

Christ Church Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100610
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	323309
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2008
Reporting inspector	John Laver

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	186
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Tim Jeffreys
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy Jacobs
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Cancell Road North Brixton London SW9 6HN
Telephone number	020 7735 1343

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2008
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Fax number

020 7840 0692

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The pupils come predominantly from several minority ethnic groups. Almost half of the pupils learn English as an additional language and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with a range of learning difficulties, encompassing emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as difficulties with literacy and numeracy, is well above average. A high proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times. Two years ago the school federated with the much larger Rosendale Primary School, and both schools are led by the same executive headteacher. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in its Reception class and its recently opened Nursery class. The school is in the process of being rebuilt on the existing site.

There is a privately run Children's Centre on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Christ Church Primary is an improving school and provides a satisfactory standard of education. This is due to a lot of hard work by all staff and also the outstanding personal contribution of the executive headteacher. She ensures that there is a shared vision for continued improvement and provides the determination to sustain it. The school has had to get to grips with a challenging legacy of staff instability, inconsistencies in teaching, the low self-esteem of many pupils and limited parental involvement. There is still a legacy of some underperformance. Therefore, the school is very conscious that it cannot relax its efforts. The close links provided by the federation contributes much of the driving force for the improvement that is taking place. The federation's work, for example in modelling best practice and supporting teachers at Christ Church, is having a perceptible effect on attitudes and progress.

Pupils join Year 1 with below average expectations for their age. The test results are for small cohorts of pupils and therefore can exaggerate trends in performance. Nevertheless the results have demonstrated variable standards in recent years. The most recent 2008 unvalidated national test results showed significantly below average standards. Many pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times, and those joining the school are often at an early stage of learning English. Achievement has been variable. It has been adversely affected by factors such as poor attendance and inconsistent teaching. The school has reduced some, although not all, of the inconsistencies in teaching. However, many pupils have had a lot of ground to make up, particularly those pupils who underachieved lower down the school.

Parents and pupils testify to the fact that Christ Church is an inclusive school. Pupils' personal development has improved and is now good. This provides a better platform for the next stage of improving academic achievement. Many pupils enjoy coming to school, benefiting from the more imaginative topic-based curriculum. Behaviour and attitudes towards learning are improving, and pupils confirm that they feel safe in school. There is good care and support for all pupils. The school has developed thorough assessment systems, enabling the tracking of individual pupils' progress. However, some teachers use this information better than others when providing the level of challenge in the classroom necessary for pupils to make good progress. Teachers' emphasis on encouraging pupils to be more independent and to take responsibility for their own learning is also variable. Nevertheless, the overall quality of teaching has improved.

Since the previous inspection, the school has addressed areas of concern such as the role of teaching assistants, which is now better defined. This improvement, in challenging circumstances, and combined with the leadership's rigorous monitoring and its vision and planning for future success, gives the school a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well in the EYFS, where many start with well below average expectations. Both the Nursery and the Reception class cope well with the constraints of new building work to ensure that children's learning is not interrupted and they make good progress in acquiring knowledge and skills. Despite this good progress, children's standards are below expectations for their age group by the time they leave Reception. Staff in the well-resourced Nursery successfully settle children quickly into everyday routines and ensure that they feel secure and

valued; consequently their social and emotional development and behaviour are good. In Nursery and Reception teachers and other staff assess children regularly and monitor progress, so that learning activities are well matched to children's needs. The school has good relationships with parents and it makes good use of outside agencies, for example the speech therapy service, to support children and their families when appropriate. Leadership and management of EYFS are good, successfully raising staff awareness of strengths and areas for development. The latter include providing more opportunities for children to initiate activities themselves, developing independence and making more creative use of the outdoor areas.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that it matches the quality of the best in raising expectations and making better use of assessment in the classroom.
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills in order to help them learn more consistently.
- Further improve attendance so that all pupils share in the improved progress.

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

Pupils currently leave the school by the age of 11 with standards which, although improving, remain below average. Overall achievement is satisfactory for pupils of all levels of ability. There are no significant differences in the overall progress of pupils coming from minority ethnic groups, nor are there significant differences in the overall progress of pupils with English as an additional language, or of those with learning difficulties. Older pupils often make the most progress, while the more varied progress of younger pupils partly reflects greater variations in the quality of teaching and learning lower down the school. The school caters well for the significant proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school other than at the usual times, so that these pupils are not too disadvantaged. This success reflects the good quality of care and support that the school provides. Although the school does not set particularly challenging targets, progress is slowly improving, due in some part to improvements in teaching and in pupils' attitudes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. For example, pupils have a good understanding of cultural differences, because the school takes full account of pupils' varied backgrounds and makes good use of varied resources to develop their understanding of what it means to live in both a local and global community. Behaviour and attendance have both improved, although attendance remains too low. Pupils report that they feel safe in school. The school has acquired Healthy Schools status, and pupils understand why it is important to look after their health. There is an active school council, and pupils appreciate the fact that it has a budget. They enjoy discussing with their classmates how this budget can be spent! Otherwise, pupils have more limited opportunities to develop the responsibility and independence, and increasing these opportunities would make them better prepared for the next phase of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school has worked hard to reduce the impact of instability in staffing and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. There are signs of some success, with a decline in the amount of inadequate teaching. Teachers are benefiting from good opportunities for professional development, often provided by colleagues within the federation. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Where teaching is good, teachers manage their classes well, make learning objectives clear to pupils and use teaching assistants well to support pupils with learning difficulties. However, there are still inconsistencies in teaching: sometimes teachers are too controlling and do not give pupils the opportunity or confidence to learn actively and independently, and this restricts the learning particularly of more able pupils. Occasionally teachers do not manage behaviour well, and the quality of marking and teachers' expectations are inconsistent, so that pupils do not get clear indications of how to raise their work to the next level.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A strength of the curriculum, planned jointly within the federation, is the range of visits, which extend pupils' learning and enjoyment. For example, they talk enthusiastically about their visit to the Imperial War Museum as part of a history topic. There is a comprehensive programme in place for personal, social, health and emotional development, and the school provides good opportunities for teaching physical education and modern languages. However, pupils would welcome more opportunities for clubs, particularly in sport. The school is now putting more emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy across a range of subjects or topics, and this is beginning to have a positive impact on the progress of some pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has secure child protection arrangements in place and pupils are rightly confident that the school will deal promptly with any personal difficulties they may encounter. Christ Church is an inclusive school, which identifies vulnerable pupils early and gives good support, whether it is for language development, 'catch-up' work in improving learning skills or dealing with a wide range of emotional or other learning issues. The school has developed a rigorous system of assessing pupils and tracking pupils' academic progress, although teachers do not use this information consistently to provide the appropriate level of support and challenge in the classroom.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Strategic planning for improvement is based upon an accurate appraisal of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher has been very effective in implementing a well-structured programme of monitoring and professional development, which has raised expectations and is developing the expertise of all staff. Governors provide a good level of

challenge and support to the senior leadership team. A minority of parents feel that the school does not take enough account of their views, but the school is working hard to engage parents in pupils' learning, and the results are beginning to pay off, for example in improved behaviour and attitudes towards learning. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Not only does the school have a high profile in the surrounding community, but many pupils show an impressive awareness of issues such as the environmental concerns which affect both Europe and the world beyond.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	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**

01 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church Church of England Primary School, London, SW9 6HN

Thank you for welcoming us so politely into your school and letting us see you at work and enjoying yourselves in the playground. We appreciated your enthusiasm in telling us about how much you enjoyed coming to school, and in particular how much you like the many school trips which the school arranges for you.

Christ Church Primary provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. The school has improved during the last two years, mostly due to the hard work of the teachers, other staff and the excellent leadership of your headteacher. Although your test results are often not as good as they might be, we know that many of you are beginning to make more progress with your work than before. Behaviour has improved. More of you now attend school regularly, although attendance could still be higher. You have a good understanding of what goes on in the world around you and most of you understand why it is important to eat healthily and take regular exercise. We agree with you when you tell us that the school makes you feel safe and deals very well with any problems that you might have. Your teachers often teach you well, particularly when they give you interesting things to do, encourage you to talk about your work and plan activities well. Sometimes some of you do not learn quite as well when the work is too easy or teachers do not make it clear exactly what you should do to improve your work even more.

We have asked the school to improve three things. One is for teachers to make sure that you always have the right level of work, so that you can achieve even more. You can also help by always trying your hardest. We have also asked teachers to give you more opportunities to develop skills on your own, so that you become more independent and confident. Lastly, although the school works hard to encourage you all to come to school, we want even more of you to attend regularly.

Once again, thank you for your welcome and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Laver

Lead Inspector