



# Christ Church CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 100721  
**Local Authority** Lewisham  
**Inspection number** 285859  
**Inspection dates** 12–13 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Wendy Simmons

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Perry Vale
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Forest Hill
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		London SE23 2NE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8699 5127
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	201	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8291 6749
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Tarina Marsac
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Larkin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 July 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	12–13 September 2006	285859

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Christ Church welcomes pupils from a socially and ethnically diverse inner city community where there is high deprivation. The school has faced complex staffing difficulties in the last year. The headteacher joined the school one week before the inspection and prior to that an interim headteacher was in place for two terms. Significant proportions of pupils join and leave the school throughout the school year. Most pupils come from Black African or Black Caribbean backgrounds. Just over a third speak English as an additional language and a high proportion of pupils has learning difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

Christ Church CE Primary School is a caring school with a strong Christian ethos and positive relationships. Substantial staffing difficulties have contributed to a slow rate of improvement and the quality of education provided is inadequate. Changes in leadership and improved management have begun to make an impact. In the words of the governors, 'The school is calm and purposeful, travelling full speed ahead but not yet there'. The school's evaluation of itself is accurate, and recognises that its overall effectiveness is inadequate.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards, and to the overall quality of teaching.

The quality of leadership and management and the capacity to improve are satisfactory, although the role of middle managers is insufficiently developed. The school's capacity to develop is evident in the improvement in standards between 2005 and 2006, but standards remain too low given pupils' abilities. Improved learning and better teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6 enable more pupils to work at an average level. Recent improvements are a result of clear leadership, support from the Local Authority, the introduction of booster classes and improved use of assessment information to help teachers to see which pupils need more help. Nonetheless, some pupils, especially the more able, are still not making enough progress, and therefore, achievement is inadequate. Provision in the Foundation Stage is inadequate; although children make satisfactory gains in their personal and social development, their speaking skills are insufficiently developed.

A striking example of recent development and evidence of the school's capacity to improve is the turn around in pupils' behaviour and attitudes. There has been a significant reduction in exclusions and incidents of bad behaviour. Behaviour is satisfactory due to better identification and support for pupils, stronger links with specialist help and good working relationships between staff, pupils and parents. A further demonstration of the school's capacity to improve is evident in the increased support for pupils with learning difficulties. Decisive leadership and effective support is resulting in this group making satisfactory progress, a higher percentage reaching average levels in their work and a reduction in the proportion needing specific help.

Teaching, learning and the curriculum are inadequate because the quality is too variable between classes. Therefore, pupils are not making as much progress as they should. In many English lessons teachers do not place enough emphasis on enriching pupils' speaking skills. Equally, pupils do not read aloud often enough. Opportunities for helping pupils to extend and improve their writing are underway but have yet to make a telling impact on standards. Although pupils value the increase in clubs and sports, which help them to become fitter and healthier, they say that they would like more art, design and technology, and creative activities. Inspectors agree that these aspects

of the curriculum are inadequate. The work planned for higher ability pupils is often dull, lacks challenge and does not promote investigative and independent learning.

The school has appointed an enthusiastic, visionary and committed new headteacher, who is well supported by his deputy, governors and the Local Authority. All staff are working as a team to promote improvement.

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

- Raise standards in English by enriching pupils' speaking skills, providing more time for pupils to read aloud and talk about books and improving the quality and quantity of pupils' writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, especially in setting work that challenges the most able learners.
- Sharpen up the leadership of subject managers especially in monitoring and supporting improvements to teaching and learning.
- Improve the curriculum so that the school provides more art, creative activities, design and technology and investigations.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Most children start school with lower than expected skills, knowledge and understanding. They make insufficient gains in the Foundation Stage and by the time they start in Year 1 few attain the expected levels for their age in the six areas of learning. This unsatisfactory position continues through most of the school. For some years standards have been below average but there are signs of improvement in the most recent tests. In 2006, the school met its targets in English and increased the proportion of pupils attaining average levels in mathematics by about a fifth. However, the rate of improvement has been slow due to lack of stability in the staffing and too much inadequate teaching. In spite of these signs of recovery, achievement remains inadequate for most pupils. Those with learning difficulties and pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language are now achieving satisfactorily. The most able pupils, however, are not doing well enough.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory with pupils commenting that they mostly enjoy coming to school. Pupils like the new behaviour systems and rewards, because the rules are clear and help everyone to improve. They also value being involved in school developments, noting in particular how they helped to plan the playground. Relationships are good with pupils showing a keenness to take responsibility. The introduction of learning and playground mentors is having a good impact on pupils' understanding of how to be safe, behave and care for each other. One pupil said,

'There is lots of talking to sort things out'. Pupils agree that bullying is not a problem. Exclusions have reduced significantly.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and enhanced by strong links with the church, the local community and through charity fund raising. Pupils are proud of their achievements and are beginning to adopt healthier lifestyles but they are not prepared well enough for their future lives because they do not make enough progress in basic skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Some teachers are accomplished at developing literacy and numeracy skills but pupils are not building up these skills in a steady enough way, because the quality of lessons is too variable. The work provided for the most able learners often lacks challenge and as a result, their progress is too slow. Teachers have suitable subject knowledge, but some are not clear about how to make learning meaningful to pupils. Inconsistent use is made of practical apparatus and resources to bring learning alive. Too many teachers do not ask probing questions that help pupils to improve their use of new vocabulary and explain and extend their thinking; this is particularly true in the nursery class. The marking of work and discussions with pupils do not always ensure that pupils know how to improve. Satisfactory behaviour in class enables learning to take place without frequent disruption. Work is usually well planned for pupils with learning difficulties and high quality support by assistants helps these pupils to make suitable progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

The curriculum does not yet prepare pupils well enough for their future lives or promote enough enjoyment of learning. The school recognises this, especially the weaknesses in the English curriculum, which lacks depth and enrichment. Improvements are underway. For example better reading and phonic work for younger pupils are helping standards to rise in Year 2.

Senior staff have worked effectively to improve the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language. The provision for history, geography, information and communication technology, and physical education show suitable development since the last inspection. These improvements are helping to raise standards.

Challenging, practical and creative activities are insufficiently promoted, especially for the most able learners. As a consequence, pupils are not developing their imaginations and problem solving skills enough. Pupils commented that they enjoy the range of extra clubs, many of which are new this year and say these are fun.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Pastoral care is strong and pupils value it. Child protection arrangements are rigorous. Vulnerable pupils benefit from sensitive and focused support, which allows them to make satisfactory progress. Learning mentors successfully help pupils to overcome sometimes complex social and emotional difficulties.

The guidance given to pupils about learning and progress is too inconsistent. Pupils are becoming more discerning about their work but do not always know their targets for improvement. Pupils complained that, 'the good tables don't get much help.' In this they are right because pupils are insufficiently challenged and do not do as well as they could and should.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school and regularly seek the views of parents and pupils in their drive to improve. The school's improvement plan focuses clearly on raising standards and improving the quality of learning. Lessons and teachers' planning are monitored regularly by senior staff and the Local Authority and teachers are given clear guidance about how to improve. Demonstration lessons are modelled by senior staff, but this is underdeveloped. Middle managers are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the quality of learning and the curriculum. The leadership for pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language has improved immensely, and this is making a good impact on their progress. However, the more able pupils are inadequately provided for and this hampers their progress.

Governors show effective leadership by taking firm action to make important staff changes, seek specialist support and ask very challenging questions about the achievement of pupils. In selecting a new headteacher, governors focused on ensuring the person appointed has suitable skills to develop English.

The school has experienced falling numbers and high pupil mobility, especially in Years 5 and 6. This has had a detrimental impact on the school's budget preventing the school from purchase much needed equipment, such as books.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	4
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You may remember that two inspectors came to your school recently to find out how good it is and how well you are doing. Thank you for being so helpful and telling us about your school. We are writing to let you know our findings.

We think that you are well cared for and you agree. We are especially pleased to see that you are trying really hard to behave well, so well done for this and keep it up! All of the adults in your school are working enthusiastically to make the school better. There is much to do because we agree with them that many things need improving and the school is not yet good enough. In particular, teaching and learning need to be improved.

The inspectors have asked your headteacher to help you to make even more progress by doing these important things:

- encouraging you to speak more often in lessons so that you can develop interesting ideas and use many new words
- providing you with more time to read aloud, talk about books and improve your writing
- improving the challenges that you have, especially for those of you who find learning easy
- providing more art, creative activities, design and technology, and investigations.

Good luck to you all. Please work hard and help your teachers, as we know that you can all work together well to make learning fun and successful. In this way you will be able to learn important skills that will help you to be successful.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons Lead inspector