

Christ Church CofE (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105341
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	287202
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Geoff Lawrence

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev S Foster
Headteacher	Mr I Young
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2003
School address	Church Street Walshaw Bury Lancashire BL8 3AX
Telephone number	01204 883415
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is average in size with Nursery provision and situated in an area of comparative advantage. It serves families whose social circumstances vary, from those that are less favourable than national averages to those from above average socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average as is the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal. Christ Church achieved the Healthy Schools Award and achieved Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, which is extremely popular with both parents and pupils. They recognise and greatly value the high level of care, guidance and support that pupils receive. The outstanding leadership places pupils' personal development and their well-being at the heart of the school's work and supports pupils' learning very well indeed. The pupils think so too as they say, 'every child matters here'. This extends to a very good understanding of the wider world and cultural differences. The pupils demonstrate a high degree of self-confidence and self-esteem which enables them to behave very well and really enjoy the wide range of opportunities the school provides, including the many after-school clubs and the very good and enticing array of sporting activities. Many of these contribute to their excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. The curriculum meets pupils' needs exceptionally well through carefully tailored provision that makes learning very interesting. For example, information and communication technology (ICT) is now used extremely well. Pupils are now very confident users, which serves to enhance their enjoyment in lessons and improve achievement. The excellent level of care, guidance and support received by the pupils assists them in becoming very articulate individuals with a very good understanding of themselves and others. As one child said, 'It's what's deep inside you that matters.' The result is they develop excellent relationships between themselves and with staff. These factors help them to make excellent progress in most areas and to have a growing understanding of their own performance. Children come into the school with skills and knowledge above their expected stages of development. The school continues to build on this and maintains high levels of achievement throughout the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve overall standards that are significantly above the national average at the end of each key stage. Pupils' progress in writing in Years 3 and 4 is not consistently as strong as progress elsewhere, partly because of unavoidable staffing problems, which have been addressed by the headteacher, and partly because teaching does not sufficiently help children to develop their writing skills. This is transformed in Year 6 where high expectations and imaginative teaching, with a greater level of support, results in accelerated learning. This helps pupils develop a wide range of writing skills and hence achieve high standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress because their specific learning needs are very well targeted with excellent individual education plans. The headteacher has successfully led a rigorous drive for improvements in all aspects of the school's work. In this respect, he has developed a very strong leadership team that has a very good capacity to improve. He has built a highly motivated staff team which is wholly committed to school improvement with pupils' all-round development at the core. Through a detailed monitoring of standards and in-depth self-evaluation, he has been able to identify quickly areas of weakness and implement successful strategies to make improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of good progress in writing throughout Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Since the last inspection, standards have significantly improved as a result of leadership that has a clear focus on raising and maintaining high standards. Pupils make impressive progress in their learning throughout the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also

make excellent progress although their standards are lower. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is above average. Children settle quickly and make good progress because of the high quality provision. Key Stage 1 standards have risen faster than the national trend over the last five years. The numbers of pupils achieving the higher levels are now significantly above average in all aspects. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 have risen rapidly over the last three years so that pupils achieve overall standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average. Standards in mathematics are exceptionally high and have been so for the last two years. Standards in English are above average, although some younger pupils' progress in writing is weaker partly as a result of recent unavoidable staffing issues. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels is significantly above average in mathematics, English and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because the school has placed this aspect central to its work. Pupils think highly of their school and their behaviour and attendance are excellent. Determined action by the school ensures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now excellent. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and really enjoy their work. They enjoy excellent relationships with each other, showing respect and care for their classmates. Pupils gain confidence and self-esteem and are active in many initiatives, such as developing the stimulating outdoor play environment and raising funds for charities. Pupils know how to keep fit and make healthy lifestyle choices such as choosing healthy snacks and drinking water regularly. They also participate in an extensive range of sporting activities including tournaments in which they frequently celebrate success. They develop the key skills that will prepare them very well for the future. These include confident use of ICT and some exceptionally good numeracy skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Excellent relationships that help pupils become conscientious and keen learners lie at the heart of teaching. As a result, learners lap up the challenges presented to them. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their planning takes full account of assessment information to match work to pupils' needs very well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have very carefully monitored programmes of support that help them make excellent progress. Teachers use resources, such as ICT, very effectively to capture pupils' imagination and make learning fun. For example, researching the origins of the Olympic Games as part of a history and English lesson and using video clips of the Titanic as a stimulus for writing. A strong focus on personalised learning means pupils are also taught how to learn and this helps them achieve very well. For example, Year 4 pupils very articulately discussed the conditions that helped them to learn best and how to tackle problems. Although teachers' marking makes pupils increasingly aware of their own attainment, it does not always explain how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Curricular provision is excellent. The school provides plenty of rich educational visits and visitors, and a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There is very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage that gets children off to a strong start. Excellent links between schools, for example a community arts project, help to extend provision and smooth transition to the high school. The skills that pupils need for life feature well in lots of subjects and help pupils to reinforce and extend those they have acquired.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding care, guidance and support contribute greatly to the pupils' academic and personal success. Exceptionally positive relationships ensure that all pupils feel safe and that there is someone to turn to if help is needed. All staff show a high degree of commitment to the pupils in their care. Very effective tracking of pupils' progress enables the school to accurately target extra support to ensure all pupils' excellent personal and academic development. The individual education plans of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have clearly focused support that enables them to make excellent progress. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and feel, in particular, that it takes good care of their children, summed up in the comment, 'My child is cared for as well as educated.' The induction procedures for children entering the Nursery class and arrangements for transfer to secondary school are exceptionally good. The school has all necessary measures in place to safeguard pupils, including for those who are most vulnerable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Excellent leadership and management at all levels have made a significant impact on improving standards and achievement since the last inspection and have addressed all previous inspection issues. This clearly demonstrates that the school has a very good capacity to improve further. The headteacher's accurate self-evaluation ensures that the school knows itself well. His rigorous monitoring has led to appropriate actions being taken to ensure that the school meets challenging targets and maintains high levels of achievement. For example, strategies to improve performance in mathematics have led to standards rising to well above average. When recent unforeseen staffing problems in Years 3 and 4 resulted in a slowing of progress in writing, the leadership quickly and effectively reorganised the staffing. There are early signs that this strategy is beginning to pay dividends. The knowledgeable and very effective governors challenge and support the school well, ensuring that the school provides very good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us welcome during the days we spent in your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing you work very hard and we think your school is an outstanding school. We think that you have an excellent school and we see how much you enjoy your lessons. We were very impressed with how polite and well mannered you all were. In fact, we thought you were all very sensible and mature.

We think that the school looks after you very well and provides many things for you to do to make your school day enjoyable. Your headteacher is helping you do better in your work and to enjoy school more. These are some of the other things we really liked about your school.

- How well you get on together and the care you show for others.
- How hard all the adults work in your school to help you to do well.
- How well you are making progress.
- Your excellent behaviour.

We have asked the school to do one thing that we think will help make your school even better and you can help. Most of you are doing really well in your writing but some of you are not making fast enough progress. We would like the school to make sure that all of you make the same excellent progress.

Thank you once again for helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed our two days with you and we hope that you continue to enjoy school.