

Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101035
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	323394
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Raminder Arora

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)	215
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	Father Geoffrey Owen
Headteacher	Mrs Colette Morris
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Batten Street Battersea London SW11 2TH
Telephone number	020 7228 2812
Fax number	020 7228 0747

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils at Christ Church come from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being African or African-Caribbean. Over half speak English as an additional language. Many children come from a Christian background, but other faiths are also represented. Almost a half of the pupils come from homes where the first language is not English and many pupils are new to English when they start school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. These include mainly speech and language or behavioural and emotional difficulties. A very high proportion is eligible for free school meals. An on-site breakfast club is managed by the school. There have been significant staffing changes over the last two years. A new headteacher was appointed in April this year.

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 School is a satisfactory school. Pupils from all backgrounds and abilities are included successfully in school life. They are happy because good partnerships exist between the staff, outside agencies and others to support learners' well-being. The parents are positive and very supportive of the school's work. One parent reflected the majority view, 'My boys love going to school and adore their teachers.' This is because the school's leadership welcomes all pupils warmly and values each one as a unique individual.

Overall standards in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Year 6. However, pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6, given their low attainment on entry. Many have much ground to make up, especially in literacy, when they start school. They are given a sound start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school's new leadership has taken clear and determined action to raise standards. There is a tight focus on developing literacy skills across the school, particularly writing, which is the weakest of all areas. Effective measures, such as the systematic teaching of phonics and letter sounds throughout the school, are starting to have a good impact.

Pupils make sound progress because teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school's leadership monitors pupils' progress and attainment carefully, using a new tracking system which is proving to be effective. This ensures that any underachieving pupils are identified early. Teachers use demonstration well and so pupils learn through a structured approach. However, staff do not have consistently high expectations of all pupils and do not use assessment well enough to match work to different abilities. Consequently, some pupils lose interest and those who find learning easy are not fully challenged. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those new to English, make satisfactory progress alongside their peers, because the suitably skilled teaching assistants are thoughtfully deployed to support them. Pupils report that they feel safe and know who to go to if they are in need of help. The leadership team is aware of the need to improve target setting and to provide pupils with academic guidance in order to help them develop as independent learners and to know how to improve.

Personal development is good. Pupils behave well and show good levels of cooperation when working with their peers. Along with their satisfactory basic skills, this prepares them soundly for life in the future. Pupils show a good understanding of how to be fit and healthy. The curriculum is appropriately planned to provide a variety of activities. However, the time allocated to different subjects is not organised properly, so pupils do not get a balanced enough experience of all areas. In some classes, too much time is given to literacy in the week, and small groups are constantly withdrawn from lessons to attend music or information and communication technology (ICT) lessons.

Satisfactory leadership and management have brought about improvements since the last inspection. For example, pupils now have better opportunities to develop their speaking skills, through talking partners and role play. The new headteacher provides a clear vision for the school. Governors work appropriately with staff and challenge the school thoughtfully. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and of the areas requiring improvement. Well-focused strategies have already had a good impact on improving pupils' progress this year. One parent wrote, 'Christ Church is a newly inspired school that I am truly honoured to be part of.' Staff working at all levels share a unity of purpose. The school has built up a sound capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children join the school with a range of skills and capabilities that are low for their age. They make satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning goals but still have below-average skills in speaking, reading and writing by the end of Reception. Caring support and warm relationships ensure that children make friends, treat each other and adults with respect, and become happy, confident learners. One parent typically wrote, 'I am glad I chose this school, my child is doing so well.' Children settle into established routines quickly and are keen to contribute to the community, including helping to tidy up, taking turns and sharing resources. Adults ensure that children develop their skills in all areas of learning and plan interesting activities. Nursery children were seen enjoying role play in the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Some used clay to make the three bears and their house. However, opportunities to extend and consolidate children's literacy and numeracy skills are sometimes restricted in the outdoor areas and this limits their progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Satisfactory processes are in place to assess children's skills and strengths when they join the Nursery and Reception classes. Records of continuous observation are kept in order to track children's progress. This information is used particularly well in Reception where additional adults effectively support small groups and work is closely matched to children's individual needs. There is a sound balance between adult-led tasks and children's self-selected activities. Letters and sounds (phonics) are emphasised well to support children's reading.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils' learning targets are set and used effectively to raise standards and accelerate progress in all subjects, particularly in writing.
- Make sure that all teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils, especially the more able.
- Ensure a balanced use of pupils' learning time in all areas of the curriculum.

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

Overall standards in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but this represents satisfactory progress given the pupils' starting points. In 2008, the results declined, particularly in reading at the end of Year 2 and in English at the end of Year 6. This has been due mainly to turbulence in staffing. This year the school has focused on literacy - pupils' weakest area when they arrive - with notable success, so that progress is now satisfactory overall. Teachers' most current assessments show that measures such as intensive group support and talking partners, to promote speaking and listening, have been effective in improving achievement in English, especially in Years 3 to 6. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is slower than in later years because of the organisation of time given to different subjects. The leaders are aware of this and have introduced better guidance for teachers and an improved literacy curriculum.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy coming to school and form strong relationships with adults and with each other. One parent commented, 'I wish I had more children to send to this school.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Caring for others, self-esteem and inclusive attitudes are well promoted through assemblies. Religious education topics promote pupils' understanding of multicultural Britain. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy and know the importance of regular exercise. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoy playing cricket at break-time. Pupils live active lives and know how to be safe. They make sound contributions to the school community. The early morning gardening club meets regularly to tend the school's vegetables, herbs and strawberries growing in the raised beds. They are proud of the radishes that have recently been harvested. Pupils have a voice through their active school council. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is satisfactory and steadily improving because the school is using a determined approach to follow up on absenteeism.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In the best lessons, teaching is well structured and focused to meet the needs of pupils. The teachers employ a variety of teaching styles, including the use of ICT, to make lessons interesting. In a science lesson, as a result of enthusiastic teaching, pupils learnt about circuits and were excited that they were able to make their bulbs light and the buzzers buzz. Good practice of this kind is beginning to drive up the quality of teaching. In most lessons, the support staff provide skilled help to benefit pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Despite these good features, in other lessons pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should. This is because the information from pupils' assessments is not used well to plan lessons effectively. As a result, there is sometimes a mismatch of work and insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. The quality of marking is uneven because it does not always make clear to pupils how to improve their work. Some pupils have targets but these are not always used to help pupils move up to the next level in their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

All subjects are suitably planned through topic work. A high emphasis is placed on daily literacy and numeracy sessions. However, in some classes too much time is allocated to literacy and not enough to other subjects to ensure an appropriate balance. ICT skills are satisfactorily promoted through small teaching groups but pupils participating in these often miss out on learning another subject back in the classroom. The pupils thoroughly enjoy all the projects planned for them, for example the Tudors and St Lucia. They talk about artwork and music activities they have enjoyed, which are linked to these topics. Pupils learn about modern Britain when benefiting from opportunities such as the celebration of Black Heritage Month. The curriculum is supported by a suitable range of well-attended after-school clubs, for example drumming and keyboards, as well as inter-school sports. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' achievements successfully in all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' health, welfare and safety are robust and there are good links with outside agencies to support pupils who need extra help and guidance. Pupils say that behaviour has improved and bullying is rare. They have a clear understanding of what to do if bullying occurs. Vulnerable pupils are adequately supported and there are appropriate transition arrangements to support pupils transferring to secondary schools. New systems are in place to track pupils' progress through the school. This is proving effective as a tool to check pupils' achievements regularly. However, target setting is not fully established. The targets set are not used effectively to support pupils' understanding of how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a good knowledge and understanding of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. She is well supported by her deputy head. Together they identified the reasons for the dip in last year's national test results and put in place a raft of initiatives to try to avoid a recurrence of it. There are signs of success. The focus has been very much on improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning through consistent monitoring and evaluation. Subject leaders have clear direction to lead their subjects and develop their own expertise, keeping up to date with current practice. Satisfactory links exist with the local community and plans are in place to strengthen the school's links with the global community. Pupils currently benefit from links with a school in South Africa. Parent questionnaires and pupil surveys form an important part of the school's self-evaluation procedures. These are satisfactory overall because subject leaders have limited opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching or lesson planning in their subjects. Governors have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have formalised their methods of holding the school to account and fully support the staff in their efforts to improve standards.

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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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/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	3
The extent to which 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	3
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?	3

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

06 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School, London, SW11 2TH

I am writing to let you know the findings from our recent inspection of your school. Thank you for your hospitality and thoughtfulness during our visit. Please will you pass on our thanks to the children who took the time to speak with us and were happy to let us look at their work. You go to a happy and friendly school which you enjoy a lot and where your teachers want you to do well. We feel it is giving you a satisfactory standard of education.

Positive things about your school include the following.

- You make satisfactory progress in the school.
- You concentrate and behave well.
- You really enjoy all the things you do at school.
- Your headteacher and senior teachers have sound ideas about how to improve the school.
- Teaching is satisfactory and the staff work hard to make lessons interesting.
- A good partnership is in place between the school and others to care for you.
- Your teachers support you well and listen to you thoughtfully.

We have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The school is going to make sure that you all have learning targets and know how to improve your work. Second, your teachers are to have high expectations of all of you, especially those who find learning easy and need harder work. Finally, your school is going to make sure that in all subjects there is sufficient time for you to learn new skills.

Continue to listen carefully, come to school everyday and enjoy all the super things you are learning at Christ Church School.

Yours faithfully

Raminder Arora

Lead Inspector