

Folkestone Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118674
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291208
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Beryl Pendlebury-Green
Headteacher	Jim Kreiselmeier
Date of previous school inspection	10 September 2001
School address	Brockman Road Folkestone CT20 1DJ
Telephone number	01303 253645
Fax number	01303 226029

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2007
Inspection number	291208

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: 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

This larger than average school includes a unit for pupils with physical disabilities. Although there are no children with a statement of special educational needs, there are several with physical disabilities and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. An above average number of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The school has held Healthy Schools status since before the last inspection. It operates as an Extended School and was one of the first in the country to be awarded 'advanced status' for its out-of-school-hours learning provision. The school is part of the Intensifying Support Programme (ISP), which is a national initiative aimed at raising standards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a school which has suffered much disruption in teaching because of staff changes. These have adversely affected standards, so that results in the 2006 national tests were very low and many pupils did not do as well as they should. With the support of the local authority, the school is well on the road to recovery. It is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. School leaders have an accurate picture of what the school does well and of those areas where improvement is needed. Moreover, they have already made many of the changes needed to bring about improvement. Children join the school with skills and abilities that are significantly below average. They make satisfactory progress in their Reception Year but standards remain low by the start of Year 1. Although standards in Years 1 to 6 are still below average, the initiatives introduced since September 2006 have had a positive impact so that pupils are achieving satisfactorily in lessons and are making up previously lost ground. The change is already recognised by parents. As one explained, 'My daughter is now getting extra help in basic skills and she is starting to catch up and get on a lot better.'

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There has been particular improvement in teaching at the top of the school, so that progress in lessons in Years 5 and 6 is often good. Lessons are generally well planned, with clear learning objectives and success criteria so that pupils can measure how well they have progressed. In some lessons, however, teachers do not expect enough of their pupils. They do not always match work as closely as they could to pupils' different abilities and they sometimes set work that is undemanding. In these lessons, the pace of learning slows.

The introduction this year of the ISP has made a big difference to pupils' achievement. It has meant that the school is more readily identifying which pupils are not doing as well as they should and is carefully targeting extra support for them. Care, guidance and support are good. Each pupil knows what they need to do to do better in English and mathematics. Pupils are looked after well and made to feel safe and secure.

Pupils' personal development is good. The Building Learning Power (BLP) programme means that pupils throughout the school are growing in confidence and developing as independent learners. Throughout the school, they enthusiastically learn not just the traditional 'three Rs' of reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic, but also the BLP's 'four Rs' of resourcefulness, reflectiveness, resilience and reciprocity. Even some of the youngest pupils can explain what these mean, and older pupils point to how they have changed the way they work and get on together.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Some aspects are very good indeed – especially the range of opportunities for out-of-school learning. The focus on English and mathematics has resulted in the time available for some other subjects being squeezed. School leaders acknowledge that there has not been enough emphasis given to learning literacy and numeracy through creative subjects, history, geography and science. The school's recovery since its poor recent test results, and its success in creating an environment where pupils want to learn and do well, show that it has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

A small proportion of the 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.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of teaching by ensuring that all pupils are set work that is consistently challenging and matched to their ability.
- Provide more opportunities to learn through history, geography, science and creative subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year in relation to their low starting point but standards at the start of Year 1 are significantly below average. In 2006, standards in the Year 6 national tests were exceptionally low. This represented considerable underachievement. This year, with the support of the local authority and thanks to a range of initiatives, and especially ISP, standards have risen measurably. Pupils are beginning to now catch up where they have previously fallen behind. As a result, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is true for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and the growing number who are learning English as an additional language. These pupils are helped to make sound and sometimes better progress because they benefit from good support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. From the Reception Year onwards, positive attitudes are apparent in pupils' eagerness and enjoyment in lessons. Older pupils are very sensitive to each other's needs and support one another well. The vast majority of pupils behave very well in lessons and in the playground. Although pupils and parents report that bullying does occur, pupils feel safe because they are confident that this is dealt with effectively by staff. School council members take their responsibilities seriously and the school acts on their recommendations, such as rewards for good behaviour and insisting that pupils should not be allowed to bring expensive toys to school in case they are stolen. Pupils are also encouraged to develop a sense of enterprise; they are expected to cost out plans to start up new clubs. Pupils' below average key skills in literacy and numeracy limit their preparation for the next stage of their education and the world of work. Pupils develop a sense of community through activities organised by the Extended School team and fundraising for charities. Pupils develop an insight into different faiths and cultures, including countries of origin of some of those pupils who have joined the school from overseas. They appreciate the nutritious lunches and participate in a very wide range of sports. Pupils are very successful in inter-school competitive sport: currently, the girls' soccer team is the best in Shepway.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school's drive to improve teaching and learning is having early success. Teachers plan their lessons well. They manage behaviour effectively so that pupils enjoy learning and respond with enthusiasm. All teachers make clear what pupils should achieve in lessons by setting targets and displaying them so that pupils can assess and check their own progress. This is supported

by helpful marking that tells pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Some lessons are not as effective as they could be because the work given to pupils is not sufficiently challenging or matched closely enough to the range of ability in the class. In these lessons, the pace of learning is too slow. In the best lessons, pupils of all abilities are set work that challenges them. For example, in a Year 5 numeracy lesson, pupils all solved similar division problems but more able pupils were given more complex numbers to work with. Pupils cooperate well with each other, and this team working often ensures all are involved and motivates them to do their best. Some teachers do not provide enough opportunities for this type of paired and collaborative work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils are helped to achieve well in their personal development through the very rich range of activities and clubs provided. These include sports, the arts and more unusual activities that are often suggested by the pupils themselves such as the Czech dance, chess, cookery and cricket clubs, and a very popular youth club. These clubs are greatly appreciated by the pupils and their parents, several of whom wrote to praise this 'excellent provision'. The more formal curriculum caters well for the core subjects of English and mathematics but this focus has been at the expense of other subjects. Whilst all subjects are planned for, there is insufficient emphasis on the creative subjects and opportunities are missed for pupils to learn and develop their literacy and numeracy skills through the work they do in other subjects such as history, geography and science. The BLP initiative is helping to improve pupils' skills in independent research and in taking responsibility for their own learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe because they are cared for in a secure and supportive environment. Their teachers and the headteacher know them very well. Policies and procedures to protect pupils and ensure their health and safety are made clear to all staff and are rigorously implemented. Pupils' views and concerns are listened to carefully and many of their suggestions are acted upon. The school works very closely and effectively with outside agencies and involves parents in helping pupils to achieve their potential. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and effective measures are taken to meet their needs. Good care and support are provided for pupils at an early stage of learning English and, as a result, many make good progress.

The work of all pupils is monitored on a regular basis and appropriate targets are set for them. Pupils are aware of these targets and understand what they need to do to improve their work, although this is mostly limited to English and mathematics. There are new arrangements this year for speedily identifying pupils who are not making the progress they should. These have already proven effective because they are resulting in carefully focused extra support to boost these pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The aspiration of all leaders to achieve the best for all pupils has become much more focused since September 2006 and the shock of the school's poor scores in the national tests. Management systems are now much more rigorous. The restructuring of the senior management and strategic leadership teams is innovative and has helped to support effective school self-evaluation. With the guidance of the local authority, the school has embraced ISP so that pupils' performance is now very carefully monitored and evaluated. School leaders now have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking appropriate action to tackle those areas where improvements are needed. The headteacher and governors cite staffing difficulties as the cause of past underachievement and recognise that they did not act swiftly enough to address these problems. The school is confident that it has learned from these mistakes. Governors are more involved in monitoring the work of the school but have not acted with enough urgency when holding the school to account. They are still too reliant on the headteacher's reports. The school is very well resourced. There is a budget surplus which the school has appropriately earmarked to improve information and communication technology and community provision.

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.

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
--	-----------------------

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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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	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

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	3
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?	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.

Annex A

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

2 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School, Folkestone, CT20 1DJ

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school.

As some of you told us, your school is changing for the better. It is now giving you a satisfactory education, and as a result, you are now making reasonable progress in your work.

Here are the main things that we think are best about your school:

- The changes made by your headteacher and staff have already helped to improve the school.
- Those of you who need extra help are now getting it and you are doing better as a result.
- You have some fantastic opportunities to learn through all the out-of-school clubs and other activities.
- You enjoy school and it is a place where you get on well with each other and feel happy and safe.
- The '4 Rs' are helping you to learn for yourselves.

These are the main things that we have asked the school to do better:

- Sometimes, teachers should set you more work to do in lessons, and make sure that it is harder for those of you who are capable of doing harder work.
- You should have more opportunities to learn through science, history, geography and other creative subjects.

You can help, too, by continuing to work hard and do your best.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours faithfully Selwyn Ward Lead Inspector