

# Christ Church CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114572
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	338405
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	June Woolhouse

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	454
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Philip Crow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Hanney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Woodland Vale Road St Leonards-on-Sea TN37 6JJ
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<b>Email address</b>	office@christchurch.e-sussex.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 28 lessons and spent about 60% of the time observing nearly all teachers twice. Meetings were held with governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, phase and subject leaders and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documents including the school development plan, policies, the tracking of pupil progress, provision for pupils identified as more able, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English, minutes of governors' meetings, pupils' books, photographs and displays. Parents and carers returned 122 questionnaires, and inspectors also looked at questionnaires from pupils in Key Stage 2 and all staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of teaching and the impact of assessment strategies and the quality of planning and marking, specifically for the more able, pupils whose first language is not English and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the achievement of the more able pupils, both boys and girls at both key stages, to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging in mathematics
- the extent to which the planned curriculum assures all groups make enough progress and reach the expected age-related levels of attainment
- the extent to which children in the Early Years Foundation Stage initiate their learning in a play-based environment, indoors and outside, and whether there is a sufficient balance of direct, adult intervention across all early learning goals.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. About a quarter of pupils come from a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds and nineteen languages are spoken at the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those eligible for free school meals is above average. Pupils' special educational needs include speech, language and communication and emotional, social and behavioural difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and physical difficulties. Ten children have a statement of special educational needs. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage on a part-time basis starting in the Nursery class. There are flexible morning and afternoon part-time arrangements. Children attend full-time in the Reception class. There is a breakfast and after-school school 'Stay and Play' club as well as a Nursery lunch-time club, organised by the governing body. The school has achieved Artsmark Gold, Activemark and Healthy School silver awards and the International School award in 2009 from the British Council.

**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

Christ Church is a good school with some significant strengths in the care, guidance and support of its pupils. The Christian values and ethos, which the headteacher and governors sensitively and effectively promote in all areas of school life, underpin the very successful blending together of a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and cultures. Community cohesion is outstanding and links extend from the school and local community far afield into Europe and Africa. Pupils understand and celebrate different cultures and the extent of their respect for, and inclusion of, everyone involved in school life is noteworthy.

This is a very inclusive school. Pupils feel very safe and exemplary safeguarding and child protection ensure that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, have the best possible chance to thrive and achieve well in their learning. One parent commented, 'I have found Christ Church to be a warm and nurturing environment. There is a good balance between academic and emotional education.' Pupils were equally enthusiastic and one summed it up by writing, 'I think my school rocks and is very, very brilliant.' Another one added, 'My school is very good. The headteacher and staff are very good at looking after us when we are poorly or hurt.' Pupils enjoy learning; their contribution to the school and wider community is outstanding as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They behave well and understand how to lead healthy lifestyles because all adults effectively promote healthy eating and exercise. Pupils are developing the necessary skills for the next stage in their education, but the school has to work relentlessly to ensure that attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils achieve well and have made consistently good progress in their learning for the past three years. Senior leaders evaluate pupil performance accurately. The most recent analysis correctly identified the underachievement of more-able pupils in mathematics as an important area for development. The headteacher's skilful inclusion of middle leaders to tackle this issue means there is good capacity for rapid improvement. The majority of teaching is good and there are examples of outstanding practice where pupils are highly motivated and make very good progress. Less effective teaching results in pupils being passive learners for too long at the start of lessons which occasionally affects their behaviour. The curriculum is well planned and emphasises creative and active learning well through music, art, drama and physical education. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress. Sometimes children do not have enough time to choose and pursue their own interests from the well-planned opportunities available to them. Access to outside learning is restricted by the design of the building, but this is being remedied shortly. Governors are actively involved in school life, holding senior leaders to account for pupils' performance and how to improve it.

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics during this academic year by:
  - planning practical activities that match more closely the range of needs in each class, especially for those who are more able
  - increasing teachers' expectations of what the more able can achieve
  - increasing the pace of learning so that pupils engage in independent activities sooner
  - improving teachers' subject knowledge and how pupils learn mathematics successfully.
- Use the information from the school tracking system to establish more precisely pupils' levels of attainment and whether they are high enough by:
  - increasing teachers' understanding of national measures of attainment and expected progress for the whole ability range.
- Design activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children can choose them independently and then be supported by skilful adult discussion and questioning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average, although there has been a dip in mathematics because the more able pupils performed less well than expected. Results are affected by pupils joining or leaving part way through a key stage. By Year 6 pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning, especially in English and science, because teaching is good or better and the majority of lessons are interesting and relevant. Pupils enjoy working in groups and collaborate extremely effectively as they discuss tasks and share equipment. They liked comparing their answers in a Key Stage 1 numeracy activity as they worked out a subtraction pattern removing one more from the original ten. They rejoice in each other's successes and are very particular about how their work is presented. This was the case in a poetry writing session where much time and effort were put into choosing just the right words and writing them carefully. Handwriting skills are exceptionally well developed. Sometimes pupils are less enthusiastic because they sit too long in the introductory session and lose interest. Key literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developing well because pupils apply them in other subjects such as history and English. Numeracy skills are satisfactory but more-able pupils, in particular, have too few opportunities to apply them to real-life, problem-solving situations. Pupils are very clear about how to keep safe because of what they learn in very well-designed personal, emotional and social education and science lessons. They take their roles as school councillors, peer mediators and monitors very seriously and provide very good role models for younger pupils. This impacts very positively on behaviour and the levels of respect shown to each other and adults. Their well-designed pupil voice toolkit is used in the Excellence Cluster.

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Pupils enjoy all school and club sporting activities and understand how these contribute to being healthy. Attendance is average and, because of the persistence of the school and other agencies, it is improving.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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>1</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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is good overall, but there are some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of how teachers' planning is implemented in the classroom. Good or better teaching leads to effective learning and good progress. Tasks are matched to individual needs and pupils move quickly into independent work following a brisk introduction that links prior learning to the lesson. Teachers' subject knowledge is substantial and this enables teachers to ask searching questions to move the learning forward in a creative way. Well-targeted adult support for pupils with individual needs ensures they make good progress. In less effective lessons independent activities are not tailored sufficiently closely to pupils' stages of learning and progress is slower. Expectations of the more able are not high enough, especially in mathematics, where pupils are capable of sustained, independent work because of their excellent collaborative skills but are not

<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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required to apply their knowledge and understanding to real-life problems. Marking is constructive and indicates how pupils can improve. Pupils’ progress is rigorously monitored on a termly basis but, as yet, is not compared precisely with National Curriculum levels of attainment. Teachers are less secure in their understanding of what levels are expected in mathematics at the end of each year in Key Stage 2 and this affects expectations, especially of the more able, across the key stage.

Underachievement for pupils with individual learning needs is intercepted rapidly and pupils get appropriate, extra support. Whilst it does not yet apply to the more able, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English benefit from this support.

The curriculum is well organised, practical and relevant, allowing pupils to express themselves in ways other than in writing. Subjects are linked through themes and pupils are enthusiastic about their ‘Learning Adventures’. Extra-curricular activities and creative partnerships contribute further to pupils’ enjoyment and personal development. The excellent links to other schools and cultures, nationally and internationally, are significant factors in promoting pupils’ outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The improving curriculum has resulted in several nationally recognised awards.

Care, guidance and support have a significantly positive impact on pupils’ safety and well-being. Parents and carers are regularly informed of their children’s progress and an open-door policy exists for those who want to talk to teachers. Strong partnerships exist within the local family of schools and other agencies which support both teachers and pupils. Staff share information about pupils’ learning and personal development to ensure a smooth transition to senior schools and work closely with the local authority and other agencies.

*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 has forged an effective and very committed team of staff and governors who are signed up to her values and vision of a Church of England primary school working at the heart of a multi-cultural community. The leadership team understands very well that pupils learn more effectively when they are engaged first-hand in practical and relevant experiences. They have been instrumental in improving and monitoring the curriculum to this end. This shows in pupils’ enjoyment,

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good behaviour and excellent levels of cooperation in lessons. In addition, pupils’ core learning skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are carefully monitored and evaluated, resulting in good progress by the time they leave. Leaders are increasingly aware that to raise standards further, especially in mathematics, they must now focus on improving satisfactory teaching to the effectiveness of the best. The school development plan is well constructed and focused on improving mathematics, in particular. Systems to monitor and improve teaching systematically and focus on those aspects that impact on better learning are at an early stage, for example how to increase pace, improve teacher knowledge of mathematics learning, better matching of tasks for the more able and sustaining independent work. The school benefits from some outstanding teaching and is well placed to make these improvements. Governors work in close partnership with senior leaders to maintain the quality of learning and well-being for all pupils. The unremitting emphasis on providing all pupils with relevant opportunities to learn and thrive is resulting in school leaders concentrating on how to eliminate the underachievement of more able pupils in mathematics. Governors contribute very well to safeguarding children and the involvement of parents and carers. They ensure that the school gives good value for money by careful monitoring and deployment of all resources.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<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	3
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children enter the Nursery class with skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress because adults understand their needs as young learners and they



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thrive in a safe and caring environment. A rich array of well-planned activities enables them to explore and investigate independently. Language development is well promoted by skilled adult intervention. This is especially successful for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or whose first language is not English. Activities in the Reception classes are stimulating and skilfully linked through themes, for example Elmer the Elephant. Links between creative, physical and language development are very good and contribute significantly to children’s very well-developed skills in designing and making models, painting and writing about their work. The emphasis on first-hand, relevant, practical tasks results in high levels of interest and perseverance. Sometimes adults over direct activities and although children complete tasks successfully, they do not always have time to choose and pursue activities that interest them for themselves, for example in problem solving within numeracy tasks. The setting is well led and managed. Children’s progress is carefully monitored through direct observation and recorded in good individual records. Very good procedures are in place for children’s welfare and safety. This is reflected in the confident way children play together and their considerate behaviour towards each other. Links with parents, carers and other agencies are very effective. These support children’s development very well and also help families to feel valued members of the school community.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were happy with the education provided for their children. Parents and carers appreciated the efforts of teachers and other adults to make their children welcome in school and feel confident about their learning. They were very happy about the extra support given to children who found learning difficult. A few parents and carers did not think their children made enough progress and inspectors agree with this view for some of the more able in their mathematics lessons. Behaviour is good throughout the school, in classrooms and on the playground.

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

The inspection team received 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 454 pupils registered at the school.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ Church CofE Primary 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	61	47	42	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	64	44	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	53	43	60	53	5	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	41	52	46	13	12	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	56	46	58	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	38	59	52	8	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	51	53	47	6	5	0	0
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	42	54	48	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	44	53	45	1311	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	43	46	41	13	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	56	46	55	49	3	3	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	73	60	45	40	0	0	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	57	48	42	2	2	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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 pupil's 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.**



12 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School, St Leonards-on- Sea TN37 6JJ

I am writing to tell you how much my team and I enjoyed being with you in school last week. We would like to thank you for helping us with the inspection and appreciated very much your considerate behaviour and willingness to tell us about what goes on in Christ Church. We were very impressed with the quality of your work, especially your brilliant handwriting, something we do not always find when we look in exercise books. We also thought you were very skilled when you were making things such as models or illustrating your work. The children in Reception made some fantastic models of Elmer, including his trunk!

We have asked Mrs Hanney to keep checking that you continue to make good progress in lessons. She said she would do this because it is important that you are up to the right level when you move to the next school. We would like her to help those pupils who can learn mathematics quickly to be given some harder problems to solve by themselves when they are working in groups. We have also asked that the children in Reception can sometimes choose activities for themselves and spend time exploring what they find interesting.

However, I must end by asking everyone to understand how important it is to come to school every single day (unless you are very ill, of course). If you miss school you get behind and that makes things difficult for your teachers as they have to help you catch up again. So you and your parents and carers must be very organised in the mornings so you get to school on time and then enjoy the super things that the teachers plan for you. After all, nearly all of you said how much you enjoy school and the interesting things that you learn!

I do hope you continue to enjoy school for the rest of the year. The time will pass all too quickly and then Year 6 will be off to senior schools. I know you will all be very well prepared for your next school and because you have been taught to work so well in groups and teams, moving on will be much easier for you.

With very best wishes to everyone.

Yours sincerely

June Woolhouse

Lead inspector

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