



St Christopher Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103652
LEA Coventry
Inspection number 276967
Inspection dates 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005
Reporting inspector Doris Bell RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Allesley Old Road
School category	Community		Coventry
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Midlands CV5 9JG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02476 675017
Number on roll	467	Fax number	02476 675017
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Richard Hier
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs Lois Thorpe

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school large primary school with 52 pupils receiving part-time education in the nursery. Attainment on entry is as expected for the children's ages when they start school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who are at the early stages of learning English, is higher than found in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including statements, is below average. The school had an acting headteacher prior to the appointment of the present headteacher two years ago and there have been several changes of staff. It is taking part in a local authority intensive support programme aimed at raising achievement and standards throughout the school.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a sound education for its pupils and is rapidly improving. Pupils' achievement, the standards they reach and the quality of teaching and learning are all satisfactory, as is the overall quality of leadership and management. The headteacher's relentless drive to improve provision has successfully enabled the school to tackle the decline in standards since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy school. Their behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory and they are adequately cared for, guided and supported. Provision and standards are satisfactory in Nursery and Reception. Standards are rising in Year 6 but they are still too variable in Year 2 and overall, more able pupils throughout the school do not always do as well as they could.

Leadership and management by senior and middle managers, though satisfactory, vary in quality. As a result, whole-school approaches are not fully established and there are weaknesses in terms of: providing effective teaching and learning for all groups of pupils; promoting literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects; establishing a systematic approach to managing pupils' behaviour; and developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society. Work is due to start on all of these areas next term, as part of a whole-school curriculum review.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory despite the ups and downs the school has faced. The school's evaluation of its own work is accurate and staff and governors are now pulling together as a team. Although it still has some way to go, the school has the capacity to improve and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- in all age groups, continue to raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, and provide more challenge for more able pupils
- plan and provide more opportunities to promote literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects and age groups and pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society and their place within it
- establish consistency in the management of behaviour at all times
- further improve the roles of senior and middle managers in leading and managing whole-school initiatives and subject-focused developments.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory in all age groups. Children reach the nationally expected standards at the end of their Reception year. In Year 2, the reading results improved in 2005 and were above average. However, standards in writing and mathematics declined. Although broadly average, they should have been higher. Staffing changes in Years 1 and 2 are improving progress in these age groups. In 2005, the test results for Year 6 rose considerably. In English, they were significantly above average. In mathematics and science, they were above the national average. This

improvement reflects what has been a key priority for the school in the past two years. Weaknesses in mathematics are being successfully tackled on a range of fronts. As a result, pupils throughout the school are making better progress in lessons.

Target setting is embedded in everyday practice. Targets for pupils' performance in national tests at the end of Year 6 are challenging. They are based on a rigorous analysis of test and other assessment outcomes and were exceeded in 2005, particularly at the higher level. Individual pupils' progress towards them is tracked well and this is having a positive effect on achievement. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Their work is well planned and teaching assistants provide them with valuable support. More able pupils do not always make enough progress because their work is not always sufficiently demanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy school. They work hard and find lessons interesting. Older pupils take responsibilities seriously and all pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Attendance is good and pupils behave well in class. However, staff use their own systems of rewards and sanctions instead of following agreed procedures. This confuses pupils, especially when, as at breaks and lunchtimes, behaviour is more boisterous and more incidents of unacceptable behaviour are recorded.

Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the local community and a good contribution to the school community. They appreciate that their views are sought and valued, for example, through the school council. They have a good awareness of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle. The school promotes this well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound. Pupils are adequately prepared for the future. However, their knowledge and understanding of the range of cultural diversity in modern Britain is not well enough developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They make effective use of resources, including the interactive whiteboards, to make learning more exciting. However, opportunities for pupils to use computers in lessons are limited and this restricts pupils' use of their ICT skills across the curriculum. In class, adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils usually respond well by concentrating hard and participating in different activities. Work is usually well organised to accommodate whole-class, group and individual work. Many good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn from each other, for example, the use of 'talking partners' to discuss ideas. However, some teachers do not plan well enough

for more able pupils. Consequently those pupils do not always learn as well as they should.

The use of assessment information for planning and target setting is good, and marking is helpful. Pupils praised the structures the school uses to help them understand how to improve, and several talked knowledgeably about how they might reach the next level. Well-briefed classroom assistants support pupils effectively, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is sound. Statutory requirements are met. Satisfactory provision is made for personal, social and health education, for pupils with learning difficulties and for pupils for whom English is an additional language. However, the needs of more able pupils are not always fully met. There are not enough opportunities planned for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy or ICT skills in other subjects. A satisfactory range of well-attended activities in and outside of the normal school day extends and enhances learning. The school is rightly reviewing the curriculum to make it more creative, enjoyable and suited to the pupils' different learning needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are adequately cared for. Good attention is paid to health and safety and child protection matters. Effective collaboration with external agencies ensures the well-being of vulnerable pupils, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils receive good academic guidance and satisfactory personal guidance. The vast majority of parents are pleased with what the school does but a significant minority have justifiable concerns about the lack of a consistent and systematic approach to managing behaviour, particularly outside of lessons. Bullying and racism seldom occur but when they do, they are dealt with effectively and reported properly. However, the agreed systems to ensure pupils' good behaviour at all times are not consistently implemented throughout the school. Good links with the local high schools ensure that pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's good leadership has successfully driven school improvement in the past two years. Her checks on all aspects of the school's work are rigorous and the school's evaluation of its work is accurate. The headteacher has an acute understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has used the intensive support programme very astutely to improve the quality of education throughout the school. As a result, standards rose significantly in Year

6 in 2005. The quality and impact of leaders at senior and middle management levels are inconsistent. Nevertheless, managers at all levels know that there are inconsistencies in aspects of school practice. The new teaching and learning teams are beginning to tackle this and are strongly committed to further improvement.

The governing body knows the school well. Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. They manage finances effectively, ensure that statutory requirements are met and hold the school accountable for the standards pupils reach. School improvement planning is detailed and involves all sections of the school community. The school is picking up again following a period of decline after the last inspection. Overall improvement since that time is satisfactory. The school is well placed to build on the good improvements made in the last two years.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St Christopher Primary School Allesley Old Road Coventry West Midlands CV5 9JG

8 December 2005

Dear Pupils

We very much enjoyed the time we spent at your school and would like to thank you for making us so welcome, especially those of you who spoke to us at length.

We found the best things about your school are

- you enjoy your learning, you work hard and make satisfactory progress
- you behave well in class and take your responsibilities seriously
- adults in school make sure you are safe and secure
- your headteacher is determined that you will do well; she has a clear idea about how to make the school better and the other adults in school are helping her.

To help you improve further, we are asking your school to do the following

- help all of you to make even better progress and to behave as well at breaks and lunchtimes as you do in class
- make sure that you develop your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all your lessons
- ensure that those responsible for different aspects of the school's work provide even better support for the headteacher
- teach you more about how people in Britain live and their different traditions and customs.

We hope you will continue to enjoy learning and do well throughout your lives.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell Lead inspector