

Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101533
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	307726
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Gordon Ewing

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	The Reverend David Neno
Headteacher	Mrs Bridget Methuen
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2003
School address	Clarence Road Kilburn London NW6 7TG
Telephone number	020 7624 4967
Fax number	020 7372 2759

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2008
Inspection number	307726

© Crown copyright 2008

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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Christ Church is a smaller than average primary school. It serves an area with a wide cultural diversity and some areas of high social deprivation. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average and the percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high with two fifths having Black British origins. Over a third of pupils have a first language that is believed not to be English. A total of 27 languages are spoken in the school. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above that found in most schools. Pupils starting and leaving the school other than expected times (pupil mobility) is high. In recent years staff turnover has been high.

Since the last inspection in 2003 there have been three headteachers in post. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Christ Church is a rapidly improving school that provides a satisfactory education for all pupils. The school has faced some very challenging times in recent years and the headteacher, ably supported by her senior leadership team, has worked decisively and tirelessly to address significant weaknesses and turn the school around. As one parent wrote 'I think that the headteacher, governors and staff have done well to put the quality and standards back into the school.'

Since the last inspection standards and achievement have varied considerably and in 2006 dropped significantly. A clear focus on improving teaching in English and mathematics across the school has improved standards so that, in 2007, standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2. By the end of Year 6 in 2007, standards in English were also broadly average but in mathematics and science they were below average. Current pupils are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science because teaching is now consistently satisfactory and improving, though pupils have yet to make up the ground lost in previous years.

It is clear that pupils now enjoy coming to school though much more needs to be done to improve attendance, which is below average. The majority of parents think highly of recent improvements in teaching, behaviour and standards. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. As one pupil commented, 'This is a good, friendly school.' Most pupils clearly respect one another and work and play in a friendly community. They have a good understanding of living a healthy lifestyle and take plenty of exercise. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school community through the Pupil Parliament and as Red Cap playground buddies. Curriculum provision is satisfactory. Pupils take part in an adequate range of clubs and visits. They are growing in confidence and developing greater independence so that they are appropriately prepared for the move to secondary school.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language, who make similar levels of progress as their peers. New pupils, from a range of backgrounds, settle effectively into the school because the staff work hard to ensure that they are integrated quickly and easily. As one new pupil highlighted, 'Everyone has been very helpful to me.' Academic guidance, including teachers' marking, however, is under-developed and pupils are not confident in knowing their targets. This is because new systems to track pupil progress are not firmly established in every day lessons and assessments are only now beginning to inform teachers on how pupils are progressing.

The senior leadership of the school is strong and effective because weaknesses are being addressed swiftly. New systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the school are beginning to have an impact and standards are rising. Given the significant changes in staffing, middle managers are not yet equipped or experienced enough to share in the drive to raise standards further. Governors are committed and increasingly knowledgeable but do not consistently evaluate how well the school is meeting its targets for improvement. However, the school has made considerable strides after significant difficulties and, in doing so, demonstrates a clear capacity to deliver further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children are admitted to the nursery most are working below the standard expected of children of that age, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal and emotional development. By the end of Reception in 2007, the Foundation Stage profile recorded that most were still working below the expected standard but pupils were more able to express themselves fluently and were better prepared emotionally and in their personal skills. This represents satisfactory progress overall. As provision in the Early Years Unit has improved significantly in the last two years, the present Reception children are now on track to achieve the standards expected of children of that age. This represents good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and science to match those achieved in English.
- Improve teachers' marking and assessment strategies so that pupils receive more frequent and effective guidance on how to take the next step in their learning.
- Develop the role of middle managers so that they can effectively share in the drive to raise standards.
- Improve strategies to raise pupils' attendance.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

From Years 1 to 6 standards vary considerably because of high pupil mobility and significant changes in the school population. In 2007 standards in Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In each case, taking account of pupils' starting points on entry to Year 1, this represents satisfactory progress. In national tests in 2007, Year 6 standards in English were broadly average and below average in mathematics and science. Predictions for the current Year 6 indicate that standards will be similar this year. Given the high mobility of pupils, the rapidly changing school population and the staffing difficulties, this demonstrates satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to that of their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. Pupils 'like the changes made' in the recently improved Early Years Unit and say that their teachers are 'balanced-not too strict and not too easy'. Pupils feel valued and say that they are influential in the day-to-day school organisation through the work of the Pupil Parliament, house captains and class monitors. For instance, they were involved in the appointments of the Headteacher and new Deputy Headteacher and can give examples of other important developments e.g. improved playground activities and behaviour. The school has worked hard to improve attendance but it remains below the national average. Procedures are in place to address the punctuality of pupils which is a continuing concern to the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils are clear about the procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and bullying. Most behaviour observed in the classroom was good and the Red Caps, who support those experiencing difficulties, play an important role in the playground. Pupils believe that they are lucky to be in a school where so many cultures are represented because 'It helps us to understand others' beliefs,' and they feel that they work well as a team. They feel secure at school and know how to stay safe. They talk knowledgeably about the effects of being overweight and understand the need for exercise and healthy eating.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory across the rest of the school. Teachers are improving their skills in making lessons relevant and challenging. As one pupil said, 'I like all my lessons - they make me think.' Pupils display positive attitudes to learning and respond well to the school's new behaviour policy. Consequently, lessons are calm and pupils enjoy purposeful activities. Teaching assistants support pupils well so that they make satisfactory progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and some effective questioning helps pupils to apply their learning well. In a good information communication technology (ICT) lesson in Year 4, pupils were challenged to explore repeating patterns for a wallpaper design. They used a search engine well to retrieve attractive images and create some interesting designs. At the end of the lesson they discussed each other's designs with sensitivity. Some parents feel that information about their child's progress could be improved and recently the school has begun to share such data at termly parents' evenings.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum supports the academic and personal development of pupils and is satisfactory. Although links between subjects are already planned across the curriculum the school rightly feels that this needs to be further developed in order that pupils find their learning increasingly meaningful and enjoyable. Visitors include African drummers, drama groups, parents who talk about their cultural heritage and the support services like the police. As well as the daily breakfast and after school clubs there are a range of weekly clubs including dance, chess, choir, cards and a variety of sports. Pupils take part in local events including joint sports days with other schools.

There are now well-organised admission procedures for all pupils admitted throughout the school which support them well in settling quickly into the school. These set a good base line from which to track future progress. Effective steps are taken to support Year 6 pupils during the transition to their secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils receive a satisfactory standard of care, guidance and support. All pupils questioned felt supported by staff and their peers and knew that there was someone to turn to if they need help or advice. There are effective arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils and the school works well with outside agencies and parents. Statutory requirements for child

protection are in place and staff understand the procedures. There is a well-organised system for tracking pupils' progress, both academic and emotional, but pupils are not encouraged to reflect on their work, or identify the next steps in their learning. This means that there are missed opportunities to improve progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is led well by a steadfast and dedicated headteacher who has acted swiftly to address poor pupil behaviour, inadequate teaching and falling standards. She has set out a clear vision for the school and is building a team of staff that is gaining in confidence and competence through focussed training and the sharing of effective practice. She is ably supported by a senior leadership team who play a key role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. As a result, standards are now rising, teaching is improving and pupils' attitudes are good. As one parent wrote, 'Behaviour has improved greatly.'

As staff changes have been considerable in recent times, few subject leaders are in place to support the school's leadership in the drive for school improvement. Nevertheless, senior leaders are beginning to provide effective peer coaching to recently appointed colleagues to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluation. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of this support. Governors support the school well, have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and ask searching questions at meetings. They do not have systematic procedures in place to regularly monitor the school's day-to-day work. The school is well supported by the local authority in overcoming the debilitating effects of a long standing deficit budget.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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

25 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School, London, NW6 7TG

You will remember that we visited your school recently to see how well you and your teachers are working. We would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views about your lessons and your school. This letter sets out what we found out about your school.

Your school is improving and now provides you with a satisfactory education. Things that you do well are;

- You enjoy coming to school and you behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Your headteacher has worked hard to support teachers so that your lessons are better planned and more interesting.
- Standards are rising and you are making steady progress.
- You say you are safe at school and feel confident in approaching staff if you have a problem.
- The Pupil Parliament and Red Caps team are helping to make the playground a fun, safe and interesting place in which to play.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to improve your school further by.

- Raising standards further in mathematics and science.
- Marking your work carefully giving you help on how to learn even more.
- Helping all subject leaders to play a part in improving lessons and raising standards.
- Work more closely with you and your parents to improve attendance.

We ask you to continue to concentrate in your lessons and play your part in helping your teachers to make Christ Church an even better school.

Kind regards

Gordon Ewing

Lead Inspector