



Christ The King Catholic School, Amesbury

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126423
Local Authority Wiltshire
Inspection number 293556
Inspection dates 6–7 December 2006
Reporting inspector John English

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Earls Court Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Amesbury
Age range of pupils	4–11		Salisbury SP4 7LX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01980 622039
Number on roll (school)	256	Fax number	01980 622039
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Carol Crossland
		Headteacher	Rita Horner
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size and serves catholic families but welcomes a wide range of pupils from other backgrounds. A very high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has a specialist centre for pupils with speech and language disorders, as a result of which it has five times the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need as is found nationally. A significant minority of pupils come from service families and join or leave the school partway through their education because their military postings change.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Christ the King Catholic Primary is best described by some of the many positive comments made by parents. One said 'It is a wonderful school and I am so pleased that my child is attending', and another, 'The staff are committed and the head is a fantastic leader.' Inspectors agree. This is a good school with many outstanding features. It successfully tackles some daunting challenges, including the exceptionally high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and the numerous pupils who join partway through their primary education, many having moved schools before. One of the outstanding features is the way the school welcomes and values every child and strives to meet their needs.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is at the heart of the success of the school, driven by the values of her Christian faith, and an implacable sense of service to the children in her charge. She achieves an extraordinary degree of commitment to these values from adults and pupils, and support from parents. She sets very high standards for all the adults and the pupils in the school, and manages very effective monitoring and self-evaluation processes which drive school improvement.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are well below average. They make good progress in their first year although standards remain below average by the end of the Reception Year. Good progress continues between Years 1 and 6; however assessment results at this level are also below those seen nationally. Pupils who enter partway through a year make good progress once they have settled in to the school. This can sometimes take a considerable time, despite exceptionally good arrangements to support them.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils have well developed moral values and a strong sense of social responsibility and support for their fellow pupils. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils enjoy lessons and contribute to them enthusiastically. Pupils feel safe and well cared for at school. They keep themselves healthy by eating well and taking plenty of exercise. They contribute well to the school community through the school council and other responsibilities, and take a great pride in contributing to the success of the school.

Teaching and learning vary from satisfactory to outstanding, but are good overall, because most of the teaching is good or better. The teachers' enthusiasm and good subject knowledge result in lessons that are varied and interesting. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, it is usually because teachers are not quick enough in spotting when pupils misunderstand what is being taught. The curriculum is outstanding, because it is constantly reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of all the pupils, including the most able and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The care and guidance given to the pupils are outstanding and at the heart of the school's philosophy of valuing children and ensuring that they do well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive an excellent education to meet their

individual needs. The care given to vulnerable pupils and those with problems from their life outside the school is also outstanding, because they all know that they will find a sympathetic ear and real help from any adult. Academic guidance is good, based on meticulous records of each pupil's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and learning so that all lessons are as good as the best, by ensuring that teachers check pupils' progress and understanding effectively in all lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children join the Foundation Stage with standards that are well below average. Reading, writing and number are particularly poorly developed. By the time pupils enter Year 1, standards have risen, although they are still below national expectations. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 standards in mathematics, English and science are still below the national average. However, this is not a true reflection of the achievement of the pupils. Those pupils in the main part of the school who have an uninterrupted time at the school achieve sustained good progress. Those who join midway through their school careers achieve well once they have settled in, but inevitably do not attain as well as might be expected had they not had interruptions to their schooling. The unusually high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also has an impact on standards.

The school sets challenging targets for pupils of all levels of attainment. The majority in all year groups meet their targets and many exceed them. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those in the specialist centre, make good progress because they are very well supported and the curriculum is very closely matched to their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' wholehearted participation in the spiritual life of the school has given them exceptionally well developed spiritual awareness, strongly developed moral values and a respect for other cultures and religions. Their support for each other and understanding of the social needs of more vulnerable peers is unusually well developed. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, consequently, is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent, in lessons and around the school, where they interact with each other, adults and visitors in a highly mature manner. Pupils enjoy school, for a sophisticated variety of reasons, including a clear pleasure from feeling that they are making good progress in their work. Attendance is above average. Pupils express their views through the school council and are proud of the way they help improve the school and support other pupils. They are not afraid to approach adults for help

when they need it. Pupils work productively and purposefully. They enjoy their sports lessons and have a good understanding of healthy eating. 'Eating healthily is only fair to your body,' said one. Although standards in literacy and numeracy are below expectations, pupils' understanding of how to work cooperatively is good preparation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge and skills, for example, in their use of interactive whiteboards, which enable them to present lessons in an imaginative way. Their infectious enthusiasm captures pupils' interest and keeps them engaged. In every class, the teachers work to improve standards of comprehension and literacy by encouraging pupils to talk about the work in hand, either with work partners or in response to skilled questioning. Pupils understand the purposes of lessons, know their targets and are capable of sharp self-assessments, which help them to improve. Assessment is used well to plan lessons which respond to pupils' needs. However, assessment of learning during some lessons is not always systematic enough to ensure that the teachers identify any misconceptions so that they can quickly correct them. As a result, although the quality of teaching is good or better in most lessons, in a few, it is only satisfactory.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

In every class, pupils at all levels of attainment are offered a rich combination of experiences that challenge them and help them achieve. The Foundation Stage curriculum is exceptionally effective, because it successfully targets those areas where the children need most help. As a result, children make significant progress. The school's inclusive approach means that those with learning difficulties and disabilities are extremely well catered for and enjoy a full curriculum. Information and communication technology is used well to boost learning in other subjects. Education for health and safety ensures that pupils both understand requirements for healthy living, and also, in large measure, alter their habits accordingly. Curriculum enrichment is excellent. The wide range of clubs and out-of-school activities contributes to pupils' skills development and adds to their enjoyment of learning. The curriculum is also enriched through visits and visitors. For example, an author and an illustrator visited to indicate how they work together, giving a vivid insight into the power of collaborative working.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school is meticulous in its implementation of procedures for pupils' safety. Pupils describe their teachers as 'very kind and caring', and one added, 'They help us grow up and be confident.' There is excellent support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Good use is made of outside agencies to support vulnerable pupils and the school is watchful for any pupil who might be distressed or anxious. Parents are confident that their children are safe and well cared for in school. Adults within the school provide positive role models and develop outstanding relationships that help pupils to feel secure, settled and well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work. Targets are set and used well in lessons to keep pupils clearly focused on what they need to achieve next. There is a thorough tracking system to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. The headteacher provides exceptional direction to the work of the school, setting the highest expectations for the professional performance of adults and the care and achievement of all the pupils. This is reflected in the fact that, in many areas of this report, the inspectors' judgements were more positive than those of the headteacher. Parents are exceptionally pleased with the work of the school and many wrote to say so. They appreciate that this is a highly inclusive school which caters exceptionally well for the needs of every child. Senior managers rigorously monitor the school's provision and the progress of the pupils in order to plan for improvements. Weaknesses in performance are identified and decisive action taken, for example, in raising the quality of teaching through regular monitoring. This, and the notable improvement since the last inspection, demonstrates the school's excellent capacity to improve. Governors support the school well, and finances are well managed.

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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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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?	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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We came into all your classrooms and talked with many of you. We were very interested in what you had to say. You gave us a very clear message that you really enjoy school and are proud of what you do.

We were particularly impressed by:

- How well you are learning and making progress.
- How well behaved you are, polite and courteous to visitors and how much you care for each other and the teachers.
- How well the teachers and learning support assistants help plan your work and make the lessons interesting and challenging.
- The caring way the adults look after you and make sure you are safe.
- What an excellent job your headteacher does in making sure you get the best out of your time in the school and that you are successful in your work.

Most of your lessons are interesting and help you make really good progress. In a few, the teachers do not always pick up quickly enough when you have not really understood something, and we have suggested to your headteacher that the school works on this to ensure that in all lessons you learn as well as you can.

We think that your school is a good school with many excellent features. We are sure you can help your teachers to make the school even better by continuing to work hard to reach your targets and help make new children welcome.

Enjoy your lessons and good luck!