

# Christchurch Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113733
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	311352
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Faysal Mikdadi

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	539
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Campbell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Clarendon Road Christchurch BH23 2AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 485579
<b>Fax number</b>	01202 484531

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 October 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	311352

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Christchurch is a large junior school. Pupils are mostly White British, with a very small number of minority ethnic children. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Christchurch Junior is a good school that has made significant improvements since its last inspection. Parents speak highly of the provision made. One parent exemplified this satisfaction by saying, 'The school has improved and my child is very happy'. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, who is given effective support from the senior team, subject leaders and governors. A good monitoring and evaluation system has had a positive impact on improving teaching and learning. This, in turn, has helped improve pupils' achievement, which is now good across the school as pupils make good progress from their below average starting points. All adults share the same ambitious vision for improvement and they have created a happy and warm learning environment. Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have put well- judged measures in place to make improvements. The recent focus on literacy has had a good impact on raising standards in English. Those in mathematics have also risen, though to a lesser extent. Improvements in science have lagged behind. The school recognises this and has made the subject a priority in its planning.

Pupils greatly enjoy being at school. Amongst the many reasons for this are the high number of enrichment activities and the fact that learning in lessons is varied. Pupils feel very safe and are well cared for. They understand extremely well how to lead a healthy lifestyle and they eat well. Personal development opportunities are good. The quality of teaching and of the curriculum contributes well to the pupils' good progress. Expectations are clear and well matched to pupils' learning needs, lessons are interesting, and pupils know what they need to do in order to improve their work further. The development of the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy is at the heart of the school's planning, and the enrichment programme motivates pupils. They do not make enough use of information and communication technology (ICT) in their day-to-day learning, which restricts the development of their ICT skills. This has been identified by the school as a priority for development.

The trend of test results was downwards over the past four years and they were below average in 2006. In order to reverse this trend, the school has focused on supporting teachers to concentrate on ways to accelerate the pupils' learning. This has pushed standards up again and the provisional results were once more broadly average in 2007. The performance of more able pupils also improved but not at the same rate as that of others, which is something that the school recognises and is dealing with.

The good monitoring and evaluation, the effective leadership and management, the strong support of governors and the commitment of staff mean that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- improve standards in science by having a stronger focus on giving pupils more opportunities to carry out practical work to enhance their investigative skills
- stretch more able pupils so that more of them attain the higher levels in their tests at the end of Year 6
- improve pupils' ICT skills by integrating the use of computers into their learning in more subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The progress of pupils has improved over the past year and they now achieve well across all year groups. After a four year decline, the attainment in the 2007 National Curriculum tests rose and was once again broadly average. Since the pupils' attainment on entry to the school was below average, this represents good progress. Current standards show that pupils are set to attain their challenging targets. The school's main success in 2007 was in raising attainment in English. Test scores improved in mathematics also, but remained slightly below average. Science was the least improved subject, reflecting weaknesses in pupils' investigative skills. The school has worked very hard to improve standards especially in English. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities perform well for their abilities. Although test results have improved, few pupils attain the higher levels. The school recognises the weaknesses in science and the attainment of the more able pupils, and well- judged measures are in place to deal with these issues.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Christchurch Junior School feels very safe to pupils because they always 'look out for each other', as one said, and they are confident that staff will take good care of them if they are hurt, upset or need advice. In practical lessons and out of school, they know that if they obey instructions they will not be in danger. They are not always confident about recognising safe or dangerous actions for themselves. Shy or slightly withdrawn pupils are happily accepted by the school and befriended by other pupils. Pupils who attend lessons in the base feel very well encouraged and supported.

Spiritual development is encouraged through assemblies and by the atmosphere in the school. Pupils have opportunities to consider moral issues and have an increasing feel for right and wrong choices. They also develop their ability to work together without arguing, to listen and respect others' views. Trips out of school improve their social skills. The pupils make a good contribution to their community. There are many positions of responsibility which they can and do apply for. Pupils help organise and run activities to help the school, the environment, the local community and national charities. The School Council makes sure that pupils' opinions are heard but they are not yet involved in decision-making.

Pupils have a very positive attitude towards their school, shown by their good attendance and their excellent behaviour in lessons and at playtime. They enjoy most lessons and feel that their teachers try hard to make all subjects fun. They also appreciate the range of clubs and sporting activities available.

Pupils know all about healthy eating and try to eat their five-a-day helpings of fruit and vegetables. The daily exercise on the 'Trim Trail' gives them a regular workout in addition to physical education lessons. Pupils make good progress in basic skills, including handling money, and they are beginning to develop thinking and problem- solving skills. This gives them a good foundation for their future working life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The good teaching enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers know what they expect pupils to learn and their explanations are clear so that pupils are confident about tackling their work. Teachers' planning is good, reflecting their accurate assessment of pupils' next steps in learning. The impact of good teaching is shown in the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and in their exemplary behaviour. Often, teachers know when to intervene with well-judged questions and when to stand back and let pupils work things out for themselves. Teaching assistants are well briefed and provide good support, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties. Occasionally, the pace of learning is not sufficiently brisk and opportunities are missed to check pupils' understanding through probing questions. In addition, the most capable pupils sometimes mark time because their work is too easy.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

A strong and effective emphasis is given to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but the school also takes care to provide a broad range of worthwhile learning experiences. For example, pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music and from many opportunities to develop skills in playing instruments. In addition, a wide range of activities foster pupils' physical development. Provision for pupils' personal development is a key strength, and pupils are given clear guidance about how they can help themselves to learn. In science, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their investigation skills and the most capable pupils require more challenging tasks in order to accelerate their progress. Resources for ICT have been recently improved but pupils make too little use of computers to support their learning in other subjects.

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of educational visits, visitors and school clubs. These are greatly enjoyed by pupils. For example, Year 3 pupils talk enthusiastically about a Victorian day at school, which was led by an actor, and a subsequent visit to a museum on Victorian domestic life. 'Much better than just learning from books,' remarked one pupil.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils are given very good care, support and encouragement. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and appropriate records kept. Illnesses and accidents are very efficiently dealt with, parents and staff are kept well informed of medical problems and records are concise but detailed. Excellent support is available from the Pastoral Care Worker for pupils with social or emotional problems. When necessary, outside agencies are well used. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored. Strategies to improve attendance further have begun to show results. The behaviour policy is clear so that staff and pupils all know the consequences of different unacceptable behaviours. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves in lessons and to take on responsibilities around the school. Pupils are set targets in English and mathematics which has helped them improve their performance. The school's new system for tracking attainment, identifying underachievement and comparing the progress of different groups is proving effective. This has recently enabled the school to identify underperformance by the more able. Pupils have clear targets in English and mathematics and these have contributed to raising

standards. This good practice is not consistently replicated in science. The majority of parents feel that the school keeps them well informed and involved in their children's education but a number do not feel that their views are taken into account.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has provided a strong lead with a clear focus on improving learning and raising standards. She has been instrumental in improving monitoring and evaluation with the help of an able and supportive senior team and fully involved governing body. Parents speak highly of the improvements made, as shown by one typical comment: 'Since the last Ofsted inspection, positive changes have been implemented in the school'.

As a result of the good leadership across the school, everyone works in collaboration with each other and shares the same clear vision for improvement which has made such a difference to pupils' achievement. Planning is effective and subject co-ordinators make a major contribution to improvements made in their subject areas. The strong focus on literacy over the last year has paid off. Senior leaders and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and are focused on elements that need to improve, such as standards in science, the attainment of more able pupils and the use of ICT across subjects.

Links with parents and the local community are good. Governors are involved in monitoring and evaluating and they give good support as well as challenge senior leaders.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### 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

### 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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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>	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christchurch Junior School, Christchurch, BH23 2AA

Thank you very much for making our recent visit to your school so enjoyable and for talking to us about your school.

You told us that you liked your school. We understand why because yours is a good school. It has many things about it that are good:

- you achieve well because you work hard and enjoy your lessons very much
- standards have improved and are broadly average
- you are well taught and your teachers help you to make improvements in your work
- you get many chances to do interesting things both in and out of the classroom
- your behaviour is excellent and you are kind and polite with each other and with the adults around you
- your school is well led, which has helped in making it good.

We have told your school what needs to be done next to make it even better:

- standards in science need to get better through teachers giving you more chances to carry out investigations
- the school should help more of you to get to Level 5
- you should be given more chances to use ICT in lessons.

Once again, thank you for all your help during our visit. We wish you the very best for the future.

Faysal Mikdadi Lead inspector



10 October 2007

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Christchurch Junior School, Christchurch, BH23 2AA**

Thank you very much for making our recent visit to your school so enjoyable and for talking to us about your school.

You told us that you liked your school. We understand why because yours is a good school. It has many things about it that are good:

- you achieve well because you work hard and enjoy your lessons very much
- standards have improved and are broadly average
- you are well taught and your teachers help you to make improvements in your work
- you get many chances to do interesting things both in and out of the classroom
- your behaviour is excellent and you are kind and polite with each other and with the adults around you
- your school is well led, which has helped in making it good.

We have told your school what needs to be done next to make it even better:

- standards in science need to get better through teachers giving you more chances to carry out investigations
- the school should help more of you to get to Level 5
- you should be given more chances to use ICT in lessons.

Once again, thank you for all your help during our visit. We wish you the very best for the future.

Faysal Mikdadi  
Lead inspector