

# Churwell Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107820
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	309509
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ralph Higgs

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	456
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Jermaine
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Cliff Summers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Westwoodside Churwell Morley Leeds West Yorkshire LS27 9HR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 2527437
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 2145408

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school admits pupils from a mixed social area on the outskirts of a large conurbation. The number on roll has fallen substantially since the last inspection as the school has changed from taking three classes on entry to taking two. The majority of pupils are from relatively advantaged backgrounds and most are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. The school has experienced a considerable turnover of staff since the last inspection but this situation has now stabilised. A new headteacher took up post in September 2006. The school holds an award as a Healthy School. It also holds a local Inclusion Charter Mark and has recently gained the Stephen Lawrence award for its work on promoting racial awareness.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory and improving education. It has several good features. The new headteacher has provided good, decisive leadership which has rapidly reversed a trend of declining standards and growing underachievement. Standards by the end of Year 6 are now broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Governors and staff are united in moving the school forward and there is a clear focus on improving learning. Parents are strongly supportive of the school and the recent changes which have been made. The challenge for the school, which it fully recognises, is to sustain the momentum of recent advances to further raise standards and achievement. This is within the reach of the school as it has a good capacity to improve.

Although standards are rising they did not meet the very challenging targets which had been set prior to the new headteacher taking up post. A more robust system of assessment, including the improved tracking of pupils' progress, has now been established to set targets which are realistic and achievable. This process is now being used soundly to stretch pupils' performance. After a good start in the Foundation Stage, all groups of pupils make steady but somewhat uneven progress overall. However, despite the school's efforts to improve, the standards that boys reach in their writing are below average, which is reflected in their performance in national tests.

More settled staffing has contributed to this improving picture and ensured that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is some good teaching across the school but there are also some inconsistencies which restrict pupils' progress. Classrooms are bright and welcoming and teaching is often enthusiastic. However, learning activities are not always tailored effectively to the needs of different ability groups, and some lessons do not include enough opportunities for pupils to think sufficiently for themselves. Teachers are using the new attainment mapping system to set targets but pupils are not always clear about what to do to improve their work. The curriculum meets requirements and is enhanced by some well planned and stimulating activities.

Very good relationships and sensitive support from a caring staff strongly promote pupils' personal development, which is good. Pupils know that there is always someone to turn to if they need help. Pupils enjoy school a great deal as shown by their eager involvement in lessons and their good rate of attendance. They are keen to participate in the wide range of after-school clubs and activities provided. In lessons and throughout the school they behave maturely and safely. They readily take on responsibilities, such as participating in the school council. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit, as the school strongly promotes these qualities. Many pupils stay for nourishing lunches in 'Le Caf,'.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The school has strengthened its self-evaluation procedures and a wider range of staff and governors are involved in systematically checking performance than was previously the case. This has given the school a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. As these systems are at an early stage of being established and some staff are new to their leadership roles, some aspects of provision, such as the curriculum, have not been robustly evaluated. However, the school has pursued its most urgent priorities vigorously and rapid recent progress has been made in strengthening pupils' learning. This has brought about satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and enables children to make a secure start to school. When they first enter Nursery, children's knowledge, skills and understanding are typical of the age group. Staff understand the needs of young children well and plan lively activities which stimulate their curiosity and desire to learn. Teaching and learning are good. Children's development is assessed systematically and thoroughly. This information enables staff to provide the challenge and support children need in order to learn effectively and to make good progress. Excellent relationships and constructive guidance provide a solid foundation for children's personal, social and emotional development. Children work and play happily together, follow school routines sensibly and readily participate whenever the opportunity arises. In response to the constant encouragement children receive from staff, they talk, enquire and explain constantly and develop communication and language skills at a good pace. Provision in the Foundation Stage is managed well and there is smooth transition between Nursery and Reception.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in boys' writing.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning in order that pupils' progress is accelerated and standards are raised.
- Improve the use of assessment information to refine teachers' planning and to provide precise guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.

A small proportion of the 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

Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2007 were broadly average compared to the above average standards of previous years. The school recognised that teacher assessments had been overgenerous in the past and took effective action to establish a more robust and accurate assessment of standards. However, taking account of pupils' starting points and their capability, this represented satisfactory progress, which continues to be the case in current classes. In contrast, the end of Key Stage 2 unvalidated national test results sharply increased in 2007 in English, mathematics and science, and were similar to the national averages. While there was still some underachievement, particularly in boys' writing, this was much less marked than in the previous year. Pupils in Year 6 had a lot of catching up to do following a period when staffing instability had adversely affected the continuity of their learning. The evidence from internal school tracking data shows that all groups of pupils made satisfactory but variable gains from their starting points in each year group in Key Stage 2. Starting from this more secure basis, pupils' current progress is stronger than previously, although their achievement is no better than satisfactory.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school, citing its sporting achievements, the range of after school clubs and the friendly, caring atmosphere as the major reasons for this sense of pride. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop self-confidence, are polite and courteous and work well in pairs and small groups. They show a good understanding of life in a multicultural world, which stems from the work done in religious education, links with schools from other countries and themed Indian and African days. Attendance is consistently above the national average and unauthorised absence is minimal. In lessons, pupils have good attitudes to work. They work at a good pace and show determination to complete set tasks. Their good self-discipline is evident in lessons, playtimes and in the dining hall, where a strikingly calm, civilised atmosphere prevails. An active junior school council gives pupils good experience of working together for the benefit of the school community. Pupils in all year groups readily volunteer to act as 'buddies' for peers who feel isolated or lonely. Preparation for the workplace and later life is satisfactory. While pupils develop good social and computer skills, their progress in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and the information they provide for pupils is accurate and clear. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, making for a pleasant atmosphere. Lessons are typically prepared and resourced carefully and have clear objectives for what pupils are expected to learn. Lesson planning is comprehensive but is over-complex and detracts from teachers producing simple but clear final plans. In recent times, teachers' understanding and use of assessment to target and promote learning has improved. However, there are still occasions when the work has too broad a base, and some pupils, particularly higher attainers, are not challenged enough. Although most lessons move along at a lively pace, there are lessons in which the pace is too slow and pupils could achieve more. When given the encouragement to do so pupils readily ask questions and put forward their own ideas. However, in lessons dominated by the teacher's voice, pupils do as they are asked but do not have enough opportunity to develop the skills they need to become independent learners or to assess their work for themselves. Teaching assistants work well alongside class teachers and are particularly supportive of pupils with learning difficulties.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and has several good features. All the required subjects are taught. It is appropriately planned to meet the needs of all groups of pupils adequately. However, while recent improvements have strengthened provision for literacy and numeracy, some aspects are not built upon progressively as pupils move through the school.

Careful attention is paid to all, ensuring that all pupils have access to the learning the curriculum provides. There is also a good emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils find the information gained in subjects such as history, geography and science very interesting but opportunities for them to make decisions and tackle 'why' questions are not employed

enough. The curriculum is enhanced with a good range of educational visits and visitors to the school. These, along with a wide range of school clubs and other activities, broaden pupils' learning effectively.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, support and pastoral guidance provided for pupils is good. Any pupils experiencing difficulties with their behaviour or attendance are very well supported by adults, including the two learning mentors. Child protection requirements and health and safety procedures are well established and secure. Pupils rightly feel safe and very well cared for. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. Links with parents and outside agencies are used well to ensure that pupils get the support they need. Pupils are well supported when they join school and prior to transfer to secondary school. A group of Year 6 pupils fully endorsed a girl's perceptive comment that, 'You can count on a lot of people around here'. Recent improvements to assessment are enabling teachers to provide pupils with more accurate information about their progress. However, the school is at an early stage of involving pupils with assessing their learning and in guiding them how to improve through the consistent use of targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Staff have responded well to the new headteacher's drive and determination to raise the school's sights for pupils' achievement. At the heart of this is a more rigorous analysis by senior staff and governors of the data on the school's performance, and a closer check of the quality of teaching and learning. More sharply focused performance management has been effective in moving the school forward. Subject and team leaders have begun to take part in these processes and they demonstrate a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the direction that the school is now taking. New initiatives such as that to improve the use of assessment have been led effectively. Governors have contributed strongly to a new strategic improvement plan and have revised their procedures to enable them to hold the school to account and contribute more effectively to raising standards. Financial management has been put on to an even keel and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

The school has placed a high priority on consulting with parents and in working more closely with the local family of schools and the local authority. These links are proving to be productive. For example, parents are pleased with the increase in the level of information they are receiving about their children's progress. Also, teachers' understanding of standards in mathematics and English has been improved by working alongside other schools and external consultants.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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	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	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

<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**

Inspection of Churwell Primary School, Leeds, LS27 9HR.

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspection team when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed our discussions with you, which were very helpful.

These are the good things we found out about your school, which provides you with a satisfactory and improving education.

- We agree with you that school is enjoyable and that the school is friendly and caring.
- The youngest children do well in Nursery and Reception.
- Our visits to lessons showed that you work hard and are keen to learn.
- You behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- You clearly know how to lead healthy lives and how to keep safe.
- The staff are always on hand to help you if needed.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to improve your education.

To help you even more we have asked your school to:

- help the boys improve their writing - but the boys will have to try hard to do this
- find ways to make teaching and learning good in all lessons and set you higher challenges to help you do as well as possible
- improve how staff help you understand how to reach the next level in your work.

Once again, thank you for being so helpful towards us. I know that you will continue to do your best to help the school continue to improve.