

Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102594
Local Authority	Kingston Upon Thames
Inspection number	308061
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan Lindsay

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	451
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	99
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pat Geiringer
Headteacher	Mrs Vanessa Vaughan
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chestnut Grove New Malden KT3 3JU
Telephone number	020 8942 2645

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2008
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Fax number

020 8336 0790

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Corpus Christi serves a community that is very diverse, both ethnically and economically. A far higher than average proportion of the pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Fewer pupils than average claim free school meals, although this number has increased recently. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The main area of need is in speech, language and communication. A very small number have visual and hearing impairment. Recent awards gained by the school are Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark. The current headteacher has been in post for a year following a two-year period with an acting headteacher. An independent breakfast and after-school club is run on site.

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. It has some significant strengths, particularly in the standards pupils reach and in the progress they make in English. The personal development and well-being of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are outstanding. Pupils throughout the school receive excellent pastoral care, which is recognised by parents. One commented that the school 'made their child feel special'. The school works well in partnership with others, especially parents who contribute much to their children's learning and who are generally very supportive of the school. Many parents commented positively about recent improvements, especially in behaviour and the ethos of the school.

Children receive a good education in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Because of good and occasionally outstanding teaching, they progress well in all areas of their learning, but especially in reading and writing. Pupils continue to learn well as they move through the school. However, progress in mathematics is not as good as that in English. This is because the school has had a sharper focus on developing writing and reading skills than on calculations and problem-solving. The very positive impact of the school's initiatives to improve literacy resulted in much higher standards in English at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2008. A similar programme is now in place to improve mathematics. This is already leading to better progress across Years 1 and 2. Nevertheless, able pupils are not always challenged enough to achieve the highest levels. Pupils who have a home language other than English and those with specific learning difficulties are well supported and so make the same good progress as their peers.

The curriculum is good and has successfully focused on developing literacy skills. There are plans now to link subjects more effectively, especially focusing on mathematics, and to add further creative and 'hands-on' investigative elements so that lessons are even more fun. Pupils show a great sense of enjoyment of all aspects of school life and they behave well. The great majority of parents agree that their children are happy in school. Parents and pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the recent introduction of hot dinners that has done much to enhance pupils' understanding about healthy eating.

Outstanding pastoral care leads pupils to say they feel safe and secure and have confidence in adults. The school makes excellent use of outside expertise to support pupils with specific needs. Academic support and guidance are good, as there are regular checks on what pupils have learned. Their targets are used well to help them to improve.

Leadership and management are good and the headteacher provides a clear vision for the school. The school's self-evaluation is good and all staff are aware that more has to be done to improve mathematics and the progress of the most able. The capacity of the school to improve is good; it has already demonstrated the impact of initiatives as well as a desire to continue to get better. Governors are prepared to question the school, and are fully involved in the planning and push for even higher standards.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Very carefully planned induction arrangements, warm relationships with adults and strong links with parents enable even the youngest children to settle happily and adjust to school routines. This means they are quickly able to benefit from the good teaching and well-planned sessions. There is a good balance of child-selected activities with those more directed by adults. Much

emphasis and value are placed on children investigating and exploring for themselves. Children obviously love this aspect, as they bubbled with glee when they worked out that putting weights in a bucket could move a toy up a ramp and even off the edge! All adults work very well together as a team and so there is a strong awareness of each child's individual needs and interests. A big emphasis on teaching early skills such as phonics and writing means that children make very good progress in these areas. Overall, progress is good as children enter with skills and knowledge that are generally as expected for their age and they leave with standards that are above average, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and their literacy skills. However, a greater emphasis needs to be placed on developing their counting and number skills. New resources and more opportunities for problem-solving are already in place to support children's learning in areas of mathematical development. The EYFS is managed well and this ensures good teamwork and a smooth transition from EYFS to Year 1. There are limited outdoor facilities as there is only a small covered area, which means play is restricted if the weather is bad. Also the Nursery classroom is cramped, making it difficult to have all resources readily available for children to select.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics by giving pupils more opportunities to practise calculating and problem-solving skills.
- Increase the level of challenge for more able pupils to help more of them reach the highest available levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils generally achieve well and there has been a significant improvement in standards in English during the past year. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been above the national average for a number of years and reading has been a particular strength. Pupils are also making better than expected progress in mathematics through Years 1 and 2. The slight downward trend in the rate of pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 over past years has now been reversed. By the end of Year 6 the provisional 2008 results show a significant rise in standards in English. Standards in mathematics remain similar to those of 2007, in line with the national average. Pupils' mathematical development is slowest in calculations and in problem-solving. The most able pupils do not always reach the highest available levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because they respond so well to the strong Christian values the school promotes. They have good attitudes to learning and behave well in and around the school. There are very positive relationships among the pupils and adults so that pupils respond well to the support given by adults. The different backgrounds of pupils and staff are celebrated well, as in the Sri Lankan assembly observed during the inspection. Pupils have many stimulating opportunities to learn first hand about different cultures and lifestyles and so they have high levels of respect for others. Pupils enjoy their time in school and attendance rates are consistently above the national average. Pupils pay good regard to their health and safety and use what they learn well, for example, in the personal choices they make about food and exercise. They develop a sense of community and responsibility for others, acting as mediators, for example, or through involvement in school

council activities. Their good basic and social skills prepare them well for the next stage in their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons. They create a purposeful working environment where good relationships enhance learning. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Teachers often make learning come alive through the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and through interesting explanations. Lessons have a clear focus, and what the teacher would like the pupils to learn is shared successfully with them so that they understand what it is they are to do and achieve. In the best lessons the learning is reviewed through pupils' self-assessment or through teachers marking their work. Marking is good throughout the school and provides pupils with a clear understanding of what they have achieved, but does not always give an indication of the next steps to take in their learning. In addition, not all teachers consistently meet the different needs of pupils well enough by making use of what they know about pupils' abilities to challenge pupils at the right level, particularly those who are more able. This means that some do not achieve as well as they could. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who have learning difficulties or who are at the early stages of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good as it gives pupils the chance to experience a broad range of subjects by linking them together. Pupils also have opportunities to learn French. The drive on improving the curriculum for English and widening the range of books has been successful in raising standards in reading and writing. Now there is a stronger focus on mathematics so that pupils can learn more through practical work. New resources and events, such as the 'Maths Week' and using mathematics more in other subjects, are beginning to impact positively on pupils' overall understanding. A well-coordinated programme of personal, social and health education enhances pupils' relationships with each other and develops their self-esteem and maturity well.

There has been a noted improvement in the provision for ICT since the last inspection and pupils make good use of their skills to aid learning in other subjects. The strong enrichment through residential and day visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs, enhances pupils' learning and contributes very well to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Corpus Christi is a caring school where pupils' welfare is a high priority. Each pupil is valued as an individual and is given the confidence to succeed. This is clear in the strong relationships that pervade the school. Robust procedures for child protection ensure pupils' health and safety. The school provides very good support for parents to enable them to help their children with their learning and personal development and to move to the next stages in their education.

Academic guidance and support are developing well. Systems for tracking and checking pupils' progress are firmly established and inform the targets for each pupil in English and mathematics. These help to raise pupils' awareness of what they need to focus on in order to improve. As a result, pupils know their targets well and say that teachers are always ready to help them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders and managers are focussed intently on raising standards. The headteacher has an ambitious vision for the school and has set a clear course for improvement. Senior and middle managers are effective in their roles. The recent focus on improving English in the school has been very effective. Priority is now given to raising standards in mathematics using the same strategies of improving resources, adapting the curriculum and using outside expertise. Developing the progress of higher attaining pupils generally is also a key focus. Equal opportunities are promoted well. The provision for community cohesion is good and supports the wider needs of the local area well. The school has successfully developed links with the Korean community and encourages community use of resources such as the ICT suite. Governors carry out their responsibilities well. They are knowledgeable about the school and are actively involved in improvement planning.

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Annex A

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
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

20 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, New Malden, KT3 3JU

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, taking part in your lessons and assembly and talking with you about your school. We think your school is good and has some excellent things about it.

Here are some of the best things about your school.

- You get off to a flying start in the Nursery and Reception classes because of good teaching and the way you are helped to settle.
- All the adults in school are very caring and look after you excellently and this means that you feel safe there and are happy.
- You make good progress, especially in English, because you are taught well and there has been a real focus on improving your skills in this subject.
- Your headteacher is good at leading and managing the school.

This is what we have asked the school to do next.

- Improve your skills in mathematics by making sure that you have lots of opportunities to practise working out problems and calculating.
- Make sure that all teaching makes you think and work hard, particularly for those who are capable of reaching the highest levels.

You can help your school by continuing to work hard and behave well. Thank you again for a very enjoyable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Lindsay

Lead Inspector