

# Christ Church CofE (VA) Primary School and Nursery, Ware

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117473
<b>Local Authority</b>	HERTFORDSHIRE
<b>Inspection number</b>	290850
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roderick Passant

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	317
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bob Owen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kerry Scripps
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 September 2001
<b>School address</b>	New Road Ware Hertfordshire SG12 7BT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01920 462158
<b>Fax number</b>	01920 486969

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 May 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	290850

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Christ Church School is larger than average and has slightly increased in size since the last inspection. Attainment on entry to Reception reflects the full range of ability but is generally the same as typically found in this age group. The overall percentage of pupils who are receiving additional support to help them with their learning is broadly average but is higher than this in some year groups; this is caused in some instances by pupils joining the school later in their school career. The number of pupils with statements identifying their specific educational needs is below average. There are a few pupils who come from homes where English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at various points in the school year, 60 in the last academic year, has increased since the last inspection and is above the national average. Most pupils live locally but some parents choose to send their children to the school from further afield because of its religious nature.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with a few outstanding features. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and attain standards that, by the age of 11, were above average in 2006. The quality of provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. The school provides good value for money. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below average by the time that pupils left the school and there was considerable underachievement. The school has improved significantly since then because of the good leadership and the sustained commitment to raising standards. Year 6 pupils in discussion were very clear about the improvements that have taken place and the headteacher's crucial role in achieving them. Pupils now make good progress because the school has an unremitting focus on tracking their achievement and each teacher identifies the steps that they are taking to improve the performance of individual pupils. There is a strong sense of a united purpose and teamwork amongst all staff that has been carefully created by the headteacher. This means that individual teachers are accountable for the progress pupils make and yet feel supported well in the process. That said, pupils themselves are not always clear enough on what they need to do in order to improve their work.

The quality of teaching has improved and is now vibrant and challenging. It is good because teachers use imaginative approaches and active strategies to engage pupils in their learning. Questioning is often very skilled and classroom management effective. Learning support assistants work effectively as part of the teaching team. Lesson planning has recently been simplified, and whilst this is effective for many teachers, some need more precise definition of what they are looking for in the lesson to help them meet the range of all pupils' needs. Pupils' personal development is outstanding because what is taught provides a good balance of academic, physical and personal development and there are excellent enrichment opportunities in this good curriculum. The result is that pupils have excellent attitudes towards learning and each other. They enjoy school very much and are exceptionally aware of the need to look after themselves and care for others. Their great enjoyment of school is reflected in their overall good attendance. All staff work hard to create an ethos that is safe and that develops pupils' self-esteem. Pupils feel that they are listened to and their opinions valued. Behaviour is good. Pupils report that children are kind to one another and bullying is not an issue. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is because of the excellent work in personal, social and health education, the effective promotion of the school's Christian values and the good quality of care, guidance and support that they receive.

Strategic planning and leadership by the headteacher are excellent. She knows the school very well and the whole school evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Leadership and management are being fostered effectively at all levels so that they are good. Governance is good because it provides both effective support and appropriate challenge.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils know how to improve their work through the quality of feedback that they receive.
- Ensure teachers plan ways of measuring a lesson's success for the whole range of pupils in the group.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Attainment at the end of Reception in 2006 was particularly high in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Standards at the age of seven have improved since the last inspection and are above average. Reading and writing show a discernible improving trend.

Results by the age of 11 significantly improved in 2006 and were above average. Standards in English were exceptionally high in 2006. Standards in mathematics are above average whilst in science they are average. The standards in mathematics and science have improved significantly over the past three years. Underachievement in science was a key issue for improvement in the last report that has been addressed well. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress, as do other minority groups. Published data indicates that pupils made satisfactory progress in the junior age groups last year. This does not reflect the good rate of progress currently seen in lessons. Teachers are very aware of, and accountable for, pupils' progress because of the tight pupil tracking systems introduced by the school last year. In addition, because a significant number of pupils join or leave the school at various points in their school career, the data does not tell the whole story of their good achievements.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning and so they achieve well. Their enjoyment in many topics is very evident from the enthusiastic way that they talk about their favourite activities in school. They have an outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils really like the special projects that allow them to develop new skills such as leading sports activities and writing pantomimes. Pupils behave well because of the teachers' and learning support assistants' effective management skills. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good because the school places a high priority on these areas. Pupils have a good awareness of other faiths and are effectively prepared for life in a multicultural society. The pupils contribute well to the community and raise a considerable amount of money for charities. Pupils regularly share concerns and ideas at the 'Family Forum' meetings and have been successful in reorganising the use of the playing areas and lunchtime eating arrangements. Because attendance is good, pupils learn key skills consistently, such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills and learning to work cooperatively. These equip them well for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers use effective methods and this means that pupils develop basic skills well. Good use of paired discussion times means pupils learn to use key vocabulary. Questioning is used effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Learning support assistants promote pupils' learning well. A few outstanding lessons were seen and the most effective characteristic of these sessions was the imaginative choice of activities that made learning exciting. Pupils in Year 6 learned to deduce meanings from poems extremely effectively because of the excellent

use of ICT and interactive white boards. In one outstanding lesson seen, the use of discussion very effectively encouraged pupils to deepen their understanding of racial issues. Occasionally, lessons are less successful because teachers do not use criteria effectively to evaluate the success of different groups of pupils. In particular, this means that extension activities do not always ensure that the more capable pupils work at higher levels of attainment.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Learning opportunities are planned really well and, as a result, pupils make good progress in the key areas of the curriculum and in their personal development. Interesting and memorable topics are created by making effective links between subjects. Special projects are planned extremely well. An assignment on films really motivated pupils to learn new skills and work together effectively in groups. Trips out from school enrich pupils' learning and afterwards they are asked to evaluate whether the trip was good value for money. After-school clubs allow pupils to pursue a very good range of activities including sports, music, chess and gardening. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are well supported and so they make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils have sound opportunities to develop their skills when they work with subject leaders, although in a few topics the work planned does not fully extend all pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

All members of staff know pupils well and work successfully to provide a good level of care and support. All legal requirements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are met.

Very good relationships between adults and pupils support pupils' excellent personal development. There are regular newsletters and well-attended workshop sessions led by staff that help to keep parents well informed. As a result, parents and carers feel valued and questionnaires indicate that they are pleased with the work of the school. School staff liaise effectively with outside agencies and this means that pupils with different needs get the support that they require.

Pupils' personal development is supported and monitored carefully and this promotes a very positive and caring learning environment. Pupils' academic progress is assessed regularly and accurately. Whilst there are examples of excellent marking and feedback, this is not consistent across the school so that pupils do not always know what they need to do to reach the next stage in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The strategic leadership by the headteacher is excellent. She is ambitious for the school, pupils and staff and has set the high standards for pupils' academic and personal development that have underpinned the school's improvement since the last inspection. Leadership and management are delegated effectively so that all staff feel part of the school's improvement programme and engaged in its effective evaluation. The senior leadership team is effective and there is good capacity to improve the school. Governance is good. Governors make regular visits and gain a good working knowledge of the school as a result. The school is very inclusive, in that pupils are made to feel an important part of the school community. It runs smoothly on

a day to day basis. Resources, particularly support staff, are used flexibly because of the way the provision for pupils is carefully organised to achieve their most effective use. There is a good school development plan in place with relevant areas for improvement. However, the criteria for success in raising science standards are not as challenging as they might be.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
---	-----------------------

### 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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
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	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	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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>	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	2
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

16 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church C of E (VA) Primary School and Nursery, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 7BT

I am writing to say how much my colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school and the opportunity to see you at work and to talk with some of you. Thank you for your contribution to the inspection of your school. It will be a long time before I forget your assembly on the 'butterfly effect' and the tuneful enthusiastic singing.

You are lucky to go to a good school where you make good progress. You were very clear when you told us that the school had improved over the years and that this was mainly due to the headteacher. Standards are above average. Teaching is good and you told us that what you learn is exciting and interesting so that you enjoy school enormously. The school fosters your personal development in an outstanding way so that you know how to look after yourselves exceptionally well and you take care of others. You behave well and you told us that children are kind to each other.

You said that you all had an adult you could go to at school if you had a problem and the school looks after you and cares for you well. Teachers listen to you and value your point of view. Mrs Scripps leads the school well and all the staff work together as a team to carry on improving the school. They all work hard on your behalf. The governors support the school well and help Mrs Scripps and the other teachers to think carefully about what they are planning to do.

We have asked Mrs Scripps to make sure that two things which often already happen in classrooms are done even more:

- make sure that you know how to improve your work
- make sure your teachers know when a lesson has been successful for everyone in the class.

I am sure that, with your help, Christ Church School will go from strength to strength. All good wishes to you in your future school careers.

Yours faithfully

Roderick Passant Lead inspector