



Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115745
Local Authority Gloucestershire
Inspection number 290326
Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Christine Huard

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Malvern Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Cheltenham
Age range of pupils	4–11		GL50 2NR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01242 523392
Number on roll (school)	213	Fax number	01242 250142
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	S Padfield
		Headteacher	J E Fentem
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school in Cheltenham. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average, although there is a well above average percentage of pupils with statements who are based in the Communication and Interaction Centre (CIC). The attainment of pupils when they enter the school varies from year to year between average and above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Christ Church Primary is a good school, with some outstanding features. It provides a good education for its pupils in a learning environment which fully reflects the Christian ethos of the school. Parents and staff refer to the 'school family' and this is indicative of the high level of support and care pupils receive, particularly in relation to their personal development. Pupils love school. This was illustrated when almost all arrived dressed up as a fictional character in celebration of 'World Book Day'. Despite the excitement and fun, their behaviour was exemplary. They show highly positive attitudes towards work and play and are really keen to do well.

The children in Reception make a good start to their school life in a lively and stimulating atmosphere. They make good progress and most join Year 1 having met the goals expected. By Year 6, standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. Actions taken to improve mathematics and writing have been highly effective with the result that standards have risen considerably. There are some weaknesses in spelling and teachers do not always focus on these sufficiently. This means improvement is not as good as it could be. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They have an excellent understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle and of the need to stay safe. As well as having a good understanding of basic literacy and numeracy skills, pupils collaborate well, and have an exceptional understanding of issues, such as global warming. All of these will stand them in excellent stead for the future. The care, support and guidance for pupils are good. Pupils are very well looked after and they receive good support for their learning. Pupils in the CIC receive excellent support for their personal and academic needs.

The curriculum is outstanding. It is imaginative and inspiring. The wide range of visits and visitors greatly enhances pupils' learning experiences and adds to their enjoyment of school. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils are interested in their learning because teachers are confident and endeavour to make learning fun. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and interaction between them is good. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously. However, sometimes it is too congratulatory and does not always provide sufficient guidance as to how pupils can improve their work. Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and she is very well supported by the senior leadership team. There is a good team spirit amongst the staff and morale is high. Staff and governors are committed to further improvement. The school knows itself well. Appropriate areas for improvement have been identified and actions taken to improve pupils' achievement are proving to be successful. The school enjoys the wholehearted support of parents; one of many such comments made sums up their feelings, 'The school has exceeded all our expectations, not just for educational standards, but in the whole package we want as parents.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the focus on spelling and clearly identify where mistakes are made in pupils' work, in all subjects, in order to improve standards in writing.

- Ensure that the quality of marking is consistent across the school and tells pupils how they can improve their work as well as acknowledging what they have done well.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children in Reception make good progress. This is because teachers know them well and provide effectively for their individual needs. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and standards are above average. In Years 3 to 6, standards are well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Pupils achieve well overall because the school carefully checks how well pupils are doing and takes effective action to identify and tackle weaknesses. Higher standards in mathematics have been successfully sustained because of actions taken to improve problem solving and calculation skills. Standards in writing are improving significantly, and pupils' work is imaginative and well presented. However, there are some weaknesses in spelling and mistakes are not always identified by teachers in subjects other than English. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those in the CIC, make good progress, because tasks set for them are matched closely to their particular needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school because it offers them a vibrant range of experiences. This enjoyment is reflected in their attendance and punctuality both of which are good. Pupils feel safe. They know they will be treated with respect by their peers and cared for by someone if they have a problem. Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' understanding of the lives of those with different backgrounds is excellent. They have a very good understanding of the nature of the multicultural society in which they live. The school council is very active and members occasionally divide into working parties for greater efficiency. For example, one recently worked on the school travel plan whilst another is carrying out a survey into the content of packed lunches in order to maintain the high profile of healthy eating. Pupils contribute to the local and wider community in many ways including charity fund raising.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils say that learning is fun. This is because teachers are imaginative in their planning and they try very hard to make learning relevant for the pupils. 'There is something you enjoy every day', said one enthusiastic Year 6 pupil. Good subject knowledge gives teachers the confidence to be adventurous in the classroom. For example, mathematics

is made more interesting through the use of quizzes and times table challenges. Pupils tackle tasks set with vigour. They are eager to learn because they find the teaching inspiring and exciting. They work well together and discuss ideas and thoughts maturely with 'response partners'. This enables them to respond confidently to teachers' questions. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those in the CIC, learn effectively because they receive good support. Marking is satisfactory. Although teachers usually tell pupils if they have achieved the aim of the lesson they do not always give pupils sufficient guidance as to how they can make improvements to their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Children in the Foundation Stage have a lively and exciting curriculum, which gets their schooling off to a flying start. These inspiring experiences continue as pupils move through the school. Visits and visitors greatly enhance pupils' learning. During the week of the inspection, an author helped pupils celebrate 'World Book Day'. A lecturer, aided by appropriate artefacts, brought the Second World War to life for Year 2. Links established between subjects are outstanding and show ingenuity and creativity. There is an excellent programme to support pupils' personal development. The termly focus on different values enables even the younger pupils to gain an understanding of what, for example, compassion really means. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, both in school and the CIC, is outstanding and planning is carefully adapted to meet their particular needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes great care of its pupils. All statutory checks are made and child protection procedures are fully in place. The support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. That for pupils in the CIC is excellent and the school ensures that they are as fully integrated into school life as their needs allow. There are excellent links with a range of outside agencies, such as speech therapy and educational psychologists. Such effective links ensure that support for vulnerable pupils is always there when required. The school monitors pupils' personal and academic development well. However, although pupils know and understand the short-term targets that are set for them, the systems used for monitoring their progress are not as useful as they could be in helping to set longer term targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's good leadership and management are characterised by shared values and a clear vision for further improvement. The school has high expectations as to what can be achieved and there is a good capacity for further improvement. The senior leadership team works closely with the headteacher, whose leadership and management

are outstanding, and there is very good delegation of responsibilities. Good use is made of information from standardised tests to analyse where there are areas for improvement and to inform future planning. Subject leaders make a good contribution but their monitoring has not been fully effective in picking up some weaknesses, for example, in spelling. The whole school works well as a team. Teachers share good practice and discuss teaching and learning in an atmosphere of mutual support. The governors provide good support and challenge. They are fully involved in the development of the school improvement plan. This, together with subject action plans, provides a very good basis for ongoing progress. The school has the confidence of the community it serves and parents are enthusiastic in their support of the school.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
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	2
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?	2
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?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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 for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. You certainly seem to be very happy and it was good to hear how much you enjoy your learning and all the extra activities you do. We think your school gives you a good education and is working hard to make it even better.

What we think your school does well:

- You work hard and achieve well because you are taught well and your teachers make learning enjoyable for you.
- You behave extremely well and are really keen to learn.
- You take very seriously the importance of eating healthily at school and taking physical exercise.
- You willingly take on responsibilities and make a good contribution to your school and wider communities.
- You have an exciting curriculum with lots of interesting activities.
- The teachers and staff take good care of you while you are in school.
- Your headteacher, senior teachers and governors lead the school well and know what must be done to make it even better.

What we have asked the school to do to improve:

- You need to improve your spelling. We have asked teachers to show you where you make mistakes when they mark your work in all subjects.
- To help you make even better progress, we have asked your teachers to tell you what you can do to improve your work as well as congratulating you on what you have done well.

We hope you will continue to work hard.