

# Churchill Community School and Sixth Form Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109312
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	337272
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anthony Shield

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1540
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	256
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Lund
<b>Headteacher</b>	B T Wratten
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2010
<b>School address</b>	Churchill Green Winscombe BS25 5QN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by six additional inspectors. They visited 48 lessons or parts of lessons, and 48 teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with governors, members of staff and students. No meeting between parents and the inspection team took place. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including the self-evaluation form, safeguarding and other policy documents, the school development plan and records of students' progress. In reaching their judgements, they took into account the views of 210 parents and carers, in addition to those of students and staff, expressed in questionnaires.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at the following:

- the extent of any variation in progress across different subjects and whether most students are making good progress
- the extent to which teaching and the curriculum challenge and meet the needs of all students, including middle-ability students
- the contribution of the school's specialisms and of leaders and managers at all levels to school improvement
- whether students are making good or outstanding progress in the sixth form.

## Information about the school

Churchill Community Foundation School and Sixth Form Centre is a larger-than-average school serving the village of Churchill and a wide area beyond. The school is a specialist performing arts college. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the school is just below average and there are very few students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Students achieve well in this good school. Students do well because the school seeks to get the best from all its students both academically and personally. The school's outstanding care, support and guidance ensure individual students feel both supported and challenged. The school is ambitious for continuing improvement and its realistic self-evaluation, committed management and well-considered plans ensure that it is well placed to continue its improvement.

There are many key strengths and some areas for further improvement

- In the school's caring and supportive environment, students feel safe, enjoy their learning and achieve well.
- There is a rising trend in students' attainment, and the school's GCSE results in 2009 were the best ever.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Students' good attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their good progress.
- Students have an exceptionally well-developed sense of their responsibilities to the community, both within the school and the wider local community.
- The school's links with parents are excellent, fostering a sense of shared partnership to pursue the best for all students.
- The well-planned curriculum encourages high levels of motivation amongst the students.
- Students make good progress through the school, although it is uneven in some subjects and classes. Some students lack confidence in their ability to take responsibility for their learning and in thinking for themselves.
- The school's performing arts specialism makes a significant contribution its ethos and the opportunities for students to develop their social and cultural skills.
- The attendance of a few students is below average and adversely affecting their progress.
- Teaching is good. However, there are some inconsistencies across the school. Not all lessons use information about how well students are doing to adapt tasks and set work which challenges individual students at the right level.
- The school is well led by the headteacher, who has a clear vision for the school's future. Leadership through the school has been strengthened and he is well supported by his restructured senior team and faculty leaders.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure more consistently good learning and progress through the school by:

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- ensuring all teachers use data and feedback on how well students are doing to set work tailored more precisely to individual needs
- promoting personal learning and thinking skills through ensuring students take more responsibility for their learning
- improving the attendance of a few persistently absent students.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Students make good progress because they are keen to do their best, work purposefully in lessons and enjoy what they are doing. This enjoyment stems from the good rapport they have with each other and their teachers. Work seen by inspectors confirms the picture of above-average attainment and of good, if sometimes uneven, progress. The school's response to some disappointing mathematics GCSE results in 2009 has been effective in ensuring that students make better progress this year. Similarly, the underachievement of some middle-ability girls in 2009 has been tackled firmly and all groups of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are currently on track to achieve well this year. Students learn well because most teachers have high expectations and explain ideas clearly. In a particularly effective Year 10 drama lesson, students worked with considerable autonomy and responsibility to develop their dramatic ideas. The teacher communicated her ideas confidently and the students knew exactly how to proceed. Where learning is active in this way, students respond with energy and participate enthusiastically. Learning of this kind which gives students responsibility for organising their time and ideas is particularly effective.

Students have positive attitudes and enjoy their learning. This is demonstrated by the overwhelmingly good climate for learning in lessons. The student leadership team is providing a singularly effective forum for students to take the lead in pushing for change and in feeding back on a range of the school's provision, including learning, welfare and the environment. In this respect, and in their work with the wider community, students make an outstanding contribution. Students recognise the importance of a healthy lifestyle and many participate enthusiastically in the wide range of sporting activities. Attendance is average overall, despite the determined efforts of the school to work in partnership with parents and carers and external agencies to improve the attendance of a few students. Nevertheless, most students have good attendance and punctuality and, alongside good basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, are well prepared for their futures.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The school's care and guidance for students are significant strengths. The development of the house system and the introduction of tutor groups with students from different years mixed together, while still relatively new, have already contributed significantly to the quality of students' personal development. Close partnerships with a range of external agencies complement a coherent and proactive approach to supporting students, especially those most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, all students receive well-targeted support and care. The school's work with its small Traveller community is particularly effective.

The school has made some important changes to the structure of the curriculum, increasing the time students spend on GCSE courses, alongside other developments to improve the match of the curriculum to students' aspirations and promote a more flexible and personal curriculum. There is a good balance between vocational and academic courses and a good partnership with external providers ensures the work-related curriculum is well considered. This has enabled students to select a combination of courses that meet their needs more closely. The formal curriculum is enriched by an exciting range of visits, visitors and clubs, particularly in the arts. There are impressive opportunities for students to develop their artistic, technical and production skills through shows and concerts.

While teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, it is inconsistent. Students and parents made this point to inspectors. At its best, teaching is inspiring, thoroughly planned and founded on trusting and good relationships with students. This results in a positive atmosphere in which pupils work industriously. However, not all teaching is of

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this quality. In a few lessons, learning is passive and students are not encouraged to think for themselves. While much work has been done to streamline assessment practice, inconsistencies in the quality of marking and oral feedback mean that work is not always adapted and planned to meet personal needs. Nevertheless, the school, through its teacher and learning community, is working successfully to share good practice.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, well supported by leaders at all levels, has set a clear vision for the school and has successfully driven through improvements which are making a real difference to provision and students' outcomes. With good support from leaders at all levels, he has set a clear path for improvement based on realistic self-evaluation. In this respect, faculty self-evaluation forms are models of good practice. Middle leaders willingly put themselves forward and are key players in the school's improvement. Heads of house also work closely to monitor the personal and academic achievement of individual students. More rigorous target setting is asking more of individual students and reflects higher expectations of what they can achieve.

The promotion of equal opportunities is good and the school meticulously monitors and analyses performance data at both individual and group level, using this analysis to intervene and take action to narrow any gaps. Governors are committed and hard working. They provide increasingly effective support and strategic vision to the headteacher. Statutory responsibilities are carried out carefully, especially with regard to pupils' welfare and safeguarding. Safeguarding policies and procedures are fully in place. The school does much to promote community cohesion and has a good understanding of its context. It works successfully to be a socially inclusive and harmonious community, and the careful attention the school gives to work with its Traveller families is indicative of its approach to equal opportunity. The school has made a particular success of its status as a specialist performing arts college, has developed good partnerships with local schools and uses the additional resources wisely to support innovation across the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

Students in the sixth form make good progress because teachers know their subjects well and encourage independent thinking. In some subjects and for some students, progress is outstanding. Retention rates on courses are high and sixth formers are good role models for younger students. Students make good use of the tutorial style teaching and the broad range of curricular opportunities available. Staff know their students well and careful monitoring of their progress ensures they achieve well. Students particularly appreciate the outstanding care and guidance which supports them throughout their course and helps them think about their future choices. Sixth formers take their responsibilities seriously and have opportunities to work productively with younger students, for example, when acting as directors of the show *Into the Woods*, or helping them prepare dance performances. The sixth form is exceptionally well led. High expectations are shared and realistic and detailed self-evaluation provides a springboard for further improvement.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1



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## Views of parents and carers

Responses were received from 210 parents and carers. Those responding are generally supportive of the school, and a very large majority are happy with their child's experience at Churchill. They are confident that they are safe and believe the school offers good opportunities for them to pursue their interests both academically and personally. There were many supportive comments, with some more negative, in particular regarding consultation and communication. However, on investigation, it is clear the school works hard to engage with parents.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Churchill School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 210 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1540 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	26	147	64	19	8	4	2
The school keeps my child safe	71	31	145	63	10	4	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	26	137	60	25	11	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	27	122	53	35	15	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	47	21	149	65	23	10	5	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	13	136	59	45	20	9	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	14	145	64	43	19	3	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	51	23	129	57	26	12	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	19	140	61	34	15	6	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	19	147	64	26	11	10	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	15	135	59	37	16	13	6
The school is led and managed effectively	47	21	137	60	22	10	11	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	26	140	60	22	9	5	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



7 May 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Churchill School, Churchill, Somerset BS25 5QN

Thank you for welcoming us to your school during our recent inspection. We especially enjoyed meeting and talking with you. Your enjoyment and pride in being a student at Churchill is clear. We were particularly impressed by the mature way in which you contribute to both the school and the wider community. Yours is a good school which has a number of exceptional features.

I would like to outline some of the other main findings from our inspection.

- You do well at school because good teaching encourages you to work hard.
- Teachers take exceptional care to ensure you are well looked after, in terms of both your personal and academic needs.
- Teaching which gets you to think for yourself and take responsibility for managing your own learning is the most successful. However, not all teaching is of this quality. We have asked the school to make sure these inconsistencies are ironed out and that every teacher uses information about how well you are doing to set work which challenges you at your own level.
- While most of you attend regularly, not all do. The poor attendance of a few students is significantly impacting on their progress.
- The sixth form offers particularly good opportunities for you to work at a higher level.
- Many of you develop confident personal and social skills, helping to prepare you for your future beyond school.
- The curriculum is wide ranging and there is a good range of clubs and enrichment activities, particularly in the performing arts and sport.
- The headteacher and leaders and managers at all levels carry out their responsibilities very well.

Thank you once again for your help during our visit, and best wishes for the future!

Yours sincerely

Tony Shield

Lead inspector

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