

Handsworth Christian School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	373/6026
Unique Reference Number	107167
Inspection number	331351
Inspection dates	6 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

Handsworth Christian School is a non-selective independent Christian day school for boys and girls aged from four to 16 years. It was established in 1986 under the direction of the Handsworth Full Gospel Church, now the Sheffield Christian Life Centre. The school is situated on the outskirts of Sheffield, but serves a wide geographical area with pupils travelling from Sheffield, Rotherham and the surrounding villages. There are currently 116 full-time pupils. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage and four children are funded through the government scheme for nursery education. There is a small Reception class for up to 10 children aged four to five years. Currently there are seven children. The school was last inspected in October 2006.

The school aims to 'help each child to achieve their potential and do their best in a secure and caring environment' and to 'encourage pupils to care for and respect others'.

Evaluation of the school

Handsworth Christian School provides a good quality of education, including teaching, assessment and the curriculum; as a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good enabling children to achieve well; their personal development is also good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; their welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. The school meets all but two of the regulations. The school has addressed most of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection and there is now a clearer structure in place to assess pupils' work regularly, although this is not yet wholly consistent throughout the school.

Quality of education

The overall quality of education is good. The quality of the curriculum is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout the school. This demonstrates improvement since the previous inspection when it was judged as satisfactory. The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well and includes experiences in all the

required areas of learning. It is broadly based on the National Curriculum and is generally appropriately planned. Pupils from Reception to Year 11 have the opportunity to learn Spanish. Art is becoming a strength of the school and pupils are prepared well for course work in GCSE by developing key skills in the primary section of the school. In the primary phase there are effective links between subjects for example, developing mathematical skills through information and communication technology (ICT) and developing literacy skills in history and geography. Pupils enjoy the wide range of visitors to the school and visits such as those to Castleton in Derbyshire which enhance their learning well. In the secondary phase, the curriculum in Key Stage 4 is based on GCSE courses and schemes of work. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are entered for GCSE examinations and in this key stage all pupils make good progress in basic skills and across the wider curriculum. In Key Stage 3, the curriculum is less well-defined and lesson planning is not always as clearly related to longer term planning and schemes of work as in Key Stage 4. However, planning is coherent and effective enough for pupils to make at least satisfactory and sometimes better progress. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is taught systematically throughout the school and contributes effectively to pupils' good personal development and well-being.

Teaching and assessment are good, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This demonstrates improvement since the previous inspection when these areas were judged as satisfactory. The school now has a more consistent system of assessment and is able to track pupils' progress more effectively. The quality of teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and ranges from satisfactory to good in Years 1 to 6, but is good overall. Similarly, in the secondary phase teaching is effective in helping pupils to learn and make good progress overall. However, the rate of progress is not consistently good across both key stages and in all subjects. It is clear that all pupils make good progress in the core subjects, but assessment information is not as readily available in other subjects in Key Stage 3. In the best lessons, work is closely matched to the needs of pupils, regular assessments are made on what children know and understand and this information is used effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Teachers know pupils well and have good relationships with them. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills is particularly good because they have many opportunities to contribute in lessons. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are taught well and pupils make good progress in these basic skills. Occasionally, in some lessons, assessment information is not used precisely enough to identify next steps in learning and, as a result, work is not matched as closely as it could be to the needs of individual pupils. As a result, these pupils make only satisfactory progress. The marking of work is good overall, but inconsistent in a small number of subjects.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout the school. Cohorts of pupils are very small and results can fluctuate because there are occasionally a higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in some classes. However, by the end of Key Stage 4, around 70% of pupils gain A* to C grades in a wide range of GCSE courses. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities obtain some

passes. Occasionally, the rate of progress slows in some lessons when work is not matched accurately to the individual needs of every pupil. However, those pupils who require additional help benefit from additional support on a one-to-one basis. Consequently, they also make good progress.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and throughout the school. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is outstanding and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are courteous and polite and take pride in their roles and responsibilities within school. They understand the difference between right and wrong and they respond very well to the support systems in place. Pupils are welcoming to visitors. They are encouraged to care for others and develop their tolerance and respect for each other. This is demonstrated by their enthusiasm in learning sign-supported English for the deaf and through their involvement in fundraising for guide dogs for the deaf. The majority of pupils say that they enjoy school very much and their attendance is good. Pupils support the wider community by fundraising for charities such as World Vision, providing farming gifts for projects in developing countries. These include chickens and a coop for Ezo County, Sudan, seeds for three family farms in Keembe, Zambia and a pair of llamas for Bolivia. In addition, they have been involved in planning a recreation ground in the local area. Pupils' cultural awareness is developed well through the study of a range of different faiths in religious education, through literature from other cultures in English and learning about life in other countries through links with Malawi and visits to Spain. Pupils gain a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England through links with the police and fire service for younger pupils and, for example, through visits to the local magistrates' court for older pupils. The personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum is taught through religious studies in the secondary phase. Pupils are prepared effectively for their future economic well-being. They make good progress in their basic skills and have demonstrated their ability to manage finances through taking a leading role in organising and managing fundraising projects. A number of older pupils have also produced a magazine for younger pupils.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory and in the Early Years Foundation Stage it is good. The school has appropriate procedures to ensure that recruitment checks are made on staff prior to appointment. It meets all requirements for this, except in one respect. One member of staff commenced work at the school prior to an application for a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check being completed for this employment; however, the member of staff is supervised at all times and all other recruitment checks have been carried out. The school is awaiting the CRB disclosure. The school maintains a single central register as required by the regulations, although it did not include this member of staff. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place and staff have received up-to-date training. However, although booked on a course, the designated child protection officer has not yet received the more advanced training. A suitable range of risk assessments are carried out, for example prior to school visits and pupils are encouraged to take

responsibility for their own safety and that of others. A number of staff have received first aid training and refresher courses are to be attended imminently. Appropriate and regular tests are carried out on fire equipment and for fire safety. The school's accessibility plan meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

The vast majority of pupils are clearly very happy and say that they feel safe in school. However, a very small number of older pupils feel that sanctions are unfair when applied to the whole class and say that occasionally their views are not listened to respectfully. A very small minority of older pupils display challenging behaviour but this is managed effectively by members of staff. Pupils have a good understanding about leading healthy lifestyles and are able to participate in the range of physical activities provided, although these are off-site. There are limited facilities for physical exercise in the school grounds, as the playground is small.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and results in good quality provision for children. Children settle quickly because of the good induction procedures in place. There is a stimulating learning environment and there is a wide variety of interesting activities, which fully engage children in their learning. These are matched well to children's needs and interests. For example, children enjoyed designing clothes made from paper and participated in a fashion show. The initial idea for this project arose from the interests of and ideas of the children themselves. Children enjoy growing their own fruit and vegetables and are learning about healthy eating. There is a good balance of activities directed by teachers and those that children choose for themselves. However, opportunities for continuous learning outdoors are limited, although staff make best use of the space currently available. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a wide range of skills and abilities, but which overall are slightly below those typical of children of their age, particularly in language and communication skills. They make good progress because of the good teaching they receive and, by the time they enter Year 1, most have reached and some have exceeded national expectations. Children's learning and development are observed and recorded routinely and effectively and show the good progress they make towards the early learning goals.

Children's personal development and well-being are good. They are eager to learn and enjoy spending time with each other and developing their independence. They are very happy and settled in school and demonstrate increasing confidence and self-esteem. They play well together and are able to share and take turns in using equipment and in games. The school is successful in safeguarding children's welfare, including their physical, social and emotional needs. Good relationships with parents and external agencies ensure that any specific needs children have are met effectively. Good routines and procedures are consistently followed and this ensures that children are safe and feel secure.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- ensure that enhanced CRB checks have been completed prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- ensure that checks made on each member of staff in post on or after 1 August 2007 are included on the single central register (paragraph 4C(2 and 3)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improvement of the consistency of planning and marking throughout the school to that of the best.
- improvement of the use of assessment information to identify next steps in learning for all pupils in all subjects to ensure that the rate of progress is consistently good.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils	√			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			√	
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		√		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		√		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		√		
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		√		
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		√		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		√		

School details

Name of school	Handsworth Christian School		
DCSF number	373/6026		
Unique reference number	107167		
Type of school	Christian day school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	5 September 1986		
Age range of pupils	4–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 69	Girls: 47	Total: 116
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,880		
Address of school	231 Handsworth Road		
	Handsworth		
	Sheffield		
	South Yorkshire		
	S13 9BJ		
Telephone number	01142 430276		
Fax number	01142 434016		
Email address	parnott@handsworthchristianschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Arnott		
Proprietor	Company number 3809725		
	Chair – Mr A Marshall		
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI		
Dates of inspection	6 May 2009		