

Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105935
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	324299
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Colin Smith

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)	202
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	Mr D Morley
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Orrell
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Nelson Street Patricroft Eccles Manchester M30 0GZ
Telephone number	0161 921 1955
Fax number	0161 789 4531

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is average in size. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is more than twice the national average, indicating the degree of social disadvantage within the area served by the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number are from African, Asian, Polish or mixed heritage backgrounds. Very few of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided for children aged from three to five. The last two years have seen extensive staffing changes. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007, the assistant headteacher one year later along with three newly qualified teachers. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award.

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's overall effectiveness and the value for money provided are satisfactory. However, under the enlightened guidance of newly appointed leaders, the school is improving rapidly and standards are rising. Good care, support and guidance are exerting a strong influence on pupils' self-belief and aspirations. In addition to ensuring that they are fully safeguarded, through good links with parents and outside agencies, pupils' attitudes, interest and enjoyment in learning are developing strongly. Their personal development is good. They are proud of their school, well behaved and appreciative of the good, rich and diverse curriculum offered. They want to be a part of the school's resurgence. Parents and pupils recognise and value the improvements made over the previous two years. Comments such as, 'Staff are very caring', 'Children are happy,' and 'Their learning is improving,' typify parents' views.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, although not consistent in every class, it is improving. From a low starting point, children make a good start in Nursery and Reception. Standards across the school are currently below average in English, mathematics and science. However, in response to higher expectations and more challenging targets, there is a notable improvement this year in the proportion of pupils working at the levels expected for their age. In Year 6 standards are very close to national averages in English and mathematics. Improving pupils' writing is proving more difficult, particularly lower down the school. Although there is some improvement, standards in writing are still not as high as they should be.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but improving. Much of the teaching is good and occasionally outstanding but it is not consistently good in every class. Lessons are purposeful, well planned and pupils know what they are expected to learn. However, not all teachers make equally good use of assessment to ensure a high level of challenge for the more able pupils. There are occasions when teachers talk for too long and pupils are not given sufficient time to practise and improve their skills. Some of the marking of pupils' work is excellent but pupils are not always given clear pointers to help them to improve. Senior staff are very aware of these inconsistencies and are working hard to eliminate them.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is more to do to eliminate the inconsistencies but no lack of commitment to the task. The new headteacher has raised the bar, put in place a coherent and effective system to check the work of the school, identify weaknesses and make improvements. This information is shared honestly and forthrightly. This is why the school's self-evaluation is accurate and largely confirmed by the findings of the inspection. The only areas of difference are where the inspection team judges that the school is actually doing better than the school's self-evaluation indicates. This is because the headteacher is cautious and not easily persuaded that improvements are complete until all of the inconsistencies have been removed. This is what gives the school its good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children begin Nursery with knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy and social development. Although, by the end of Reception their attainment is still below that expected for their age in all six areas of learning, they have made good progress and have achieved well in relation to their starting points. The calm, reassuring atmosphere helps children to settle quickly. They are well behaved and safety conscious, without

being fearful. They play cooperatively and take responsibility for small tasks. Teaching is good. High-quality planning ensures a good balance of activities led by adults and those chosen by children themselves. Children's responses are carefully observed and assessed to ensure that the next steps are clearly identified and children's individual needs are catered for. Nursery and Reception staff play a vital role in identifying children's learning and welfare needs. Difficulties are acted upon swiftly, not least through the rapidly expanding parental involvement programme. Good leadership and management are central to the good provision. Staff are frustrated by the limited indoor space, which restricts children's creative and physical development, despite the imaginative use of the building. To help compensate, an attractive, stimulating and secure outdoor area has been created, which is used in all weathers, to the delight of the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing.
- Remove the inconsistencies in marking and the challenge and use of time in lessons to ensure that teaching is consistently good.

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 make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Although standards remain below average by the end of Key Stage 1, a greater proportion of Year 2 pupils are working at higher levels than historically. Pupils make satisfactory progress from Years 3 to 6 overall, although progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is strongest. Although pupils from Years 1 to 5 are working at levels below those expected for their age in English and mathematics, increasing numbers are reaching their age-related targets. This is particularly noticeable in Year 6 where pupils are currently reaching higher standards than they have done for some time. The three-year decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 is now being reversed. Although standards are improving across the school, progress in each year group is not consistent. Pupils achieve best in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing in most classes are lower than they should be. Standards in science are below average, largely because some of the more able pupils do not reach the higher levels of which they are capable. However, Year 6 pupils are developing good skills of investigation. Pupils who require learning support make satisfactory progress but improvements in checking their progress and providing 'catch up' sessions are helping to raise their achievement further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Their confidence blossoms in response to good pastoral care and encouragement. They learn to understand the consequences of their actions, develop an acute sense of justice and show a pronounced distaste for any form of bullying and racism. Pupils behave well and work and play together harmoniously. Carefully planned cultural experiences, including links with schools with a very different ethnic character, locally and overseas, help pupils to understand and respect diversity. Pupils seize upon the many valuable opportunities to take responsibility, make decisions and support each

other. In their roles as play leaders, buddies and school council representatives, they show maturity, sensitivity and care for others. The rich curriculum fuels their interest in learning and enhances their enjoyment of school. Attendance is good and above average because pupils want to come to school. Class discussions about the importance of diet and exercise and dangers, such as drugs and smoking, ensure that pupils acquire a good awareness of safe and healthy lifestyles. Weaknesses in literacy and numeracy are diminishing, most pupils are competent in using information and communication technology and are able to work independently. These factors are helping to secure their future economic well-being satisfactorily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although much of teaching is good, and occasionally outstanding, there are inconsistencies between different year groups, which hold pupils' achievement back. All teachers manage pupils well, ensure that they know what is expected of them and use a good variety of interesting methods and approaches to make learning enjoyable. Teachers set realistic targets for pupils to aim for and to help them to reflect on what they have learned during the lesson. These measures are making pupils more responsible for their own learning. Where teaching is good, assessment is used precisely to provide tasks that are closely matched to pupils' different learning needs. This ensures that all pupils learn successfully. In these lessons learning is active, the pace is quick and pupils are swept along. Not surprisingly they describe learning as 'fun'. Where teaching is outstanding pupils are inspired, for example, to investigate and to write with flair and imagination. Some teaching is satisfactory. In these lessons, assessment is not used well enough to ensure that the more able pupils are suitably challenged, although the tasks and support provided for pupils who find learning difficult are always well focused. In a minority of lessons, teachers talk for too long and pupils do not have sufficient time to practise and improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has worked hard to provide an interesting and diverse curriculum that pupils enjoy. It includes good opportunities for pupils to investigate and research information, which is helping them to become independent learners. A rich variety of additional activities, such as after-school clubs, educational visits and theme weeks, nurture pupils' interests and talents successfully. The curriculum has been sensitively adapted to support pupils who find learning difficult and boost the performance of those whose attainment lost momentum in the past. Improving the curriculum to meet the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils is a new initiative but gradually taking effect to ensure that more of these pupils fulfil their potential. A well planned programme of personal, social and health education underpins pupils' good personal development and understanding of healthy lifestyles. Priority is given to literacy and numeracy to help equip pupils for the next stage in their education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Child protection and safeguarding systems are in place and meet current government guidelines. When uncertainties regarding pupils' well-being arise, parents are informed immediately. If

concerns are not fully resolved, health and education professionals are quickly involved. This ensures that pupils are protected and the most vulnerable ones supported to help them overcome any barriers to learning. Parents are highly appreciative of the caring atmosphere and applaud the school for taking a determined stance on safety issues. Very good systems have been introduced to track and improve pupils' academic progress. Any faltering progress is pinpointed. Measurable individual targets are then set to enable these pupils to raise their performance. These factors are at the heart of the school's raising achievement programme. However, the marking of pupils' work does not consistently ensure that they know how to improve the next piece of work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior leaders have an ambitious vision, provide clear direction and a culture of improvement has been established. Key leaders make a significant contribution to improvement but because they have to oversee two important subjects each they do not have sufficient time to check all that is happening across the school. However, monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory and developing purposefully because of the headteacher's contribution and that of the school improvement partner. Lessons are observed, teachers' plans and pupils' work are examined and pupil's progress is carefully checked. These measures are helping to eliminate former underachievement. Inconsistencies in teaching and progress still remain but senior staff are taking determined steps to eradicate them. The school is inclusive and promotes equality satisfactorily. Although pupils' individual progress is kept under constant review, the school is only just beginning to compare the progress of different groups, such as boys and girls, to ensure that any gaps are identified and effectively closed. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. It is guided by a clear policy, including a study of the different community groups to find out whether these are all represented in the school. The school is now reaching out to involve the community more fully in promoting shared values. Governors support the school eagerly. They give freely of their time to discharge their responsibilities. They are beginning to hold the school to account by making visits to see the work of the school for themselves.

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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	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 learners' needs?	3
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

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	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 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**

Inspection of Christ Church C of E Primary School, Eccles, M30 0GZ

Thank you for making me so welcome and answering my questions so politely. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit. After two days inspecting your school, I would like to explain my findings.

Your school is judged to be satisfactory at the moment and there are many good features. Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science in most classes, although they are rising, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The progress you are making in reading and numeracy is better than in writing, which needs to improve more quickly lower down the school. The information from the tests you have done and lessons observed show that you are making satisfactory progress. Those of you who do not find it easy to learn are well supported. This is helping you to reach your targets. However, the more able ones among you are not always challenged sufficiently. The marking of your work is often but not always good and you are not always given enough time in lessons to practise your literacy and numeracy skills.

There are many good things about your school. Young children make a good start in Nursery and Reception. The way pupils with learning difficulties are helped and supported is getting better all the time. Your behaviour is good and you are eager to learn. I noticed how much you enjoy school, especially all of those extra activities. You know how to keep healthy and stay safe. Your school is very caring. Teachers and support staff go out of their way to make sure that you are content and happy. It's good to see that you follow their example by helping each other. Your headteacher and senior staff are working very hard and there are signs of improvement, just as you told me. To help the school improve further, I have asked your teachers to:

- help you to become good writers – you can help also by checking your work
- help you to continue your learning as you move from class to class by setting more challenging work for the more able pupils, giving you enough time to practise and improve your skills in lessons and writing comments in your books that help you to improve your next piece of work. You can help by trying hard to reach your targets.