approach to giving pupils feedback on their work enhances pupils' understanding of how they can improve their learning, not only in reading, writing and mathematics, but also in subjects including science, religious education (RE) and history.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics. This was evident in a Year 5 class where pupils were looking at different problems related to converting kilograms into grams. The teacher insisted that all pupils identified how they worked out their answers by asking searching questions such as, 'Explain your answer in detail' and 'How did you come to that conclusion?' Similarly, in a Year 6 class, the teacher constantly asked probing questions to establish pupils' knowledge and understanding of inverse operations, which they skilfully applied to a range of problem-solving activities.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of different writing genres and literary conventions. This was exemplified in a Year 5 class, where pupils were evaluating two very different texts. Pupils discussed and explained clearly why words such as 'barked' and phrases such as 'stinking, sticky curry' added humour to the 'kitchen-sink', domestic style of one of their texts. In addition, they had a precise understanding of how grammar and punctuation in horror stories can be used to create short, sharp and curt sentences to evoke a sense of fear in the reader.
- Teachers are proficient at developing pupils' appreciation of the importance of skills such as map reading in the world outside school. This was exemplified in two Year 4 classes. Pupils went into the playground to map out and identify features such as trees, benches and dustbins, which they drew and placed at different compass points. Back in class, pupils' skills were refined further as they wrote directions such as, 'the place you are looking for is five squares north and four squares west' to help their peers navigate their way around a street map.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to investigate the natural world, as they did recently at Freshfields, a local beauty spot, as part of their geography and science work. Pupils then linked this work to their class text, 'The Unforgotten Coat', which centres on several locations in and around Merseyside.
- Teachers' effective approach to teaching English and mathematics has led to pupils' much improved achievement this year. All pupils know that they can experiment with some aspects of their learning, such as writing, before completing a formal version in their main writing books. Pupils can also practise their calculation skills and rehearse their methods before tackling activities in their mathematics books.
- While pupils are usually challenged by learning activities appropriate to their skills and abilities, occasionally work is not hard enough for the most able. As a result, these pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable. Similarly, support for lower attaining pupils is not always closely targeted. When this happens, such pupils can find it difficult to participate in learning activities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are curious, well mannered and very welcoming towards visitors. They enjoy finding out new things with their peers and are prepared to respond to the learning challenges they often face in class. Pupils are becoming increasingly resilient. They are willing to try new things and have sufficient confidence to 'have a go' at a difficult mathematical problem or challenging text before asking for help.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel confident in talking to staff if they have a worry or concern. Some specifically mentioned the nurture base, where outstanding support is available for pupils who may at times find it difficult to learn alongside their peers. Parents, staff and governors who spoke with inspectors all said that the school is very safe.
- Transition arrangements are well established. This allows for the smooth move from the Reception class, to Year 1, Year 2 and key stage 2. In addition, Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school of their choice and are exceptionally well prepared for their learning when they start their new school after the summer break.
- Extended transition arrangements are in place for those pupils who are likely to find the move from Christ Church School to secondary school difficult. This includes pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Pupils know how to stay safe while using the internet. Older pupils know never to add strangers to social network groups and to use privacy setting for creating profiles. All pupils know that they should talk to an adult at school, or home, if they are unsure about the safety, or appropriateness, of a website or link.
- Various visitors from the police, fire and social services talk to pupils, often during assemblies, about safe and unsafe situations and how to minimise dangers and risks.
- Large numbers of pupils regularly attend the breakfast club. Here they can eat a healthy breakfast of fruit, yoghurt and cereal and refine their table manners. Pupils enjoy catching up with their classmates and are well prepared for the day ahead.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is good most of the time. Christ Church School is very calm and purposeful. Pupils wear their uniforms with pride and enjoy taking on various responsibilities, as buddies to their younger schoolmates and members of the school council.
- Pupils take care of their school. They ensure that it is well kept and free of litter. Pupils behave sensibly and safely at all times. This includes when they are moving around the school, during lunchtimes and when at play.
- Pupils say that bullying is 'when you are constantly mean to someone'. They have workshops on bullying during anti-bullying week and explore issues, including tolerance and cultural diversity, through the personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional

(PSHCE) aspects of the curriculum.

- Pupils know what racism is – ‘to judge someone unfairly by the colour of their skin’ – and say that it never happens at school. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of most prejudice-based bullying, including homophobic bullying, which they say is ‘unkind’ and not allowed in the school.
- All parents who met with inspectors, and the vast majority of those who submitted text messages during the inspection, are of the view that behaviour is good. Governors and staff are also of this view. The school’s logs indicate that poor behaviour is rare. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils’ behaviour is typically good over time.
- Pupils’ attendance is below average, despite senior leaders’ and pastoral workers’ tireless efforts and initiatives to improve it. Pastoral workers make home visits, and good attendance is celebrated. In addition, irrefutable data is produced, which is shared with parents, to show the relationship between good attendance and good achievement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils’ progress has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now at least good in all subjects. At the end of Year 6 in 2017, pupils made outstanding progress in mathematics, moving from the bottom 20% in 2015, to the top 15% of all schools nationally. Similarly, middle-ability pupils, by far the largest group of pupils, made better than expected progress in writing, to move from the bottom 40% to the top 20% of all schools. Although progress in reading was not quite as good, most pupils made at least good progress in this subject by the time they left Year 6 in 2017.
- Pupils’ attainment has also improved. At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. At this time, pupils’ attainment at the expected standard dipped in reading at the end of key stage 1 and was broadly average in writing and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence, including the school’s own assessment information and work in pupils’ books, indicates that current pupils are making rapid and sustained progress across the school in all subjects.
- At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2017, few pupils attained at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that a higher proportion of pupils than previously, including those in Years 2 and 6, are currently attaining at greater depth.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Their reading records indicate that they do so very frequently, both at school and at home. Pupils are familiar with different genres and can name several popular authors. They say that they enjoy guided reading and competing in various reading challenges, in the hope of winning a top award and selecting the whole-class reading book for their year.
- Phonics teaching is consistently good and much improved since the previous inspection. As a result, outcomes in phonics have improved each year for the last three years at the end of both Year 1 and Year 2. At the end of Year 1 in 2017, an average proportion of pupils were secure in their phonics skills and knowledge in the national screening check.

- Pupils make rapid progress in mathematics and attain highly. For good reason, pupils say that they enjoy this subject. This is because teachers make mathematics both challenging and interesting. Pupils regularly apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities. Pupils' books indicate that they are skilled at showing their methods and highlighting their calculation strategies.
- Pupils' progress in writing is good. This is evident in the highly accomplished extended writing displayed throughout the school, exploring topics ranging from Romeo and Juliet to Liverpool and the slave trade. Pupils have many opportunities to write about their educational trips and visits and are well equipped to express their opinions through letter-writing and persuasive texts.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2017, disadvantaged pupils made good progress in reading and writing and were just shy of the top 20% of all schools in mathematics. This pattern is repeated across the school. In some classes, disadvantaged pupils' progress is better than that of their peers. At the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils' attainment was not as good as that of other pupils nationally in any subject. However, differences in performance are rapidly diminishing.
- Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good. Parents are especially pleased about their children's progress, which they say is good. The special educational needs coordinator works in partnership with various specialists to ensure that pupils get the support they need. This includes those who are supported in the nurture base. Tailored teaching activities, including those aimed at developing pupils' language and communication skills, effectively meet pupils' specific educational needs, helping to give them access to the curriculum and make good progress.
- Few pupils attained greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics at the end of either key stage 1 or 2 in 2017. The proportion attaining greater depth in grammar, punctuation and spelling matched the national average. Attainment in mathematics was closest to average at the end of key stage 2, but furthest from average at the end of key stage 1.
- Current data indicates that pupils are attaining more highly this year. This is confirmed by the quality, and degree of difficulty, of work in pupils' books. However, some pupils are not attaining the standards of which they are capable because they are not consistently challenged in class.
- Pupils' workbooks and assessment information indicate that they make good progress in a range of subjects, including science, art, computing, PE, RE, mathematics and English. As a result, most are well prepared for their learning in Year 7.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and management of the early years provision are good. As a result of effective monitoring and evaluation, the early years leader has an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development in the early years provision.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations of children, with whom they form strong bonds. All staff are trained well. They have attended courses focusing on developing children's writing and talking. In addition, training has been provided for staff responsible for two-year-old children to ensure that they have a good

understanding of how young children learn.

- A high proportion of children enter the Nursery class with weak skills in several areas of learning, including language and communication. They make consistently good progress through early years. In 2017, an average proportion attained a good level of development. As a result, most were ready for their learning in Year 1.
- Staff continually assess children's performance. They capture and collate information on children's skills and achievements, which are recorded in workbooks. Disadvantaged children are targeted to ensure that they make the same good progress as their peers.
- Children are exceptionally keen to learn. They work together well and enjoy finding out about the world around them. Children are very attentive. They concentrate for sustained periods, listen carefully to adults and respond well to instructions.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff consistently focus on extending children's language and developing their confidence in speaking and writing. A speech and language therapist works closely with staff to identify any children in need of support. Interventions are put into place immediately when needed. In addition, staff work closely with parents so that they too can support their children's language development through story-telling.
- Children are very creative. This was evident when a small group of children in a Reception class were making mini-beast pictures. The teacher constantly checked children's understanding of the characteristics of insects by asking, 'How many legs do insects have?' and 'Do all insects have wings?'
- Children love listening to stories. This was evident during a reading of 'The Scarecrow's Wedding' in a Reception class. At the end of the story, the teacher asked children to recall and sequence events. They were able to sustain their concentration as they confidently asked questions about the scarecrow and stated, 'The scarecrow got married at the end of the story.'
- Children's work is valued, celebrated and carefully displayed throughout the Reception and Nursery classes. Indoor provision is clearly linked to the various areas of learning, providing opportunities for children to read, construct and write, use computers, engage in tactile activities using modelling clay, and pursue their individual interests.
- The school's two-year-old children are well looked after and kept safe at all times. The children are very inquisitive. Most can say their first name, and some their first and second names. Staff are highly skilled in working with young children and have high expectations of them. This was evident when children were asked, 'What's the princess's name?' and 'Who is the prince?' Children were also asked, 'What will we be celebrating later?', to which some replied, 'The royal wedding'. Children enjoyed making their finger-painted union flags in anticipation of their forthcoming celebration party.
- Despite the elevated level of excitement generated in the carpet area, where children marched like royal soldiers, engaged in the 'corgi bark' and practised the 'royal wave', children's behaviour was outstanding. However, activities for two-year-old children are not always planned carefully enough to meet their specific needs and different stages of development.
- Children enjoy playing outdoors, where they are considerate and move around safely. However, this area is not as stimulating as it could be. In addition, opportunities are

missed to clearly link provision to different areas of learning such as developing children's writing, balance and appreciation of shapes. Senior leaders are aware of these limitations and have made it a priority to develop outdoor learning and play areas.

- All parents who spoke with inspectors were highly positive about all aspects of the early years provision. Typically, they say that their children are making good progress and enjoy coming to school. Parents are satisfied that their children are safe and well looked after.
- Nothing is left to chance when it comes to safeguarding. The same highly effective procedures in operation in key stages 1 and 2 are adhered to by staff in early years.

School details

Unique reference number	104893
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10045896

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	393
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Thomas Rich
Headteacher	Josephine Evans
Telephone number	0151 922 2136
Website	www.christchurchce.co.uk
Email address	admin.ChristChurch@schools.sefton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 June 2016

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, several members of staff have been appointed, including two newly qualified teachers, a specialist sports teacher and two teaching assistants. Three new parent governors and a foundation governor have joined the governing body.
- Christ Church School is larger than the average-sized primary school. More than half of its pupils are disadvantaged and in receipt of support through the pupil premium funding.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average. No pupils at the school have education, health and care plans or a statement of SEN. The school has a nurture base, which is available to help pupils in need of personal, social and emotional support.
- Two-year-old children attend pre-school provision on a part-time basis. Other children

under five attend Nursery on a part- and full-time basis. All children in the Reception class attend full time.

- The school runs a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body. This provision was inspected.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils learn to read. Four observations were carried out jointly with the senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- Inspectors read 34 text responses submitted by parents during the inspection and met informally with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 38 members of staff and 107 pupils were also considered.
- A meeting was held with eight governors, including the chair of the governing body. Meetings were held with various leaders and subject specialists, including those responsible for English, mathematics, science, art, religious education and computing. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for assessing pupils' learning and progress, the early years provision, and provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- A meeting was held with a school improvement representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' progress, the school's checks on the quality of teaching and reviews of its own performance, development plans, records of pupils' attendance, and behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kathy Hall	Ofsted Inspector
Tina Cleugh	Ofsted Inspector

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