



Christ Church CofE Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122792
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 292511
Inspection dates 17–18 January 2007
Reporting inspector Roger Brown

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Victoria Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Newark
Age range of pupils	5–7		Nottinghamshire NG24 4UT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01636680051
Number on roll (school)	68	Fax number	01636680053
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev Fred Olney
		Headteacher	Mrs Gill Maguire
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2002		

Age group 5–7	Inspection dates 17–18 January 2007	Inspection number 292511
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves a community on the outskirts of Newark. Numbers at the school have dropped by almost a third since 2003. This is mainly due to the changing nature of the catchment area. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, a very small number come from different ethnic backgrounds. The area varies widely, both socially and economically, but the number of pupils eligible for a free school meal has now risen above the national average to 27%. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is close to the national average overall, but is very high in particular year groups. Attainment on entry to the school, although showing marked variation from year to year, is below average. The school has been awarded Active Mark Status and a Healthy Schools award.

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 that has now emerged from a difficult period in its history. In four terms from the summer of 2005 it had four different headteachers and a prolonged period of staff illness. Alongside this, it had a falling roll and changes to the nature of its intake that it was initially unprepared for. The situation has now stabilised. The school is coping well with a cohort that has a higher than average proportion of learners who have specific learning difficulties and who need high levels of support.

The school is very effective at carefully assessing, monitoring and then analysing pupils' needs. Teachers make good use of this information to focus teaching on target groups and individuals, ensuring that whatever their starting points, pupils make better than expected progress. Standards in the school are improving; in the Foundation Stage, standards are good. In the 2006 teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils, standards in all areas assessed were below average; this is no longer the case and overall standards are now close to those expected. The school has correctly identified the need to provide even more challenge for the able and talented pupils to ensure that they make even better progress.

The pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and enjoy school and all it offers. Their spiritual, moral and social understanding are good. Although satisfactory, their cultural understanding is less well developed. The school recognises the need to plan more regular learning experiences to develop this. Pupils play together well and point out how exercise and co-operative play help to keep them healthy and safe. They make a positive contribution to the local community by taking part in local events and by their involvement with different churches in the area.

The quality of teaching is good; the knowledgeable and thoughtful teachers are given great support by high quality teaching assistants. The curriculum is good and is developing well; the staff are clearly motivated by the integrated, thematic approach they now follow. However, the constraints of an old and cramped building are limiting the inventiveness with which they can use information communication technology (ICT) to support and motivate pupils' learning. Care guidance and support are good. Pupils say that they are happy, safe and secure at school, they know who to turn to if they have difficulties or if there are problems. Pupils get good guidance about developing and improving their work.

Good leadership and management result from successful teamwork in the school and ensure that it provides good value for money. The re-introduction of performance management procedures has enabled the leadership to have a clear and accurate picture of the school's development and its effectiveness. Governors actively support and promote the school. They undertake their responsibilities thoughtfully. The school was highly rated at the time of the last inspection and despite the difficult period when it was hit by factors outside its control it is now back on track and clearly has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the creative use of ICT to motivate and support pupils' learning.
- Extend the provision for the high achieving pupils to ensure they make even better progress.
- Provide more opportunities to strengthen and broaden the pupils' cultural understanding.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. The school's results in the end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments have varied widely over the last five years. The variations have largely reflected the nature of different year groups. Pupils currently in the school are making good progress from a below average starting point to bring their standards close to those expected nationally. Pupils enjoy their lessons, work hard and respond to the challenging targets the teachers set them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the high quality support and the consistent structures and systems which all staff use with them. The school has identified that some more able pupils have not been challenged enough and need to be given harder work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good because teachers engage them well and make lessons lively and interesting. Pupils enjoy their learning, describing it as 'fun.' The good support for pupils with special needs boosts their confidence, particularly for those who are emotionally vulnerable. Pupils' behaviour is good because they are interested in what they do. Attendance is similar to that found nationally, but the school has correctly identified this as an area where it must take more action as a high proportion of absence is down to term-time family holidays.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They know which foods and drinks are good for them and which are not. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to make decisions about the way the school runs. The school is aware that there is scope to extend such opportunities and is planning more developments. From the Foundation Stage onwards pupils learn to co-operate well, both in the classrooms and outside at play.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has worked hard on pupils' social development and this is reflected in their good quality relationships. The school is aware that it can still do more to extend and develop the pupils' cultural awareness.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic; they are ably supported in their work by the teaching assistants. Lesson planning is consistent and thorough. Teachers' classroom management skills are good. As a result of these factors pupils are motivated and learn effectively. The teachers and teaching assistants are particularly skilful at using assessment procedures to identify accurately what groups or individual pupils need to learn to progress further in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The challenging targets the school sets in these areas enable nearly all pupils to make good progress. The school knows that it still has more to do to develop this process across the wider curriculum. However, teachers understand that pupils' learning is particularly effective where they are clear about what they need to do to improve their work. The school's simple marking system is used well to do this. Pupils with additional learning needs are well supported by all staff and progress well as a result of the consistent approach and systems used by the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good quality of the curriculum is notably enhanced by the integrated, themed approach the school has adopted. A number of parents, in their written comments to the inspector, reported that their children are keen to talk about what they are doing at school and are clearly motivated by the topics the school has introduced. The curriculum is also enhanced by a range of visits, visitors and clubs. The good-quality Foundation Stage curriculum provides a strong basis for independent learning, and the well-developed outdoor play ensures that the children are also beginning to learn how to co-operate effectively. The school has begun to make extra provision for ICT. It has plans to develop this further as it has identified that although the technology available is used well, still more can be done to further enhance the pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is another good aspect of the school's work. Pupils are happy and secure with all necessary procedures in place to protect them in school. Pupils' personal and academic development is supported very effectively by all the staff. The school tracks pupils' progress well and teachers are now making good use of the information to target improvements for groups and individuals. Good induction arrangements mean that children starting school settle down to learning very quickly. Transfer arrangements to junior school are good, although with the changing nature of the intake the school recognises that it needs to expand this work to accommodate the diverse choices parents are making for their children's future schooling. Most parents are extremely supportive of the work of the school; 'My child is very happy at the school and we can

thoroughly recommend the school,' is typical of the great majority of comments submitted by parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and the governors have a clear and accurate picture of the school's development and its effectiveness. The current headteacher has brought stability and calm which have helped to restore staff morale and confidence following a hectic period of change when many developments were initiated without being fully implemented. The leadership team makes good use of the school improvement process to evaluate and assess what works well and what needs to be improved. The teachers are now playing a fuller role in leading the work of the school and have valuable insights into what the school can do to improve further. The governors are effective not only at supporting and promoting the school, but also acting as a critical friend overseeing the developments and checking progress. Financial management is good; the school seeks to ensure that it always secures best value for money in its expenditure. Despite its small size and therefore the high cost of educating each pupil, the school provides good value for money.

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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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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	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

18 January 2007

Dear Children,

Christ Church C of E Infant School, Victoria Street, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 4UT

Thank you for the warm welcome when I visited your school. It was a pleasure to be with you. I enjoyed watching your classes and I especially enjoyed talking to you about your work and what happens in your school.

What I liked most about your school was:

- The fact that you enjoy school and the work you do.
- You are well-behaved.
- You care for each other and get on well together.
- Your teachers and their helpers work hard for you and give you great support.

However, I would like your teachers to:

- Look at how they can improve the work you do with computers.
- Help those of you who are already doing well to become really outstanding.
- Help you to know more about how other people live.

Many of your parents wrote to me to say that they really like your school and are pleased with the way you are cared for and taught. I agree with them. I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent with you in your school.

Best wishes for the future.

Roger Brown

Lead Inspector