



Christ Church Church of England Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104366
Local Authority Wolverhampton
Inspection number 286921
Inspection dates 6–7 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Woodcote Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Tettenhall Wood
Age range of pupils	7–11		Wolverhampton WV6 8LG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558700
Number on roll (school)	249	Fax number	01902 558702
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	David Sedgley
		Headteacher	Helen Morris (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Christ Church is a medium-sized school serving an area on the outskirts of Wolverhampton. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, although all are fluent in English. There are a few pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The school has been under the leadership of an acting headteacher since August 2006. A new headteacher has now been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Christ Church provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils join and leave the school with standards that are above average, having achieved satisfactorily. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils do well in English, where the work is demanding. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory, but boys in particular spend too much time practising skills they have already learnt, rather than moving on to something new. The satisfactory curriculum provides a good range of extra clubs and visits, but pupils do not carry out enough investigations in science, so more able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.

The school's biggest strength lies with pupils' good personal development. Teachers stress the importance of 'old fashioned' values, so pupils behave well, are polite and have good manners. Pupils lead healthy lifestyles and play a good part in the school community. Attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they get on well with one another.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses, and what needs to be done in order to improve performance, because data is analysed well. Consequently, the school is making steady progress. Nevertheless, expectations of pupils' achievement are not always as high as they could be. Targets for the school's performance are conservative and do not raise the aspirations of staff. Systems for checking on the quality of teaching and the curriculum provide an accurate picture, but those for checking aspects of day-to-day management are not rigorous enough. There are gaps in policies and procedures for safeguarding children that limit the quality of care, guidance and support, for example, to no better than satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve boys' achievement in mathematics by ensuring they are moved on to new topics more quickly.
- Improve the progress made by more-able pupils in science by devoting more time to experiments and investigations.
- Implement systems for checking that policies and procedures are in place and are being carried out.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils from all backgrounds achieve satisfactorily and make adequate progress in the skills needed for later life. They join and leave the school with standards that are above average. Standards are exceptionally high in English, where pupils make good progress. In mathematics and science, standards are a bit lower, but still above average. In mathematics, boys do not do as well as girls, while more-able pupils do not do as well as they should in science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are attentive in class and show concern for others by being well mannered and thoughtful throughout the school day. Their behaviour is good and they play very happily together during school breaks, demonstrating a satisfactory awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They express their ideas and beliefs confidently and clearly, and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in a community, playing a major part in decision making on the school council, for example. Nevertheless, they are rather passive in lessons and do not take as much responsibility for their own learning as they should. They expect to play their part in supporting those less fortunate than themselves through fundraising and collective worship. Pupils enjoy school and show their eagerness to be there in their good attendance. Pupils are well aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, so lots of fruit and healthy snacks are in evidence at break.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Classes are managed well across the school, so that incidents of misbehaviour are rare. The consistent reinforcement of school rules in lessons results in pupils developing good moral standards and learning how to get on well with one another. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in English and plan lessons that stretch even the most able pupils. In contrast, boys are not moved on quickly enough in mathematics. They often spend too long practising a skill they have already grasped, when they could more profitably be learning something new. Boys get bored in such circumstances and work very slowly through the practice tasks. Girls, on the other hand, will continue to work hard on the extra examples, finish them quickly, and move on to the next topic. Teachers' good questioning ensures that they know when pupils have grasped a new skill, but planning does not include extra tasks for pupils who learn faster than is anticipated.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a wide range of subjects, including a foreign language, and interesting activities such as clubs, sport and residential activities. The provision for music is especially good, with a remarkably large number of opportunities for pupils to learn to play different instruments. Pupils are enthusiastic about their trips to the theatre, for example, when they went to the New Vic theatre at Stoke, and about their residential visits. These experiences help pupils to make good progress in their personal development. In science, there are too few opportunities for first-hand practical work

to help pupils to experiment with ideas and materials to discover how things work for themselves. This reduces the rate of learning and achievement over time for all pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that there are friends and adults they could talk to if they felt worried or upset. Child protection and arrangements for vulnerable pupils are adequate, but policies concerning pupils' care need to be updated as not all records are accurate or complete. The school's new tracking procedures provide a clear and accurate picture of the progress made by pupils. However, the information is not yet being used to plan suitably challenging activities for all groups of pupils, or to help teachers mark more precisely to show pupils how to improve their work. This leads to pupils not being entirely sure as to what they are aiming for or how they are to get there.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's performance has slowly but surely been improving over recent years, because managers have the necessary skills to keep it on an even keel. However, improvements are not happening particularly rapidly. This is because the leadership does not set consistently high expectations of the academic standards that pupils can achieve. Targets are generally met, but they are not always demanding enough and those for 2007 are too low given the pupils' above-average standards on joining the school. This in turn filters through to teachers' expectations of their pupils, which are satisfactory but not challenging, especially in mathematics. Nevertheless, managers have analysed strengths and weaknesses in performance well, so have an accurate picture of what is most in need of improvement. Work on improving standards in English has been particularly successful, and similar approaches are now planned in mathematics and science.

Governors take their responsibilities seriously. Some parents have been concerned about the time taken to appoint a new headteacher, partly because they have not been kept well enough informed about what has been going on. However, governors have quite rightly insisted on waiting for the most suitable person for the job and have made an excellent compromise in the interim appointment of an acting consultant headteacher. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in the day-to-day management of the school which have not been picked up. Some important policies are not in place and administrative tasks not kept up to date, so the school's managers cannot be sure that what should be happening is actually carried out.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for helping us when we came to visit your school recently. We were impressed by your good manners and behaviour, and very much enjoyed talking to you. You get on very well with one another, and it was great to see so many of you eating fruit and other healthy snacks at break.

Overall, we found that the school is doing a satisfactory job. You study the subjects that you should do, and get lots of trips and visits. Your teachers make sure you learn at the sort of pace that we usually see. You are particularly good at reading and writing, but boys could do a bit better in maths. Some of you told us that you find the maths a bit easy, and we agree. So we have asked your teachers to make sure you are taught something new when they know you understand how to solve a particular type of problem. Some of the cleverest scientists among you could also learn more if you did more experiments for yourselves. So we have asked the people who run the school to make sure that you spend more time doing investigations.

All the adults are keen to keep you safe and happy in school. Usually they are good at this, but some of the rules that they have to follow are not clear and nobody checks that they are always followed. So we have asked the people who run the school to make sure everything is up to date and that all the right forms are filled in.

We wish you all the best for your future.

Thanks again for helping us.