

Folkestone Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118674
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339274
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Robin Gaff

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	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Beryl Pendlebury-Green
Headteacher	Jim Kreiselmeier
Date of previous school inspection	6 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 part lessons, and observed every teacher in the school at least once. They spent a total of eight hours observing pupils' learning. Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils and the chair of governors. They looked at planning and evaluation documents, as well as reports completed by external bodies, including the local authority. Inspectors scrutinised the school's own analysis of pupils' progress and attainment. A total of 88 questionnaires, completed by parents and carers, were received and analysed.

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

- the extent of the school's success in improving pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and science
- the accuracy of the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning
- the impact of developments in the curriculum on pupils' learning, including their wider personal development
- the extent of leaders' and managers' success in tailoring provision to the needs of the school's changing population
- the impact of partnerships with parents, carers and with other providers on pupils' achievement and well-being.

Information about the school

Folkestone Christ Church is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, although the number who have statements is below average. An increasing proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times other than are normal for transfer. A privately owned nursery operates on part of the school's premises and is not part of this inspection. Children start this school in the Early Years Foundation Stage Reception class.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Folkestone Christ Church provides is a satisfactory and happy school that places a very high priority on being highly inclusive. The promotion of pupils' equal opportunities is especially impressive and at the heart of this school's work. This is especially important due to the high numbers of pupils who join and leave the school throughout the year and because of the very wide ranging cultural diversity of the school. Almost all pupils say they enjoy school, and their parents agree. Pupils with different abilities and backgrounds, including many who have recently arrived in this country, settle in well. Pupils from different backgrounds work and play together very harmoniously, and learn to respect and value one another as individuals.

Particular strengths of the school include the way that standards are rising and the way that pockets of past underachievement have been addressed. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, pupils show an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and they behave well. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They benefit from a wide range of opportunities to take on responsibility. Pupils are considerate of one another, and show good spiritual development and moral awareness. Pupils are increasing their knowledge about life in different cultures and communities and this is enhanced by the highly inclusive nature of the school. However, leaders recognise that pupils still need to know more about life elsewhere in the United Kingdom and in the wider world.

The poor attendance of some pupils hampers their ability to learn to best effect. However, the school is making strenuous efforts to reduce unauthorised absence, and there is evidence of rapid improvement for those individuals and groups whose attendance had caused most concern. The school is still working on this to help improve the overall rate of attendance.

Pupils' achievement is rising because teaching is improving and the school is adapting its curriculum successfully to meet pupils' varying needs. However, sometimes faster progress is hampered by the fact that teachers do not always include activities which are sufficiently challenging and motivate pupils to learn as well as possible. Added to this, the quality of teachers' written feedback is inconsistent, and this also slows some pupils' progress as they are unsure of what they need to do to improve.

Leaders evaluate the work of the school satisfactorily and are committed to continuous improvement in order to raise pupils' levels of attainment. They now have an accurate view of what constitutes good teaching and learning and they know that there is more to do to make teaching and learning consistently good. The school works well with a

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range of partners, building particularly strong links with local organisations. The ability of governors to fulfill their role as critical friends is improving. The school has made sound progress in tackling issues raised by the last inspection report, and its capacity to improve still further is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' attendance so that it is line with national averages.
- Raise standards and improve the rate of pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - overall teaching is good and all lessons include activities that are sufficiently challenging and motivate all pupils to do as well as possible
 - all teachers provide pupils with sufficient information to enable them to know what steps to take to improve their work.
- Ensure that pupils have more opportunities to learn about life in communities elsewhere in the United Kingdom and in the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes better progress from their starting points.

The standards pupils attain in Year 6, particularly in mathematics and science, are rising and as a result, attainment is now securely in line with national expectations and this was very evident in the lesson seen and from pupils' work in their books. Groups who had previously underachieved are now making faster progress so they do as well as others and this again demonstrates the school's impressive approach to ensuring equal opportunities and the good support that they receive.

Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those for whom English is an additional language, receive good support from teaching assistants and specialist teachers. In particular, these groups develop their speaking skills well and grow in confidence, which sets them up well for their satisfactory overall progress in other aspects of their learning. Pupils mostly enjoy learning, especially when they are given practical tasks to do; this helps them to learn faster. Year 3 pupils had great fun and made good progress in learning about changes caused by heating and cooling when they discussed the results of their experiments with ice and hot water.

Pupils know how to use the internet safely and they behave responsibly in the school, showing respect for others' cultures and different religions. One pupil commented, 'We all have plenty of friends at school'. Pupils are polite, welcoming and helpful and listen to and learn from one another in class. Pupils know the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods and diets, and there is a good take-up of healthy options in the canteen. Pupils enjoy regular swimming in the school's own pool and are very active in the daily 'Wake Up and Shake Up'. Pupils contribute strongly to the day-to-day running of the school and know their views are valued and acted upon, for example when the school made changes to its patterns of worship to ensure that the school is very inclusive to all cultures and faiths. Pupils develop problem-solving and teamworking

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skills well and learn about budgeting. They respond well to the spiritual qualities of nature, music and art.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and mostly suitably high expectations. They make sure that pupils understand clearly what they are going to learn. Teaching assistants support groups and individuals effectively. In lessons seen, teachers help pupils to develop their command of the English language well and it was very evident how well pupils keenly helped each other with this. In many lessons, pupils are challenged to explain their thinking and they participate enthusiastically in their own learning. However, in some lessons, activities do not always proceed at a sufficient pace. Consequently, pupils do not always make the best possible progress. Some pupils commented that they found the work too easy. Teachers' use of questioning to check pupils' understanding is good but marking in pupils' books does not always tell pupils exactly how to improve, for example, their writing and presentation skills.

Inspectors looked in particular about how well the curriculum is developing to help

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 with their learning and personal development. Inspectors found that the curriculum is improving well and is being tailored to the needs of the school's changing population and pupils' interest. As seen in lessons, progress in mathematics is accelerated by the tighter focus on basic calculation and problem-solving. The Year 1 curriculum has been successfully adapted to ease transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the school as a whole, musical opportunities are increasing; for example, pupils play the ocarina and ukulele. Visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning. For example, pupils were enthralled when former evacuees talked about their wartime experiences. The school provides a good range of well-attended clubs and sporting activities. Pupils are very proud of the ongoing success of the netball team. The school has gained a number of awards, including Healthy Schools status, as well as Activemark and Arts Mark awards.

Parents appreciate the care and support provided. One Year 3 parent said, 'All the teachers my son has had have been very approachable and have supported him.' There are good arrangements for transfer to secondary education. The school promotes good behaviour through a clear system of rewards and sanctions. The number of pupils excluded is low, and falling. The school has succeeded in involving some hard-to-reach families who do not yet appreciate the importance of regular attendance, but recognises the need to develop these measures still further.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his senior team provide a caring, supportive and inclusive learning environment in order to cater for the diverse needs of the school's rapidly changing population. The school has thoroughly embraced the need to strongly promote equal opportunities and make sure that there is no discrimination. As a result, any past underachievement by some groups is being addressed well so that all groups are helped to make similar progress.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. Leaders have acted decisively in order to eliminate some past inadequate teaching and have implemented a range of strategies to improve pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff morale is high and there is a shared vision of school improvement. The effective school development plan is helping to move the school forward, but middle managers are not as involved in setting this as they could be.

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Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses of the school and its priorities for improvement. They have fostered strong links with the local community, and have considerably increased the resources available to the school. This is reflected in the new 'community building', currently being built. The school works effectively to make parents, including some who are hard to reach, feel welcome in school, understand how well their children are doing, and how to help them at home. This practice is especially well established in the lower part of the school.

The school has been successful in promoting community cohesion at the local level and this demonstrates how well they are working to ensure that there is no discrimination. Pupils learn about different faiths, cultures and social diversity. The school is very successful in tailoring provision to the needs of the school's ever- changing population It recognises, however, the need to establish stronger links with different communities elsewhere in Great Britain and abroad.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills when they join the Reception class are less well developed than those found nationally. Staff organise exciting and challenging activities and, as a result, they make good progress. Children enjoy their learning and behave well, although some of them take too long to settle down to be ready for story time. Children are eager to learn, and show positive attitudes, for example in showing good care and concern for the class guinea pigs. They benefit from a welcoming, attractive and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment.

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Planned activities cover all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, and staff adapt them well to meet children's different learning and development needs. Teaching is good. Staff relate well to the children, and have developed effective techniques for observing and recording their progress. Children have good opportunities to assess their own progress. Parents feel they are well informed about their children's development, which helps them to support their children's progress at home. One commented, 'The school provides excellent information about my child's needs.' Leaders have identified areas for improvement, and have implemented measures, for example reading partnerships, which are having a good impact on children's progress.

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

Parents and carers are generally very supportive of the school. A very large majority are happy with children's experience of school. Most parents and carers believe the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress, helps them to support their children's learning, and takes account of their suggestions. A few express reservations about its response to their concerns and about how it deals with unacceptable behaviour. However, inspectors believe that the school has introduced effective measures to promote good behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Folkestone 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 403 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	55	39	44	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	41	47	43	49	4	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	34	45	51	9	10	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	28	51	58	6	7	4	5
The teaching is good at this school	28	32	56	64	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	30	47	53	4	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	39	49	56	2	2	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)	21	24	47	53	9	10	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	28	51	58	4	5	4	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	23	46	52	13	15	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	20	56	64	8	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	24	27	58	66	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	40	43	49	6	7	2	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 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.



22 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Folkestone Christ Church CofE Primary School, Folkestone CT20 1DJ

Thank you all for being so welcoming and helpful to the inspectors. This letter is to tell you about what we found.

You have a happy school where everyone gets on very well, no matter what background they come from. You enjoy lessons, especially when there are exciting things to do. You learn new things in a steady way. In Year 6, you reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. You behave well and you feel very safe in school. Your understanding of healthy lifestyles is excellent: you know what is good to eat and drink and you take plenty of exercise; well done for this, and keep it up! You help to make the school a better place through your work on the school council and by helping one another in various ways. You also raise lots of money for charity. You work well together, and you enjoy solving problems. Some of you need to make more of an effort to arrive in school on time, and attend more regularly. Please ask your parents to help you with this. The school takes good care of you, and helps you to settle in very well when you start. You have a good range of after-school activities, and you particularly like the sports clubs ' well done to the netball team!

The headteacher, staff and governors are all working hard to make the school even better. To help them do this, we have asked them to make sure:

- your attendance improves
- all your lessons include interesting and challenging activities that help you to make as much progress as you can
- you have more information about what you need to do to improve your work
- you have more chances to learn about how people live in other parts of this country, and abroad.

We wish you all the best for the future!

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff

Lead inspector

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