

# Christ Church Pellon CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107535
<b>Local Authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	287844
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Johnson

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 category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs York
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	Sandbeds Road Pellon Halifax West Yorkshire HX2 0QQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01422 350792
<b>Fax number</b>	01422 350792

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average sized voluntary controlled school located close to the centre of Halifax, maintains a strong Christian mission. Pupils are from predominantly White British backgrounds. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. A slightly higher than average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Christ Church is recognised as a Healthy School and has also gained recognition for its work in the arts and its support for pupils with dyslexia. The headteacher took up her post at the beginning of the summer term 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Visitors to Christ Church are guaranteed a warm welcome. Pupils are polite and friendly. They greet visitors confidently and are proud to show them their school and to talk about the awards they have helped the school to gain. Pupils enjoy school, attend well and generally show caring attitudes towards one another. They willingly take on day-to-day responsibilities such as being librarians, helping in the stationery shop or working on the school council. The majority of pupils show mature attitudes to work and behave well, but teachers, pupils and parents recognise that some have poor listening skills and their behaviour sometimes hinders learning and others' enjoyment of school. Pupils feel safe in school. They have trusting relationships with the adults who care for them, and they know that there is always someone they can turn to for help. Pupils who have specific literacy needs are given good support. The provision of horse riding sessions to boost the confidence and self-esteem of vulnerable learners is a further example of the thoughtful care shown by the school.

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and make good progress to achieve their expected targets. Teaching is good in Reception and the curriculum is lively and challenging. As a result, children's needs are fully met. Pupils make steady progress throughout Year 1 to Year 6 and achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress where the quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and use a good range of methods and resources to help pupils learn. For example, the use of 'talking partners', where pupils discuss ideas before answering questions or beginning work, has a positive impact on their speaking and listening skills, on their writing and on pupils' personal development. However, teachers' insufficient use of assessment information to check progress and set new targets is a relative weakness, and day-to-day marking is not helpful enough to pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with strengths in the range and quality of activities which enrich learning and the provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship education (PSHCE).

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school's future and a strong determination to bring about essential improvements. With that in mind a revised draft improvement plan has been drawn up which provides a robust evaluation and clearer view of the school's current development needs. Support from the local authority advisory service has been enlisted and the school is part of a pilot initiative focused on helping pupils to make good progress. The headteacher has secured the support of staff and governors. They share the revised perception of the school's current needs. This includes the urgent requirement to improve whole-school systems to track pupils' progress more rigorously in order to gain an accurate picture of pupils' academic performance and future learning needs. Governors provide satisfactory challenge and support and manage finances astutely to ensure satisfactory value for money. Issues from the previous inspection have been adequately dealt with. Given the very early stages of new leadership and as yet untested strategies, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve systems to track and review pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement.
- Review the current strategies for behaviour management.
- Ensure that teachers' marking provides pupils with a clear knowledge and understanding of their own progress and of what they should do to improve.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. They make good progress in Reception having started with broadly average knowledge and skills for their age. Consistently good teaching in that class ensures that most reach all of their early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress in Years 1 and 2 because assessment and planning do not build on early skills as effectively as they could. Although there is some good progress in Years 3 to 6 where teaching and learning are more effective, overall progress by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory and standards are currently average.

National test data shows that standards have fluctuated over time, but they rose in 2006 following a dip in the previous year. At the end of Year 2 in 2006, they were broadly average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The numbers achieving better for their age were above average in all subjects. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 showed a marked improvement following a below average performance in 2005. Pupils' performance in English was particularly impressive, following a period of intensive support for improving standards and achievement in writing.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They attend school regularly and enjoy lessons and the extra activities provided. A measure of their enthusiasm is that the summer school organised for the holiday is usually oversubscribed. Most pupils behave well and are confident and self-assured by the time they leave Year 6. They have caring attitudes towards others, are quick to help each other during lessons and proud that their school is seen to be 'dyslexia friendly'. Nevertheless, there is still a small element of immature behaviour which is detrimental to some pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and are prepared to listen to others' points of view. Staying healthy is high on their agenda. The school council oversees the tuck shop, and lunch menus include healthy choices. Sports and other activities are taken up enthusiastically. Walking to school is routine for many pupils. Good life skills are acquired as a result of pupils taking on extra responsibilities such as acting as 'befrienders' who help to restore faltering relationships between pupils, or as lunchtime helpers. These qualities, along with their grounding in basic skills, prepare them well to meet future challenges.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Although there are features of good teaching in lessons, its quality is not consistent throughout the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and this enables them to ask pupils searching questions in order to assess their level of understanding. There is usually good pace to lessons, especially where practical resources are used to help pupils learn. Teachers use interactive whiteboards confidently to

help bring lessons to life but pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) during lessons is not a feature of teachers' planning. Relationships are good. Consequently, pupils know that their contributions to lessons are valued, and they are willing to 'have a go'. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress, especially when working with groups and individual pupils who have additional learning needs. They know the pupils well and are sensitive to their particular difficulties. In some lessons, pupils' behaviour is not managed effectively because the range of strategies to challenge and engage them is too limited. Teachers' marking is a weakness. It is not linked to learning objectives to show pupils how well they have achieved; nor does it indicate to pupils what they must do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The recent whole-school focus on literacy has had a good impact on speaking and on listening skills. There is some well presented writing of good quality. Opportunities are not well established for pupils to practise and apply their basic skills, for example writing and ICT, across subjects. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. Children are fully engaged in activities which link areas of their learning because there is a good balance between teacher-led and independent activity. PSHCE is planned well. As a result, pupils are enabled to make sensible choices about their personal well-being. There is a good range of activities to add interest and enjoyment outside lesson time. More unusual, but nevertheless popular, is the Challenge Club which enhances pupils' problem-solving skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. There are some very strong features of pastoral care and support. These include mentoring to help pupils overcome emotional difficulties and access learning more easily. Sensitive activities are provided to strengthen relationships and trust among pupils and there are early morning sessions for Reception children who need to improve their physical coordination. It is little wonder that the vast majority of parents are fully confident that their children are well cared for. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies. Those whose needs are literacy based are supported well. Although other learning needs are identified, help is not always as well focused. All procedures to safeguard pupils in school are in place. Safety awareness and anti-bullying weeks prepare pupils to guard their own and others' safety. Academic support and guidance is weak. Tracking systems are outdated and do not provide reliable information about pupils' progress. There is no rigorous monitoring of progress towards annual targets in order to pick up on underachievement, to enable more challenging targets to be set or to inform teachers' planning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher has quickly established her role and has set the school on a clear course for improvement. She is supported by an experienced senior leadership team whose members are clear about their roles. However,

these are too extensive and demand too little accountability for standards and achievement throughout the school. The school's evaluation of its own effectiveness suffered from lack of rigour in monitoring its work, resulting in a more generous view than that which is currently held. Leaders play a key part in teachers' performance management and are aware that weak assessment systems do not allow this to be linked directly to pupils' progress. Some staff members have embarked on professional training for middle managers. This is beginning to improve their subject leadership by helping them to develop the skills they need to enable them to be effective in raising standards and achievement.

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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>	<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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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

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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

## Annex A

**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	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**

Inspection of Christ Church, Pellon, Halifax, HX2 0QQ

Thank you for making Mrs Lambert and me feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you very much and finding out how proud you all are of your school. We can see why you enjoy it so much. You are all so friendly and the school dinners are scrumptious! Although there are some good things about the school, it currently gives you a satisfactory education.

We found that you are making steady progress with your literacy and numeracy and that you are all pretty good at PE. Although you are mostly well behaved, polite and well mannered a few of you could be better at listening to your teachers and making sure you don't stop others from getting on with their work. We think it's good that the grown-ups in school look after you so well. Your parents also like your school and with your new headteacher and teachers they want to see you do as well as you can.

In order to make Christ Church a better school we have asked your teachers to keep a closer check on your progress to make sure you all get work which is right for you. Also, when they mark your work, always tell you what you must do to make it better. You can help by making sure you always know what your next learning targets are and by working very hard to achieve them.