



# Christ The King Catholic Primary School, Thornbury

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109267  
**LEA** South Gloucestershire  
**Inspection number** 278169  
**Inspection dates** 17 July 2006 to 17 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Kerr AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Easton Hill Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Thornbury
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Bristol BS35 1AW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 866680
<b>Number on roll</b>	143	<b>Fax number</b>	01454 866681
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carol Lawler

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

## **Description of the school**

Christ the King is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school in the small town of Thornbury near Bristol. It caters for a variety of children, including Traveller children, those with Special Educational Needs and a small number of pupils with English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school is below average overall. The school gives priority to Catholic families, but accepts pupils from any background and religion. Staff turnover has been high since 2003, and four of the six permanent teachers are relatively new to the school.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school with some outstanding features. The school's view of its effectiveness is confirmed by this inspection. The pupils achieve well and the school gives good value for money. Provision in the Reception class is good and the children make good progress. However, because starting points are low for many children, standards are still below expectations overall on entry to Year 1. The pupils continue to do well in Years 1 to 6. As a result, standards are above average overall at the end of Year 6, although they are not as high in mathematics as they are in English. An outstanding feature of the school is its determination to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils, whatever their background. Care and guidance are outstanding and good teaching of a rich curriculum is provided. There is a very effective partnership with parents. The pupils flourish in this environment. They enjoy learning and strive hard to improve. Relationships are excellent and behaviour is good. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies, especially the Traveller support service, enable the school to cater successfully for a wide range of needs. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and a high quality of support and guidance for her staff. The governors do an outstanding job in supporting the school and challenging it to raise standards. The school has successfully tackled all the issues from the previous inspection. More practical work has been provided in mathematics and the school is currently taking strong measures to raise standards further. Current strengths put the school in a strong position to continue improving.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- raise standards in mathematics to the same level as those in English.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well in relation to the challenging targets set for them. Progress is good throughout the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress because of the quality of the support they receive. Children make good progress in Reception. Most are working within expected levels in most areas of learning at the end of the year, although communication and literacy skills are still weak for a significant number of children. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2, bringing overall standards up to expectations by the end of Year 2. Achievement is better at this stage in reading than in writing and mathematics. Good progress is maintained throughout Years 3 to 6 so that by the end of Year 6, standards are above average overall. The school adds significant value to the pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6. In English, achievement has not been as good in speaking and writing as in reading, but the school took effective measures to remedy this in 2005. The provisional test results in 2006 show a continuing rise in standards. Whilst standards and achievement are not as high in mathematics as in English and science, recent action to tackle this is beginning to have an impact.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are very happy in school and respond very openly and politely to visitors. They feel safe and well looked after, and talk readily about why they think this is a good school. Pupils new to the school, including those with English as an additional language, settle happily and say they are welcomed by lots of kind and friendly faces. Behaviour is good and pupils work hard. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to think about and express their feelings, and many of the older ones do this with confidence. Older pupils play with, and enjoy looking after, younger ones. They know it is very important to keep healthy and safe and they learn about the dangers of drugs. Their level of confidence, love of learning and improving range of basic skills put them in a good position to take full advantage of secondary education and earn a good living afterwards. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and has many strong features. Pupils understand the part they each play in their school community and school council members are certain this is a school where the views of pupils are really valued. They raise money themselves and enjoy deciding how to spend it. Attendance overall is satisfactory and has improved this year.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good. The Reception class provides a safe, stimulating environment for young children to learn through guided play, making many choices for themselves. They learn happily indoors and out, making good progress in all the areas of learning. Excellent relationships and the pupils' very positive attitudes foster a very fruitful learning environment in Years 1 to 6. All the teachers challenge and support the pupils to develop and use their literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum. Improvements to the teaching of writing are reflected in good progress in the pupils' books. Some excellent teaching of mathematical skills was seen in a lesson in Year 1. The pupils made rapid gains in their understanding of directional language through exciting floor games with programmable robots. However, lessons generally are not quite as effective at enabling the pupils to develop their mathematical thinking. Strategies have been implemented to improve teachers' skills in this area, particularly in asking challenging questions of the pupils as they work. Pupils with learning difficulties and with English as an additional language learn well because they are given demanding, but realistic, targets and very good support to achieve them.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good, with a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT) and thinking skills. The school has

responded to the views of the children and reviewed its curriculum to make it more lively and enjoyable for them. As a result, planning of the curriculum has made learning more purposeful by linking key skills in English, mathematics and ICT to other subjects, such as history and art. A good range of enrichment activities is provided, including drama, French and sport, which the pupils enjoy very much. Pupils also benefit from a week's residential visit to an outdoor activity centre in Wales. The curriculum in the Reception Year is good, with a strong focus on encouraging children to make choices and decisions for themselves. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and with English as an additional language, have full and equal access to all activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding, and parents often choose this school for this reason. Their overwhelmingly positive comments to inspectors include: 'Children are valued and cherished'; '...a very caring and nurturing school' and 'Intervention strategies are excellent'. Support for Traveller children, as well as those with learning difficulties and English as an additional language, is excellent. Purposeful, well-managed links with many outside agencies, together with a very strong partnership with parents, help to make this support even more effective. A real eye for detail is evident in much of the planning and implementation of support for all groups of pupils. The tracking of pupils' progress is outstanding. The school uses this information well to provide extra challenge for more able pupils as well as to identify those needing extra help. The pupils are very confident that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Rigorous arrangements for safeguarding pupils are overseen by the headteacher, who leaves no stone unturned to provide the extra support and care any pupil may need. Attendance is very carefully monitored. The school has good systems in place to encourage regular attendance by all pupils and works closely with families where there are any concerns

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets an outstanding example in striving to provide the highest possible standards of care and education. Staff, governors, parents and pupils all feel fully involved in this process and voice their support and admiration for the headteacher, who has kept the school on course through a period of substantial change in staffing. The friendly but purposeful atmosphere in the school is a reflection of the underlying sense of purpose that underpins all its work. The school's implementation of equality of opportunity is outstanding. A strong commitment to the faith and values of the Catholic religion does not prevent it being totally open to, and supportive of, pupils from any background. The school realistically and accurately evaluates its work and takes appropriate measures to remedy identified weaknesses. For example, standards have been raised in speaking and listening and writing by linking work to promote these skills and making this a whole-school focus. The school's main priority now is to improve provision and standards in mathematics

to the same extent. For example, teachers are beginning to seek more opportunities to use and apply mathematics in different subject areas and are encouraging pupils to share discoveries and ideas through displays and presentations. The recently established 'learning teams' are proving a very effective vehicle to facilitate such initiatives. All the teachers, including the new and inexperienced ones, are fully and enthusiastically involved in this process. It gives them all an excellent overview of the school and develops good management skills. The governing body plays an outstanding role as 'critical friend' of the school. As well as offering full support, it asks probing and challenging questions aimed at raising standards even higher.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

18 July 2006 Dear Pupils My colleague Charlotte Roberson and I thoroughly enjoyed the time we spent in your school. We saw that you really enjoyed your work, and we would like to thank you for being so polite and friendly towards to us. Your teachers, teaching assistants and the headteacher keep you safe and well and they work hard to make your school life enjoyable. We especially liked the way you are learning to stay healthy by eating sensibly and taking plenty of exercise. We were particularly impressed with your reading and writing and your involvement in so many interesting activities. We think that if you and your teachers work hard at your mathematics, you will be as good at that as you are already at English. This should prepare you even better for the secondary school and for the jobs you want do in the future. Wishing you and everyone connected with your school best wishes for the future, Peter Kerr Lead Inspector  
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