

# Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Ashmore Park

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104379
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308585
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth Westbrook

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	175
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	C Harris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wenda Pearce
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 0001
<b>School address</b>	Ashmore Avenue Ashmore Park Wednesfield Wolverhampton WV11 2LT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558725
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 558727

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a middle-sized primary school with a maintained Nursery class. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The school was without a permanent headteacher for most of the last academic year. The current headteacher has been in post since the beginning of the summer term in 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and improving. Since the previous inspection there has been a considerable period without a permanent headteacher. This led to a cessation in developments to improve the quality of provision, and standards, achievement, teaching and learning have all remained satisfactory. Since her arrival, the new headteacher has provided very good leadership. She has a clear view of how the school should move forward and has very effectively shared this with the school community. As a result, everyone is pulling together to implement plans effectively and rapidly. Already, a number of strategies are leading to improvements in teaching and learning.

In the Foundation Stage, the children's achievement is satisfactory and they reach broadly average standards in most aspects of their learning, although their communication skills and their social and personal development are somewhat lower.

In Years 1 to 6, achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. However, there are some general weaknesses in pupils' writing and some middle ability pupils do not always make as much progress as other groups of pupils. The school is addressing these matters.

Teachers are beginning to use information from the new tracking system to set targets for individual pupils and groups more effectively. These targets are more challenging than previously and are set to move progress from satisfactory to good. In the past, there has been no regular check on the quality of teaching and learning and there has been a limited programme of feedback and professional development for teachers. Systems for checking the school's work are now in place and subject coordinators are beginning to play a more active part in this process as their skills improve. These new arrangements to strengthen the school's leadership are already having a positive effect on planning and development, and contribute to the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

A good spiritual dimension is prominent in many aspects of school life. Through this, there is a strong emphasis on pupils' moral, social and cultural development. This underpins the school's high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils respond well and strong relationships develop between members of the community, contributing to a very harmonious atmosphere and good personal development and well-being. Parents recognise the very good levels of care for pupils. They find staff 'approachable and helpful' and school an environment where pupils feel 'respected and included'. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work and are particularly appreciative of the improved communication between school and home since the appointment of the new headteacher, valuing the new learning log, for example.

The school has developed good partnerships with other schools and organisations to promote its work. This has contributed particularly to enriching the opportunities available within the curriculum. The strong support of The Coppice School, for example, enables the school to provide a wide range of sporting activities. This good aspect of the school's provision is promoting healthy and active lifestyles for pupils and is contributing to their considerable enjoyment of school life.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and improving. Children enter the nursery with abilities generally below those expected for their age. This is particularly

noticeable in their language and social development. They settle into school well and make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage. This is due to the well-planned curriculum and satisfactory teaching. Strong emphasis is placed on the acquisition of language skills and practitioners give much time to discussion, role-play and group activities. This is already beginning to have a positive effect on the progress children make. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage, children are closer to the levels expected nationally in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are still below the expected levels in personal and social development and communication skills. The school has generous outdoor space for the Foundation Stage and a good supply of outdoor play equipment. Both are used well.

Good teamwork and recent changes to assessment procedures ensure that practitioners are gaining more information about the progress children make and are increasingly able to match the curriculum to their individual needs.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning for all groups of pupils by regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and providing feedback and professional development for teachers. Develop the role of subject leaders in this process.
- Embed the use of assessment data in planning so that pupils are set challenging targets.

A small proportion of schools where 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**

Standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1 have been below average, but they improved to average in 2007. Writing is now the weakest subject at both key stages and is the focus for improvement in the school's plan. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 6, but the school has rightly identified middle-ability pupils as making less progress than other groups. A number of strategies have been implemented recently to support these pupils. These are showing early signs of success, as in developing skills in writing, for example. Their success is having an impact on all pupils' achievement. A new system for the setting of targets for pupils is at an early stage of use.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have a good awareness of how to lead a healthy life. The content of most lunch-boxes reflects pupils' good eating habits. Pupils are active at break times, taking advantage of the activities and coaching which encourage purposeful play. This has led to improved behaviour in the playground. Their good behaviour comes from their understanding and acceptance of the 'Rainbow Rules' which they have helped to devise. Most pupils enjoy school, as demonstrated in improved levels of attendance. The great majority feel safe and show a good level of concern for the safety of others. Older pupils show good care and concern for younger ones in their role as buddies at break time. Pupils work together to build a better community, as shown by their commitment to raising funds for new windows for the school. They value these

opportunities to take responsibility and work with others developing sound skills to support their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The daily planning of lessons is good and increasingly takes account of pupils' differing abilities, including those of average ability. Teachers manage their classes well and there are good relationships between pupils and adults. In a good literacy lesson on Prince Cinders, pupils were motivated by the fast pace of the lesson. They behaved very well and were keen to contribute. Questioning in most lessons is good. Teaching assistants play a vital role in both teaching and learning and in supporting pupils with learning difficulties. The school is seeking to employ more of them to support further progress in learning across the school. Marking is improving and in many instances now helps pupils to make progress. Procedures for assessment are good. However, the school's tracking system is new and not quite complete and so teachers' ability to track the progress of all pupils is still a little limited. The school has not monitored the quality of teaching and learning regularly until recently. Consequently, opportunities for professional development have been limited.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils experience a broad, satisfactory curriculum, enriched by good additional activities. Emphasis for development has rightly been placed on pupils' skills in English and mathematics. Improvements are being made in speaking as a result of increased opportunities being presented to pupils within all lessons. Whilst daily planning is good, the curriculum is not always planned to ensure the development of skills across a range of linked subjects. However, 'focus' weeks planned for this year, for geography, for example, provides opportunities for the school to improve this. Provision in information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. As a result, pupils are making appropriate progress and reach the levels expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. The use of a music specialist for singing supports standards in this subject. After-school and lunchtime clubs provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

A caring, Catholic ethos permeates all of the school's work and has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. The parent questionnaire shows that parents are confident that their children are safe and well cared for in school. Health and safety issues are well noted and risk assessments are taken for all visits. Good procedures are in place to protect pupils. The Year 6 visit to the 'Crucial Crew' gave them much useful information concerning water, fire, road and personal safety. However, the guidance given through the school's assessment and tracking systems is not yet as good as it could be, although it is being developed. Now, teachers mark work more carefully, giving better advice to pupils on how they can improve. There is satisfactory support for pupils with learning difficulties and for those identified as gifted and talented. As a result, these pupils make the progress expected of them. However, there are occasions when pupils do not make better progress because there is no additional support in the classroom.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher has provided clear leadership for the school since her appointment last spring. With subject leaders, she has evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. Together with governors and her deputy, she has planned how to raise standards and develop the learning environment. These improvements have already had a considerable impact on the behaviour of pupils and they are beginning to show signs of increased achievement in learning. Systems are in place to check on the school's work, but leaders other than the headteacher are only just becoming involved in this. Effective systems for sharing assessment information with class teachers are in place and teachers are beginning to use these well to set suitable targets for pupils. There are subject coordinators for most subjects, but there are some significant gaps, for example, in numeracy. Coordinators are rapidly gaining skills as they benefit from recently introduced development opportunities. Governors know the school well. They have given sound support to senior staff in developing the agenda for improvement. They are excited by the promise of the 'new era' in the school.

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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?	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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	3
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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

27 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV11 2LT

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome on our recent visit to your school. I would like to share with you what we learned about the school.

- It is a satisfactory school and improving fast.
- You make satisfactory progress in your work and reach standards that are average.
- Your headteacher leads the school well and has introduced a number of improvements since her arrival.
- All staff care for you well and support you to do your best. As a result, you feel happy and safe in school.
- You eat healthily and know how to keep fit. You love taking part in the many activities on offer and these help you to stay healthy.
- The older pupils look after younger pupils well in the playground. You take responsibilities seriously and play a real part in making your community a happy one.
- You are finding the new targets helpful in your learning. We are asking your teachers to make sure that targets are always set and that they challenge you to make good progress in your work.
- We have asked all teachers, and particularly those who look after subjects, to regularly check the teaching to ensure that you make as much progress as possible in lessons.

I hope you will help your headteacher and the staff to put in place the plans to make the school even better.

Ruth Westbrook Lead inspector



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Lead inspector