

Christ Church CofE Infant & Nursery School

Victoria Street, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 4UT

Inspection dates

29–30 January 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not been effective in ensuring that their initiatives are applied consistently well.
- The governing body is not as effective as it should be in holding leaders to account for pupils' progress or the impact of additional funding.
- Leaders do not plan or review carefully enough how they use the pupil premium.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Agreed school approaches are not applied equally well.
- Leadership of some subjects and aspects of the school's work is still at an early stage of development.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are not consistent. Too many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not achieve as well as they should.
- Expectations of behaviour are not consistent.
- Sometimes, teachers do not use information about pupils' learning well enough to decide next steps in learning or match work well to pupils' abilities.
- Teachers do not address pupils' errors and misconceptions consistently well.
- Teachers are not as effective as they could be in ensuring that pupils are fluent with the important ideas in mathematics and that they can use these to solve problems and to reason.
- Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is too low.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. However, pupils are still not achieving as well as they should.
- Provision in the early years is not sufficiently stimulating and challenging to enable children to make consistently good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Leaders and other staff have accurately identified the areas in which the school needs to improve. They are beginning to improve standards.
- Leaders are bringing rigour to school improvement and creating a culture of higher expectations.
- The school works closely with other schools to help improve standards.
- Relationships are positive. There is an ethos of care.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:
 - they check pupils' progress more carefully and ensure that their initiatives are applied consistently
 - they develop further effective middle leadership roles and responsibilities appropriate to the school's needs, including leadership of the early years
 - they improve further their effectiveness in checking pupils' progress in phonics and ensure that all staff have the skills they need to ensure that pupils make good progress
 - they improve teaching and the curriculum in the early years by ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching and the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes and provide learning opportunities which are more stimulating and challenging
 - the governing body effectively holds leaders to account for pupils' progress and the impact of additional funding, including the pupil premium and the funding for physical education (PE) and sport.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in the early years, to improve pupils' outcomes by ensuring that all teachers:
 - teach pupils to be fully secure in their phonics and reading skills and promote these across the curriculum, ensuring that pupils can apply these accurately in their writing
 - more effectively check pupils' understanding to decide next steps in learning and match work accurately to pupils' abilities, particularly for the least and most able pupils
 - ensure that pupils are fluent with the key skills and important ideas in mathematics and can use these to solve problems and to reason
 - more effectively address pupils' errors and misconceptions.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - all staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour and apply the school behaviour policy fully
 - leaders are relentless in improving pupils' attendance and reducing persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- This is an improving school. The newly established leadership team is bringing ambition and drive. Leaders are creating a culture of higher expectations. Leaders and other staff have recently introduced, or are developing further, a wide range of initiatives. These are bringing about improvements to, for example, the curriculum, the teaching of phonics and writing. However, many of these are at an early stage. Leaders have not ensured that their initiatives are applied consistently and effectively.
- There has been a period of staff instability and there is a legacy of underachievement. Leaders are taking decisive actions to address these. They provide training and support and ensure that staff work with colleagues in other schools to support improvements to leadership and the quality of teaching. However, the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress are too inconsistent.
- Leaders have not created and published a focused plan or reviewed the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding. The school uses the funding to, for example, provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils, as well as fund attendance at the breakfast club. However, the funding is not targeted carefully. Leaders cannot be sure that it is having the maximum impact on improving pupils' outcomes or attendance. Leaders and the governing body have planned a review of the use of the pupil premium. It is crucial that they act with urgency on its recommendations.
- The additional funding for PE and sport has been used to, for example, fund a PE coach and provide equipment for the school playground, which is helping to support pupils' physical development. Pupils greatly enjoy this. However, again, leaders have not ensured that focused plans and reviews of the impact of the funding on improving the quality of teaching and increasing pupils' participation in PE and sport are in place.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have identified relevant actions in the school improvement plan. They check standards by, for example, looking at pupils' work or visiting lessons. However, they are not as sharp as they could be in their analysis and use of their findings, including for the early years, to better hold staff to account.
- Joint work with a partner school is helping to strengthen middle leadership roles. However, this work is at an early stage. Senior leaders have not yet fully established a secure and sustainable middle leadership structure appropriate for the school.
- Leaders have rightly made improving pupils' attainment and progress in phonics a priority. They have reviewed the structure and organisation of the phonics programme. The school is working with another school which has expertise in this area, and has clear plans for further work. Pupils' progress in phonics is improving. However, pupils are still not consistently making the strong progress they should.
- The additional funding to support pupils with SEND is used effectively. Leaders carefully identify pupils' needs, support the planning of appropriate support, and carefully check pupils' progress. Leaders ensure that staff have relevant training to help meet the needs of pupils.

- Leaders and staff recently introduced and are developing a new structure for the curriculum. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. The new approach is engaging pupils' interest. This was observed when pupils proudly told the inspector about the rockets they had made at home with parents and carers as part of their space topic. The curriculum is complemented by singing and 'healthy club', and is increasingly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- External support from the local authority has been effective in supporting improvements to leadership and the quality of teaching. The local authority has brokered a wide range of relevant support. The school works with a range of other schools to support improvements in many aspects of its work. This includes valuable opportunities for staff to share expertise with colleagues. Leaders are outward-looking, and this is helping to improve standards.
- The large majority of parents who spoke with the inspector are happy with all aspects of the school's work. They say that their children are happy, kept safe and enjoy coming to school. However, some, including some of the small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were less positive. Leaders are working to develop stronger engagement and partnership with parents.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has not ensured that the school has focused plans for the use of the pupil premium and additional funding for PE and sport. Nor has it reviewed the impact of these funds. Consequently, it cannot effectively hold leaders to account for the effectiveness of the uses of these funds in improving pupils' outcomes.
- The governing body has not ensured that the school has met the requirements of what it should publish on the school website.
- The committed governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas in which it needs to improve. It knows the school well. The minutes of its meetings show that governors often ask challenging questions of leaders. However, the governing body has not challenged leaders as effectively as it could about the progress and attainment of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- The governing body has identified clear roles, and governors undertake regular visits to look at safeguarding arrangements, for example, and to meet with staff. However, their evaluations and reports of their visits are not as focused as they could be.
- The governing body has effectively supported the school and leaders through a period of staff instability and financial challenges. In this, they have a clear strategic overview, which includes consideration of the school's capacity and staff's welfare. The governing body has also established a joint collaborative committee with the partner school to share resources and expertise.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that the record of recruitment checks on staff, governors and visitors is accurate and up to date. Leaders take timely actions when they have concerns about

pupils' welfare and well-being. They are tenacious in involving external agencies when this is appropriate and keep appropriate documentation of the actions they take.

- The designated leaders for safeguarding ensure that staff are trained, and all staff fully understand their shared responsibility to keep pupils safe. Leaders are taking additional steps to ensure that all members of staff are clear about school procedures and understand their responsibilities in relation to the school's 'Prevent' duty.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. Leaders ensure that the school site is safe and well supervised. Instances of bullying or derogatory behaviour are rare. There is a secure culture of safeguarding and an ethos of care. However, some parents did raise some concerns, which leaders are aware of. Leaders' records show that they take appropriate actions to try to resolve concerns raised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is inconsistent. Teachers' application of agreed school approaches and their expectations of what pupils can achieve are too variable. These inconsistencies across the school mean that pupils' progress is not as strong as it should be.
- Sometimes, teachers do not address pupils' errors or misconceptions sufficiently well. Teachers' use of information about pupils' learning is not as effective as it could be to ensure that work is matched well to pupils' abilities or to decide when to move learning on to more challenging work.
- Teachers often use practical resources and visual imagery well to support pupils' learning in mathematics. This was demonstrated when staff used equipment to help pupils 'see' the difference between odd and even numbers in key stage 1, for example. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils are sufficiently confident with some of the important skills and ideas in mathematics. Pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills are not taught consistently well.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. Staff have a more consistent and structured approach to teaching the school's phonics programme. Staff ensure that pupils' books are usually matched well to pupils' reading abilities. Well-structured guided reading sessions are helping to ensure that pupils have positive attitudes to reading. However, teachers do not promote and consolidate pupils' phonics well enough across the curriculum to enable stronger progress.
- Standards in writing are also improving. However, teachers do not teach pupils consistently well to apply their phonological understanding in their work. Expectations of the quality of pupils' writing are sometimes not high enough. Pupils' errors and misconceptions in, for instance, letter or number formation, spelling, punctuation and handwriting are too often not addressed.
- Teaching assistants are sometimes deployed well. They work with pupils of all abilities. They are most effective when working with individual pupils. This was observed in the Nursery and Reception classes, for example, when pupils with SEND were supported to improve writing skills by using a sand tray.
- Some strong teaching practice was evident from observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Teaching is improving due to teachers working alongside each other and colleagues in other schools to develop their skills, for example in assessing pupils'

learning. Pupils' work shows that teachers are increasingly planning sequences of lessons which effectively build pupils' learning over time. Teachers have at least sound subject knowledge and are often skilled in asking questions to check pupils' understanding or develop their thinking.

- Teachers ensure that pupils' presentation of their work is improving.
- The majority of parents are happy with the homework their children receive. As well as holiday project work, tasks often relate to key skills or knowledge they need in their lessons, such as practising reading. Teachers work hard to encourage parents to read regularly with their children.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils often have a positive attitude to learning and try to apply themselves to their work. Most are keen to learn, and pupils collaborate and work well together. However, they sometimes easily lose focus, particularly when teachers do not match work well to their needs or when they are unsure about a task.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. Illustrating this, pupils in Year 2 told the inspector, 'When you do something wrong, you should say you're sorry; it's kind' and 'You should be kind to others so you have friends.'
- Pupils are aware of the school's values. An assembly was observed in which pupils were encouraged to reflect on what it might feel like for a pupil to move from a different country. This helped to promote pupils' cultural awareness and understanding of others. However, pupils are not as confident as they should be in understanding some aspects of British values.
- Pupils are not as confident as they should be in knowing how to keep themselves safe, for example when online.
- Pupils learn about bullying through, for example, Anti-Bullying Week. Some say that there is some bullying, but that it is rare. Most are confident that staff will resolve any concerns if they are worried about something. Some parents were less positive, but inspection evidence shows that the school takes bullying seriously.
- Staff help pupils understand the importance of being healthy. This was evident when pupils explained to the inspector their healthy lunches. The well-attended 'healthy club' helps pupils understand how to make healthy choices and participate in a range of physical activities. In Nursery, staff taught children the importance of brushing their teeth. The breakfast and 'healthy after-school club' and positive breaktimes provide valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils also requires improvement. Most staff, including in the school breakfast club, are aware of and use consistent approaches to managing behaviour in accordance with the school's policy. Pupils are aware of school systems. However,

some staff do not apply these as well as they should. Some instances of low-level disruption were observed.

- Current attendance shows improvement, but it is still below the national average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Attendance has been low over time. Leaders scrutinise attendance and emphasise the importance of high attendance with parents. They work to support families of pupils who have persistent absence. A small number of families with high persistent absence, for legitimate reasons, have considerable impact on overall figures. Nonetheless, attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, is too low.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well. They are friendly and polite. Many were happy to talk to the inspector about their work and experiences of school life. They play well together at playtimes.
- Most pupils enjoy school. Staff ensure that pupils take increasing pride in their work and their school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- As a result of leaders' and other staff's efforts, current pupils' attainment and progress, including of disadvantaged pupils, are improving in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects. However, pupils' progress varies too much within each phase and across the school. Too many current pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most and least able, do not make the progress or attain as highly as they should in the early years and key stage 1.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check improved in 2018, though it was still below the national average. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 was below the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of current pupils' writing is improving across the school. Pupils are taught how to write increasingly complex sentences over time. However, sometimes teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Too often, errors or misconceptions in spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting reduce the quality of pupils' work.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving. There is evidence of progress across different areas of the mathematics curriculum. However, again, work is sometimes not well matched to pupils' learning, and pupils, particularly the most and least able, do not make the progress they are capable of. Pupils in some year groups make stronger progress than others.
- Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are making improving progress in developing their phonics and reading skills. Pupils are becoming more confident readers and have positive attitudes to reading.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' presentation of their work is improving.
- Most pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Many children join the early years with skills typical for their age. The proportions of children achieving a good level of development have been below the national averages for the last four years. While cohorts are often small, too many children have not made good progress and been prepared well for key stage 1.
- The quality of teaching and leadership of the early years is improving. Staff benefit from work with a teaching school alliance and support from the local authority. Children's progress is improving. However, leaders have not ensured that children's progress and attainment are consistent across the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Leaders carefully check children's learning and development across the different areas of learning. However, leaders do not use their findings as well as they could to guide teaching and the planning of the curriculum. Leaders have identified writing, number, and promoting pupils' understanding of the world, for example, as areas for improvement. These are not sufficiently prioritised in teaching and the indoor and outdoor classrooms.
- Teachers do not plan activities that stimulate children's curiosity and challenge them well enough. Children are sometimes not as purposefully engaged as they could be.
- Children generally collaborate well and are respectful of each other. Children show that they can persevere with some tasks. This was observed when a group of children were working together with large building blocks to build a speedboat in the 'builder's yard'. However, they quickly lose focus, including when on the carpet as a group. Staff do not consistently ensure appropriately high standards of behaviour.
- Nonetheless, expectations of what children can achieve are improving. The teaching of phonics is effective. Children are taught to write words using their phonics skills and some are able to create simple, punctuated sentences. Children are taught to represent their understanding of mathematical concepts. Staff ensure that children practise letter and number formation well.
- Teachers and other adults sometimes use questioning effectively to take children's learning forward.
- Parents contribute to assessments of their children's learning and development. Some parents told the inspector how they had shared their children's achievements and experiences from outside of school, such as baking or visiting a local farm, via the school's online system.
- Leaders ensure that the arrangements for welfare and safeguarding children in the early years meet requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	122792
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10057684

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Roberts
Executive headteacher	Mr Jon Brown
Telephone number	01636 680051
Website	www.christchurchinfantschoolnewark.org/
Email address	head@christchurch.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2015

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant staffing changes, including changes to leadership. The current head of school was appointed in September 2017 and the executive headteacher from September 2018. The leader of the early years was not present during this inspection.
- The school established a formalised collaboration with another school from September 2017.
- The school is organised into two classes: a mixed Nursery and Reception class and a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class.
- Christ Church CofE Infant & Nursery School is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The school receives support from the local authority through regular visits and support to arrange training.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is similar to the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils who speak English as an additional language are similar to those seen nationally.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classrooms, including the teaching of phonics. All lessons were observed jointly with the executive headteacher and/or the head of school. During these visits, the inspector looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils to evaluate the quality of their learning. The inspector scrutinised pupils' work with leaders. The inspector listened to pupils read and met pupils informally, as well as meeting with a group of pupils.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the leader for key stage 1, the coordinator for pupils with SEND and other staff. The inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day, and account was taken of the 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the nine free-text responses. There were no responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' attainment and progress, and staff performance. The inspector looked at plans for improvement, as well as leaders' evaluation of the school's performance. The inspector also considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019