

Christ The King RC Primary School Manchester

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105514
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	308878
Inspection dates	31 October –1 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Geoff Lawrence

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	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Very Reverened Father A Denny
Headteacher	Mr P Devlin
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Culcheth Lane Newton Heath Manchester Lancashire M40 1LU
Telephone number	0161 6812779
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Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools and offers full-time Nursery provision. The majority of pupils are from the local neighbourhood, which has considerable social disadvantage. Most are of White British background. The majority of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school holds the Healthy Schools Silver Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, in which the personal development and the care and support of pupils are strengths. As a result, good relationships exist at all levels and these encourage pupils to behave well. The school has a caring and welcoming atmosphere and provides a happy and safe place for pupils to learn. This is a view endorsed by the vast majority of parents.

During the last year, the school has been receiving support from the local authority (LA) because there has been evidence of underperformance as a result of a lack of rigour in the monitoring by senior leaders and subject coordinators of both pupils' progress and teaching and learning. Changes within the management team, coupled with assistance from the LA, are having the desired effect in helping to raise standards and address the previous underachievement. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress and achieving standards close to the national average.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with examples of good practice at the end of each Key Stage, but there is too little good or better teaching to raise standards quickly enough. Some teachers make better use of performance data but this needs to be developed further to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can. By contrast, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are monitored closely and this helps them to achieve well.

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used as an effective teaching tool. Some meaningful links are made between subjects but this is at an early stage of development. A strong focus on healthy lifestyles contributes well to pupils' good personal development. There is an appropriate focus on the basic skills. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available and this is popular with the pupils and adds to their enjoyment. Attendance is below average but the school has been successful in exceeding its local target because the comprehensive range of strategies it employs ensures that pupils come to school regularly.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Areas of weakness exist in the monitoring of pupils' progress and the role of subject leaders. There has been some improvement since the previous inspection and the school is working well in partnership with the LA. There is now a clear focus and plan of action to raise standards and achievement further and this indicates a satisfactory capacity to improve. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Satisfactory but improving provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to make a solid start to their education. They enter Nursery with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age in all areas except physical development and some aspects of mathematics. A high priority is given to developing positive attitudes through good personal, social and emotional provision. As a result, children settle quickly, enjoy coming to school and behave well.

Limited resources are used well and a wide range of activities is provided for children to develop their knowledge and skills. However, the outdoor curriculum is underdeveloped and this restricts learning opportunities. This has already been identified by the Foundation Stage manager. Her good leadership has already been responsible for the improving provision. For example, she has altered the way phonics is taught and this has led to an improvement in the way children link letters and sounds.

Close monitoring of children's progress helps staff set appropriate tasks, although they do not always take full advantage of the opportunity to develop children's speaking skills during adult-led activities.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, children's standards remain below those expected for their age except in mathematics and physical development, which are in line with national expectations. This represents satisfactory progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the outdoor curriculum in the Foundation Stage.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and increase the proportion of good teaching.
- Ensure that the teachers use all the information they have to set challenging work for all pupils so that they can make the best possible progress.
- Ensure that the monitoring of pupils' performance including by subject leaders is rigorous in identifying and addressing underperformance.

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

Standards have been below average in recent years but because of effective measures taken by the school in partnership with the LA they have started to rise. Pupils' work and school data show that pupils' outcomes are beginning to reflect the standards of which they are capable and all year groups are making at least satisfactory progress. In 2007, test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 improved in English, mathematics and science and are now close to the national average. Standards of the work produced by the present Year 6 pupils demonstrate that they are on track to meet challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because their progress is closely monitored, resulting in well targeted and focused learning support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' awareness of other cultures has improved since the previous inspection. This is the result of activities such as culture weeks, which have had a positive impact on pupils' understanding of lifestyles and beliefs of those whose culture is different from their own, not only in the school but also in the local community. They are also involved in contributing to a variety of local and national charities. Pupils are friendly, polite and say that they enjoy school. Their good behaviour contributes very well to the school's caring ethos. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and practise this well through sport and physical activities.

Attendance and punctuality are below average even though the school is doing all it can in this respect. Standards of basic skills in English, mathematics and ICT are broadly average and this means that pupils are in a satisfactory position to develop the skills needed for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to develop pupils' learning. Teachers plan and prepare their lessons carefully but some do not use the information on pupils' achievements well enough to set work that is challenging for all groups. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Conversely, in the better lessons teachers accurately assess pupils' progress and guide learning well. This motivates pupils and helps them to make better progress.

Marking of pupils' written work is inconsistent and rarely makes clear what is needed to improve. In contrast, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given clear guidance and support to help them achieve well. Teachers involve pupils well in discussions and make effective use of classroom support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with an appropriate emphasis placed on basic skills in mathematics, English and ICT. The school has recognised areas in the curriculum requiring development in order to raise standards further, for example, improving the opportunities for practical mathematics and science activities. Teachers are beginning to make meaningful links between subjects but this is at a very early stage of development. Pupils' learning is enriched by a range of visits and visitors and especially through close links with the church and local high school. For example, during the inspection, pupils took part in a performing arts session. This clearly promoted enjoyment and added to their cultural development. Many pupils enjoy taking part in a number of extra-curricular activities, such as sports and the choir.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care is good with strengths that support pupils' personal development and well-being. The monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress are not fully effective in identifying their needs. Pupils are involved in assessing their own work, but this is inconsistent across the school and most pupils are unaware of their targets or their next steps in learning.

Senior staff have a good awareness of the needs of those pupils who are most vulnerable and those at risk; as a result, these pupils receive high quality support and care. Their needs are clearly identified in comprehensive individual education plans. Regular reviews and close tracking are helping to move learning on and these pupils make good progress.

Pupils say they feel safe and that there is always someone they can talk to if they have a problem. Policies on child protection are in place and the school meets the latest Government requirements on safeguarding children, including those who are more vulnerable. Procedures for first aid and risk assessments are in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is working in challenging circumstances and the headteacher has placed care and personal development at the heart of school improvement. He knows the pupils well and has established strong links in the community. These strengths have contributed to the good personal development of pupils but there has not been a sharp enough focus on pupils' academic progress. This has resulted in standards falling in recent years.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. They have shown recent improvements due to changes in the management structure and intensive support from the LA. This assistance has been effective, resulting in improved standards in the latest national tests. A further consequence is that the senior leadership now has an accurate picture of the school's performance and a much sharper focus on pupils' academic achievement.

Subject leadership is inconsistent. The monitoring skills of most subject leaders are at an early stage of development. Most subject leaders are not yet fully effective in understanding performance data and how it relates to school improvement. Some individual leaders, however, are well informed and knowledgeable and have a good overview of their areas. The management of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very effective and consequently they make good progress.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors carry out their required duties and support the school's work. However, they are not fully effective in holding the school to account for any weaknesses, for example, the decline in standards following the previous inspection.

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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 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	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	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?	2

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	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

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

Thank you for making us welcome during the recent inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing you work. We were impressed by how friendly, polite and helpful you were towards us. We were pleased to hear you tell us about the many things that you enjoy in school. These are some of the things that we judged to be good in your school:

- adults in school make sure that you are safe, well cared for and happy when you come to school
- there are interesting things for you to do including after school clubs and lots of sport
- you understand the importance of healthy eating and taking lots of exercise.

There are many good things about your school, but we have asked your teachers to do some things to make it even better, and you can help. Most of you know that it is important to have good attendance. However, not all of you attend school as often as you could. You can help by making sure that you attend school every day and arrive on time because the more you attend school, the better chance you have of doing well.

We have also asked your teachers to try to make sure that all the teaching in your school is as good as the best that we saw. We would like them to use all the information the school has about you to keep a better track of how well you doing. This will enable teachers to plan work for you that will help you to get good results. We have also asked your school to improve learning outside for the children in Nursery and Reception.

Thank you once again for helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed our two days with you and we hope that you continue to work hard and enjoy school.