

Christ Church CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115745
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338655
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susan Padfield
Headteacher	Miss Janie Fentem
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent about half of their time looking at learning, visiting 16 lessons and observing 10 teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment information about pupils' progress, records of the school reviews of its actions for improvement, current school development and updates of progress towards meeting priorities. They also considered questionnaire responses from 104 pupils, 26 members of staff and 79 parents.

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

- the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the progress pupils make from Year 3 to Year 6
- the extent to which the school is successful in improving the attainment of its target groups, including
- pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- more able boys in writing
- more able girls in mathematics.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils are from homes where English is not the first language; this proportion is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils find learning difficult; a few have speech, language and communication difficulties or behavioural or emotional problems. There is a Communication and Interaction Centre within the school which provides specialist support for these pupils. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Reception class. The school has received the Activemark and the National Healthy School award.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Christ Church is an outstanding school where every child really does matter. The visionary headteacher leads a strong team who ensure pupils receive high levels of care and education. This means that pupils are extremely happy and confident learners. Pupils have exceptional understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. The school's warm and purposeful ethos is supported by a wealth of exciting experiences in which pupils engage, extending their knowledge and understanding of the world about them. An overwhelming proportion of parents are happy with their children's experience. Their comments included, 'Our children are excited about learning,' 'Our child has reaped enormous benefits, academically, emotionally, culturally and socially,' and, 'My child begs to go to school, even when she is ill.'

From entry points broadly typically of their age, all groups of pupils make good progress, leaving with attainment that is above national averages. The good start children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage continues and accelerates through the school as pupils build successfully upon previous achievement and work towards challenging targets. Teachers have an excellent understanding of pupils' abilities because of the exceptionally well-established strategies for assessment and evaluation. These enable leaders to pinpoint where weaknesses are and successfully address them, as reflected in the school's recent success in raising the attainment of more able boys in writing and more able girls in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with English as an additional language, progress as well as their peers as a result of highly effective support. The school ensures that all have many opportunities to achieve. The work of the Communication and Interaction Centre received particular praise from parents. One commented, 'My child has transformed from a very unhappy and confused little boy into a successful child about to go off to secondary school as well prepared as possible to face the new challenges this will bring.'

Good teaching and an excellent curriculum enthuse pupils and stimulate positive attitudes to learning through an exciting range of practical experiences. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, access to the outside areas is limited by the distance between the classroom and the outdoor learning area. This restricts learning opportunities for children, particularly in developing their independence. Throughout the school, the very strong Christian ethos actively supports pupils' outstanding personal development and very successfully raises their self-esteem and their respect for, and understanding of, others. Their well-developed academic and personal skills enable them to make a good contribution to the school, the local and global communities, in addition to preparing them to take the best advantage of their future education.

The highly effective leaders demonstrate an outstanding commitment to maintain and

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build upon the school's success and identify areas for further improvement. They rigorously evaluate the school's performance, quickly and clearly prioritising areas for improvement. As a result, areas identified at the last inspection and additional priorities, such as tackling dips in the performance of individual cohorts, have been successfully addressed. Productive engagement with a range of external partners contributes successfully to the positive outcomes for pupils. All of these successes indicate the school's outstanding capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase opportunities for children in the Reception class to make choices and develop their independence by increasing their access to the outdoor learning area.

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

Excellent relationships and exemplary behaviour create an environment in which pupils are well motivated to learn and, as a result, they make good progress. During a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils made excellent progress in solving problems, choosing the appropriate mathematical operation. Working extremely well in pairs, they spotted the deliberate mistakes the teacher made in some 'specimen answers'. A focus on ensuring consistency in teaching and learning has to a large extent ironed out some previous unevenness in progress across Years 3 to 6, particularly in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils' attainment in 2009 was high and the quality of work seen during lesson observations and in pupils' books indicates that the current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach similar levels. After a dip in attainment at Key Stage 1, there has been full recovery. Year 1 pupils, on a 'treasure hunt' around the school, showed a very secure understanding of a half and quarter turn as they followed directions. Older pupils rose to the challenge of making anticlockwise turns.

Pupils appreciate the need to eat sensibly, to take regular exercise and how to deal with situations which concern them. Pupils' responses indicate their love of school and the many exciting things on offer. As a result, attendance is above average. Pupils are proud of their contribution to the school through their wide range of roles, such as school councillors and peer mediators. Pupils understand the Christian principles which underpin their respect and consideration for others. This is evident, not only through their interaction with other pupils and staff on a daily basis, but in their ready support for those around the world less fortunate than themselves. Through religious education and the work the pupils engage in with geography students from the local university, pupils gain a good understanding and appreciation of many different cultures and beliefs.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The rich curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities to make learning fun and is well supported by a range of visits and visitors. Teachers have good skills and a wide range of expertise. This enables them to dovetail subjects in imaginative ways which engage pupils and motivate them to learn. Shared learning objectives at the beginning of a unit of study or individual lesson clarify what is expected of pupils. Indeed, pupils are often asked to identify success criteria for themselves, which deepens their understanding. Pupils benefit from excellent feedback through marking and frequently evaluate their own work against their individual targets. Commenting on another pupil's work, a classmate wrote, 'I really like your poem. I think you missed some words from the second line. I like your simile the crackle of the wheel was like hot water in a saucepan' the most.' Such strategies, alongside an excellent system for tracking pupils' progress, enable teachers to set work which offers a good level of challenge for all pupils.

Classrooms abound with prompts for learning, such as key vocabulary and 'working walls' to which pupils add their ideas and questions. Pupils progress best in lessons where there is active participation in learning through problem-solving and creative activities. In a Year 1 design and technology lesson, for example, after learning about the rigidity of a triangle, pupils went on to construct model bridges of high quality. The teacher's skilful use of the interactive whiteboard to display photographs of their work in progress helped pupils to make insightful evaluative comments. Very occasionally the pace of lessons slackens and tasks lack sufficient challenge because the work is not securely based on the assessment information available. Despite this, the overall use of assessment to inform teaching and learning is outstanding and a major strength of the

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provision.

Literacy, numeracy and computer skills are used very effectively to support learning in other subjects. A particularly strong feature is the excellent range of extra-curricular activities which have high attendance levels. There are strengths in all subjects. Activities, such as belly dancing in physical education and building Anderson shelters in history, thoroughly engage pupils. Successful efforts to provide further opportunities for writing across the curriculum and practical work in mathematics not only benefit the more able boys and girls but are having a positive impact on the progress of all pupils. Music permeates school life, with many pupils in Key Stage 2 learning an instrument. A highly inclusive ethos ensures that concerns are quickly highlighted and addressed with sensitive support. Every child is recognised as an individual. Comments from pupils indicate that they understand where to find help. Vulnerable pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with English as an additional language are very well supported. This was exemplified during a session in the Communication and Interaction Centre. With great sensitivity, the teacher enabled pupils with social and emotional difficulties to reflect calmly on the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The clear vision generated by the headteacher and senior leaders is shared by all, leading to a highly motivated team which is working towards a common purpose. Delegated responsibilities enable leaders to plan for development within a clearly identified framework for improvement, strategically linked to improving outcomes for all pupils. As a result, target setting is challenging, progress for all groups is accelerating and levels of attainment are rising. Senior leaders provide excellent role models in their teaching. Curriculum leaders provide first class support for colleagues. All subjects are reviewed regularly and leaders provide clear guidelines on practical activities, cross-curricular links and assessment. Parents who responded to the questionnaire were unanimous in their confidence in the leadership and management of the school.

The wide-ranging expertise of the governing body brings additional skills to the school. There is a governor linked to each subject. Governors visit at least twice every year to gain first-hand information and produce useful reports for their colleagues. This means that governors are able to support and challenge the senior management from a highly

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informed position. Safeguarding arrangements are very secure. Effective strategies ensure that the school is a healthy and safe environment with regular checks to minimise risks. The strong commitment to community cohesion is firmly rooted within the Christian principles of the school. Pupils' ability to make a difference for themselves and for others is very well supported by the highly effective citizenship programme which underpins work within the school, the local community and globally. The school promotes equal opportunities extremely well. It keeps a close eye on the outcomes for different pupils and is quick to address any anomalies.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly within the warm and welcoming environment, establishing good relationships with their teachers and with other children. This helps to build their confidence as they play happily together, showing increasing levels of respect for others as they share and take turns. Children are encouraged to understand simple rules which contribute to their safety and well-being. By the end of Reception, they have made good progress, providing a good basis for learning in Year 1.

Children enjoy a range of learning opportunities and teachers plan interesting activities within a well-structured programme. Parents take good advantage of opportunities to share in their children's learning and reflect that their children are happy and settle well. Children's learning is enriched by a good range of resources. Opportunities to access outdoor activities are constrained by the location of the dedicated outdoor area across the playground from the Reception class base. This means that outdoor sessions have to be timetabled, which restricts children in their choice of how and where they engage in

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all areas of learning. Adults establish children's starting points on entry and carefully track their subsequent progress, recording each term their levels of attainment in key social, language and numeracy skills. This enables them to devise activities which build on children's prior attainment. Occasionally, the adult-led tasks are too challenging. For example, most children struggled to write sentences about Mothering Sunday independently and had to rely on intensive guidance from adults. The team works well together to ensure a successful setting where children engage happily in learning. The strong emphasis upon children's personal and social skills drives their early learning. Policies and procedures are consistently applied and this contributes to the security of the setting.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 overwhelming majority of parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. They hold the headteacher and her staff in very high regard and greatly appreciate the care and consideration given to their children. They are confident that any concerns are listened to carefully and acted upon appropriately. The school received much praise for the efforts it makes to provide a very caring environment in which pupils achieve well. Of the small numbers of concerns raised, all were fully investigated and there were no serious issues found.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

The inspection team received 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	53	34	43	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	71	21	27	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	44	40	51	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	48	35	44	2	3	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	46	58	30	38	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	48	31	39	6	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	63	27	34	2	3	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)	31	39	37	47	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	42	36	46	6	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	51	32	41	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	44	37	47	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	55	70	23	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	65	25	32	2	3	1	1

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CE Primary School, Cheltenham GL50 2NR

It was lovely to meet all of you when we inspected your school recently. We did enjoy talking to so many of you and we were very impressed with the way in which you care for each other and for your school. We especially liked the way you lived up to the school's motto to 'always be kind'.

Christchurch is an outstanding school. All of the staff work really well together to make sure that you have lots of exciting experiences and this helps you to enjoy your learning. Your school is a happy place. This is something that you told us and all of your parents agreed.

All of the staff and people who work for you in school make sure that you are very well cared for and this means that you feel safe and confident. Your teachers know you very well and make sure that the work they give you matches what you need to learn. As a result, you all make good progress.

Although we know your school is excellent, it is our job to help it become even better. Therefore, we have asked the school leaders to help the children in Reception by giving them more opportunities to learn in the outdoor area.

Well done everyone for contributing to a very special school.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton

Lead inspector

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