



# Church Hill Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119955  
**LEA** Leicestershire  
**Inspection number** 280696  
**Inspection dates** 29 November 2005 to 30 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Alison Cartlidge RISP

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Church Hill Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Thurmaston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 8DE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2692083
<b>Number on roll</b>	180	<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2692083
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Paul Tadman
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Jayne Willetts

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school is situated on the outskirts of the city of Leicester. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with about a third being from Indian or mixed race backgrounds. Most pupils with English as an additional language are Gujerati speakers. Whilst no pupils are at an early stage of speaking English, they receive some additional support in improving their spoken English. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. Attainment on entry to the school varies considerably from year to year. It is average this year, but is sometimes below average. This is the first year that all Reception pupils have started school in September because the local education authority admissions policy has changed. Most pupils are taught in single age classes, although there is one class with pupils taken from Years 1 and 2.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The inspection team agrees with the headteacher that this is a satisfactory school with good features. Pupils make a good start to their education in the newly developed unit for the Reception Year, where provision and teaching are good, enabling pupils to make good progress. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2. Whilst teaching is never less than satisfactory, teachers in these year groups do not always challenge pupils enough, especially the more able. This is most noticeable in pupils' written work, where punctuation and spelling are weak. In Year 1, where there is a high proportion of less able pupils, many are not good at listening and this slows their learning during whole-class activities. The school provides pupils with a good level of care, and relationships between members of staff and the pupils are strong so that pupils behave well and attend regularly. Pupils enjoy school because there is a good curriculum with a wide range of interesting activities.

The school has improved satisfactorily since the time of the last inspection and is able to improve further. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and suitable plans to bring about the necessary changes. The school has started to track pupils' attainment, but this information is not used sufficiently to monitor progress and to set and achieve challenging targets. The school has effective links with its parents and external agencies and provides sound value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attainment in writing, especially in spelling and punctuation.
- Improve the listening skills of pupils in the current Year 1.
- Raise teachers' expectations, especially for the more able pupils.
- Make better use of the information on pupils' attainment to set challenging targets and monitor and support pupils' progress.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' attainment is broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in the Reception Year make good progress, especially in personal, social and emotional development. Most pupils are on target to meet the nationally expected levels by the end of this year, and some to exceed them. Reception pupils listen well and are already capable of working independently. Attainment is below national expectations in Year 1, because there are more lower-attaining pupils in this year group, and many have weak listening skills. In Year 2, whilst attainment is average overall, pupils do not take enough care with their writing and their spelling and punctuation are weak. More able pupils do not consistently make enough progress because expectations are not always high enough. Whilst the school sets targets for pupils in English and mathematics, they do not identify what they expect pupils to achieve by the end of each year.

There is no significant difference between the progress of different groups of pupils given their starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language develop their spoken English quickly, giving them full access to the curriculum.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well and there is a harmonious atmosphere in school. Most pupils work hard in lessons, although some do not always listen well enough, slowing the pace of learning. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is good. They have good attitudes towards learning, especially when they are working on practical activities.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. From when they start school, pupils learn to get on well together and to follow rules. They are keen and conscientious when taking responsibility for tasks around school. Pupils enjoy celebrating each other's beliefs in lessons and special assemblies, and parents appreciate these opportunities. Pupils have healthy and safe lifestyles, with even the youngest explaining why they need to wash their hands before eating. Pupils understand why it is important to eat fruit and drink water and they know how exercise will help them to concentrate in lessons.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community by raising funds for charities and by recycling materials. Pupils learn the value of thriftiness by saving money to buy books through a book club. These activities help pupils to develop skills and attitudes that prepare them for the next stage of their education and the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and are good in the Reception classes. Members of staff work together well and provide good support for pupils. They have good expectations of pupils' personal and social skills, helping them to become confident and independent quickly. Teachers assess attainment thoroughly but there are times at the end of lessons when more could be done to help pupils talk about their work to reinforce and extend learning further.

In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully and have good relationships with the pupils. Lessons are well resourced and learning is made interesting through practical activities that motivate and engage pupils. Teaching assistants are well informed and work well with groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported effectively by two bilingual teaching assistants.

Teachers assess pupils' learning regularly, but not enough use is made of this information to ensure that work is matched closely enough to pupils' needs. In particular, more able pupils could do better if they were given more challenging work. On occasions, teachers are too generous with their praise when marking pupils' work rather than challenging pupils to improve, especially in writing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a good curriculum which generally reflects the interests and backgrounds of pupils. All Reception pupils now benefit from a full year in these classes and a wide range of experiences. In Years 1 and 2, the development of basic skills is given adequate priority but there are missed opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in all subjects. This holds back the pace at which writing can improve.

The school provides a good range of visits and visitors. Other activities such as a special 'art day' also enrich the curriculum and bring subjects alive. Unusually for an infant school, Year 2 pupils are able to go on a residential visit. This is greatly enjoyed by pupils and has a good effect on their social development.

There are good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the local community, and the school successfully teaches pupils how to stay safe and healthy. The need for a healthy lifestyle is promoted effectively and special projects such as 'Fit for Life' help pupils to learn about the importance of exercise. This is reinforced by the two hours a week timetabled for physical education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, are well cared for and their personal development is supported effectively. Members of staff know the pupils very well and their welfare is very thoroughly monitored and is supported sensitively. There are good arrangements for ensuring pupils' health and safety. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and secure and they know what to do if they have a worry. The school works closely with outside agencies to help pupils who might be at risk and to ensure that their learning does not suffer. For example, the school has reacted positively to a suggestion by a parent governor for lunch boxes to be stored on trolleys in the kitchen rather than in classrooms which can become too hot for food storage. Academic support is satisfactory, but no better, because of the limited use of information from assessment to set targets. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is carefully monitored, helping to ensure that support is given quickly when needed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school judges leadership and management as being good. However, the inspectors find it to be only satisfactory because further work needs to be done to raise attainment

and improve teaching. Nevertheless, the headteacher and new deputy headteacher have established a close working relationship and have a shared understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have an accurate awareness of school effectiveness and have developed the new Reception unit quickly.

The headteacher has collected information that can be used to track pupils' progress through the school, and is aware of the need to use this to set challenging targets for all pupils and to identify and provide support for pupils who make limited progress. Teaching and learning are monitored appropriately, and well-organised day-to day management ensures that the school is calm and happy. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school is in a secure position to improve further. School development planning is used sufficiently to highlight the most important areas for improvement, although what that is expected to lead to in terms of raising standards is not always clear. Governors are supportive and carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily.

Most parents are very positive about the work of the school and show their support by attending workshops with their children. For example, parents support groups of pupils each week in art and design and technology lessons. The school is improving ways that parents' views can be collected more systematically and included in development planning. Pupils' views are collected at the end of each year and taken into consideration when planning work. There are good links with the community, and mothers and toddlers visit the school each week for informal play sessions.

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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>	3	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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	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>	2	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>	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

<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**

Church Hill Infant School Church Hill Road Thurmaston Leicester Leicestershire LE4 8DE

30 November 2005

Dear Children,

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly.

What we liked most about your school:

- children in the Reception classes learn quickly
- members of staff help you to learn to behave sensibly
- the school helps you to learn about healthy living
- your teachers are kind and caring and look after you well
- members of staff and governors are working hard to make the school even better
- your parents and carers are very pleased that you enjoy coming to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- help you to improve your punctuation and spelling
- make sure that teachers give you hard enough work
- use information on how well you are doing to set you targets and to make sure you are all learning as quickly as you should.

What we would like you to do:

- we think that some of you would learn more if you listened carefully to your teachers.

We thoroughly enjoyed listening to you and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge, Mike Capper Additional inspectors