

# Christ Church Church of England Controlled Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104893
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308700
<b>Inspection date</b>	4 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	428
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev T Rich
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr G Watts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 April 1998
<b>School address</b>	Brookhill Road Waterworks Street Bootle Merseyside L20 3JL
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 922 2136
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 922 2360

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the effectiveness of the school's efforts to boost boys' attainment in the Foundation Stage, especially in the areas of creative and physical development; the impact of the school's work to improve literacy skills in Key Stage 1; and the achievement of boys compared with girls. The inspector gathered evidence from the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data; the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes; parents' questionnaires; and observation of the school at work. Interviews were conducted with senior members of staff, the chair of governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in similar detail. The inspector found the school's assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, to be justified apart from its view of its overall effectiveness, which was judged good rather than outstanding.

## Description of the school

This large school is situated on the southern edge of town. The proportion of pupils eligible for school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A considerable number of pupils were admitted in April 2006 following the closure of four neighbouring schools. The school holds several awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the National Healthy Schools Award and the Sportsmark.

## 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 in which pupils are outstandingly cared for, guided and supported. Pupils are enabled to achieve well both academically and in their personal and social development. Parents and carers value highly the contribution the school makes to their children's progress. They recognise the exemplary care, guidance and support offered to their children and, in their words, 'the lengths staff go to meet the additional social and academic needs that pupils may have.'

Pupils make consistently good progress across Years 1 to 6. From below expected skill levels on entry to Year 1 they reach standards which are usually slightly above average by the end of Year 6. In recent years there has been a steady improvement in standards in both key stages. Standards were below average in Year 2 in 2007, but this was due to a higher than average number of lower-attaining boys in the year group. Standards in Year 2 are now average. In 2007 standards in Year 6 were maintained at the improved levels achieved in 2006. As several of the 2007 Year 6 pupils had recently joined the school with lower levels of attainment this represents good and in some cases exceptional achievement. Girls achieved very well in all subjects, but boys lagged behind in English. This difference in attainment levels is not a constant feature in Year 6. In the present Year 6, standards reached by both boys and girls are average. Although this reflects a small decline at the higher Level 5, it still represents good progress for these pupils. A significant factor in the school's successful quest to improve standards is the good quality of curricular planning for English, mathematics and science. Teachers are keen to try out new approaches and take effective action when areas for improvement are identified. New initiatives are trialled in one year group and efficiently evaluated before being rolled out to the other years. A good example of this is the Big Writing initiative, which has helped to raise standards of literacy in both key stages. This is now well established in classroom practice and in the minds of the pupils, who talk enthusiastically about its positive impact on developing their writing skills. The school's very successful commitment to pupils with additional needs is shown in the equally good progress pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy their education for two main reasons. First, the excellent support from the staff is very effective in boosting pupils' confidence and aspirations. Second, pupils take an evident pride in the quality of their work. This is because teachers require them to work hard, but also present lessons in a lively and enthusiastic way which fosters their enjoyment of their learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Older pupils make excellent use of the many opportunities they have to contribute to the school community. These include not only the school council, but also reading buddy and peer mentor schemes, which are well appreciated by younger pupils. Opportunities for younger pupils to play a full part in school life are more limited. Pupils are welcoming and polite and behave well. The good curriculum ensures that they have a good understanding of how to stay safe and demonstrate an excellent appreciation of healthy lifestyles, as reflected in their recent national awards. Excellent relationships with adults ensure that pupils are confident in sharing concerns with staff. The school implements a wide range of measures, including sanctions, to underscore the importance of regular attendance. It has some success in ensuring that irregular attendance does not seriously affect the achievement of pupils but a persistent hardcore of poor attenders ensures that, overall, attendance is satisfactory rather than good.

The school has developed a new system for tracking pupils' progress. This is enabling senior leaders to build more detailed profiles of pupils and to target and monitor more closely the programmes the school uses to consolidate the basic skills of pupils who need extra help. Links with other schools and other partners are exploited well to extend the curricular opportunities for pupils. A telling example of this is the work undertaken in school with Year 6 pupils by The Royal Shakespeare Company on Macbeth. The challenging targets for pupils' progress reflect the staff's strong aspirations for pupils. These targets are regularly met and often exceeded.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A key ingredient of this is the consistency in practice evident in all years. Teachers are experienced and energetic and have a good understanding of how children learn. Pupils' responsiveness helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills well. Pupils' good attitudes to, and enjoyment in, their learning are especially evident in practical activities, for example in science and Spanish. Teachers use a good range of resources and techniques expertly to capture pupils' interest and maintain their concentration. They plan well to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Individual targets for pupils are used well, especially in writing, to help pupils assess and contribute effectively to their learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets a very clear direction for the school, especially in curriculum development. The school's constant search for improvement has created a positive climate, where staff work well together and are very willing to learn from best practice elsewhere. This is then thoughtfully adapted to supplement national programmes, for example in literacy and numeracy. The staff are held closely accountable for the progress of their pupils and their professional development is purposefully linked to school priorities. The work of the school is organised well and its systems are reviewed efficiently to promote improvement. Although plans are in place to enhance middle leaders' monitoring role, the sharpness of their understanding of standards in their subjects is uneven. In part, this is a consequence of some new appointments. Some assessment data is, however, unclear and this inhibits middle leaders' capacity to account precisely for current standards. Child protection procedures are in place and arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet with the latest government guidelines. Other arrangements for ensuring pupils' health and safety are regularly reviewed and updated. Governors support the work of the school well and have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. The school has built well on its previous positive inspection report and demonstrates the capacity for a similar rate of improvement in the future. It provides good value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage provides a good education for its children. Often from low starting points, children make good progress overall in their learning. This is especially the case in mathematics and in their personal and social education, where children reach the nationally expected levels by the end of Reception. Even so, the vast majority, especially boys, are working below these levels in literacy, creative and physical development by the time they join Year 1. Staff have recognised these variations in attainment and are making many changes to address them. While there is some evidence both in Nursery and in Reception of the positive impact of these measures, it is far too early to assess the impact of others. Teachers successfully foster in children good attitudes to their learning. This helps children readily acquire and practise new skills, for example to learn new letters and sounds to promote their reading and writing. The curriculum provides a satisfactory mix of activities. All the interior areas of learning are carefully organised to help children reinforce their basic skills, but the limited size and facilities of the

outdoor area restrict opportunities for furthering children's creative and physical development. Staff take good care of the children. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

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

- Ensure that all the changes in The Foundation Stage become fully embedded in order for them to have the planned impact on the development of children's literacy, creative and physical skills.
- Ensure that middle leaders make use of up-to-date data to assist them in monitoring their subjects.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2

### 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?	1

<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>	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 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

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

Inspection of Christ Church Church of England Controlled Primary School, Bootle, L20 3JL

I am writing to thank you for your help when I visited your school recently and to tell you what I found out. You told me that you enjoyed your learning, especially the fun lessons. Your teachers have lots of energy and make sure you are also very active in your learning. I saw that, for example, in science and Spanish lessons and this is one of the reasons why you learn well.

Your school is good. After the good start you have in the Foundation Stage, your school helps you make good progress. The infants and juniors are getting to a higher standard in all their subjects, including in writing. You certainly know your 'Wow words!' The excellent way your school helps you grow in confidence and the very good opportunities for older pupils to help in the school community mean that most of you have very positive attitudes to school and life. You are very keen to answer your teachers' questions and take a real pride in your work. You accept the need to work hard and enjoy doing so. Your teachers play their part too. Apart from making your lessons fun, they know their subjects well and plan their lessons carefully to make sure everyone can learn at their own pace. They give you lots of opportunities to show what you know and can do. They make good use of your targets, especially in writing, and this also helps you to work out how you can improve. You told me you felt safe in school and that there was always an adult or peer mentor to call on, if needed.

Staff make things better for you and their efforts (and yours!) have been recognised by the awards you have achieved in the last few years. This, together with the fact that your school has improved well since its previous inspection, means your school continues to be in good hands. I have asked the headteacher to do three things to make your school even better.

- Make sure the changes going on in the Foundation Stage help children make faster progress in the areas they need to improve.
- Make sure subject leaders are using the most up-to-date information on your progress when they are checking the standards you reach in your work.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils who do not attend very regularly.

You can help by continuing to work hard, and in the case of some of you, attending more regularly.