

Christ Church CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122792
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	340215
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Hawthorne
Headteacher	Gill Maguire
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed learning in each of the four classes, visited eight lessons and observed the work of four teachers. The lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body. The lead inspector observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including tracking of pupils' progress, samples of recent work, school planning and records of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors also evaluated documents regarding the safeguarding of pupils. Questionnaires from 28 parents and carers, 27 pupils and 10 staff were scrutinised.

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

- whether all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can, especially in their writing
- if the personal development and well-being of the pupils is effective and if attendance is improving
- whether assessment information is used well enough to provide consistently challenging and interesting work for all groups of pupils
- if the work of the school is monitored and evaluated rigorously enough to identify the right areas for further improvement.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average sized infant school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and only a very small number speak English as an additional language. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above the national average. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average with these pupils having a range of learning, behavioural and health-related difficulties. The school holds gold Healthy Schools and Sports Partnership awards and has recognition for the quality of its Extended Services.

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

This is a good school where pupils say that they make lots of friends and feel happy. Parents are pleased with the quality of education and care provided. One said, 'My child has had a wonderful time at Christ Church', while another noted, 'My child has benefited from the small class size. He enjoys school thoroughly and the staff are always helpful.'

The very small numbers mean that standards can vary considerably from year to year. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which sometimes are in line and at other times are below the expectations for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Pupils make good overall progress particularly in Key Stage 1. Standards have improved in the last two years and are around or slightly above the national average. A growing proportion of pupils reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics. But, few pupils write in sufficient length or depth to reach the higher levels in writing. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress but at times there are not enough adult-led activities to ensure learning moves forward in key areas, especially in the development of early writing skills.

Pupils' good behaviour has a positive impact on their learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they understand how to keep themselves and others safe. They have satisfactory opportunities to take on responsibilities in and around school and are keen to take on small jobs that help adults and other children. The attendance rate is broadly average but a very small number of pupils do not attend regularly enough and some parents take their children on holiday in term time.

The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is good and all staff praise and support the pupils' well, which helps them develop confidence. Key to recent improvements has been the careful tracking of progress. Effective use is made of assessment information to match tasks to pupils' different abilities. The support and guidance of pupils are good and staff know and care for the pupils well.

The leadership and management of the school are good and the headteacher and staff work well together to keep the school moving forward. This ensures there is good capacity to continue to improve. Links with parents, other schools and agencies are good, which supports pupils' learning and development well. While there are appropriate checks of the quality of teaching, subject leaders do not have many opportunities to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning in areas for which they hold responsibility.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- – Extend the opportunities for pupils to develop better writing skills by:
 - ensuring that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have well structured opportunities to develop early writing skills
 - making sure that pupils across the school develop the ability to write at appropriate length and in depth
 - providing more opportunities for senior staff to rigorously monitor the quality of planning, teaching and learning.
- Raise the level of attendance for those pupils who do not attend regularly enough by:
 - monitoring and supporting the very few pupils who are persistently absent
 - encouraging families to take holidays out of term time in order not to disrupt learning.

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

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are largely in line with the expectations for their age although their early writing skills are less well developed than other areas. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress. Standards have steadily improved in the last two years. Pupils often read well because the school has an effective system of hearing them read in groups and individually. Parents are also very supportive of reading at home which enables pupils to practise the skills they have learnt in school. Pupils often do well in mathematics too and, in discussions, several say this is their favourite subject. Recent work shows that pupils also do well in science. This was seen when pupils in Year 1 learnt more about mini-beasts, deciding where pictures of several creatures were to be placed on a diagram indicating those with or without six legs and those with or without wings. Their classmates also learnt more about using a computer to add pictures and sounds to their sunflower seed stories. However, pupils do not make as much progress in writing as in other areas and few pupils are working securely at the higher levels. This is because the teaching of writing does not build in a consistent and progressive manner the skills needed to write at length, with confidence and imagination. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with additional needs, including the very small number at the early stages of learning English, make good progress because they are well supported by staff including skilled teaching assistants. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave well. As they move through the school, most grow in confidence with many being keen to share their ideas and what they know. This helps them prepare at least satisfactorily for their future. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, including in the restricted outdoor area. They have a satisfactory understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle but there is more work to be done to convince them of the benefits of eating vegetables and of wise choices for packed lunches. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to take on responsibilities such as 'the child of the week', with jobs including collecting fruit and milk for the class. But, with no school council, there are currently few other

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opportunities to develop a 'pupil voice' or to take on other responsibilities in the school or wider community. Although attendance is broadly average and most pupils attend regularly, a very small number of pupils are persistent absentees. School data shows that these pupils do not do as well in their work as their classmates.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is good, though it is slightly more effective in Key Stage 1 than in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching in Year 1 is most effective because staff use assessment information well to set challenging tasks for groups of pupils of different abilities. Pupils in Year 2 also make good progress, as evidenced when they identified the main features needed for a report about a sunflower using a title, an opening statement and connectives to develop their story. Teaching assistants and students helping the pupils have a good understanding of their roles and support different groups well. The curriculum is good with themes, such as the current focus on 'growth', linking subjects together well. This is reflected in some interesting tasks in science, showing good development of knowledge, skills and understanding. While the

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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curriculum to develop writing skills is satisfactory, recent work shows pupils have relatively few opportunities to write at length, to develop different strands of a story and produce depth in their work. This is because quite a lot of writing pieces are short and focused on the development of basic skills at the expense of developing higher level skills.

Teachers and the good number of support staff know and care for the pupils well. In some classes, there are four adults working with relatively small numbers which helps support pupils' learning and social development well. Pupils with additional needs are well catered for and support is matched to their difficulties. Pupils new to the country are well supported and develop confidence in speaking English. Academic guidance, including the marking of pupils' work, is effective. Provision for children in the breakfast club is good, which ensures there is a calm and well-organised start to the school day. At times, midday staff miss opportunities to encourage pupils to try vegetables or foods that are new to them and develop better table manners. Food is therefore wasted which does not give pupils a positive message about eco awareness.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

There is a clear sense of the staff team working well together which results in good leadership and management. The mainly very experienced members of staff have often worked in the school for some time and share a commitment to the pupils and their families. The headteacher is quietly driving the school forward and standards are improving which helps ensure the school provides good value for money. Self-evaluation is accurate, though records of monitoring are often descriptive and supportive rather than rigorously evaluative. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is well led and governors have, rightly, identified the need to further develop a programme of focused visits to ensure all governors are well informed at first-hand about the work of the school.

There are good links with local schools through a 'soft federation' and with a range of external agencies, all of which support learning and the pupils' personal development well. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and is effective in supporting those with additional needs. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily: it works well with its local community but has not yet developed many links with the wider and global community. Safeguarding procedures are good. There are careful checks of

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those who help in school and the staff take seriously their responsibility to ensure external areas provide a safe environment for everyone. The school building is small and outside space restricted. At times, the extensive storage of equipment and materials means that some internal areas are cramped and cluttered and do not entirely eliminate the possibility of minor accidents for pupils and staff.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school has recently extended its provision for younger children and now admits them shortly after their third birthday. The Foundation 1 (Nursery) class works alongside the Foundation 2 (Reception) group in adjoining classrooms and share the outside area. Children enter with mixed skills and experiences which overall are in line with the expectations for their age, although often lower in communication, language and literacy. While many children chat happily, their vocabulary and early knowledge of sounds and letters and mark making is more varied. They make satisfactory overall progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and sometimes this is good, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. Children grow considerably in confidence and enjoy themselves. The staff have worked hard to introduce a wide range of opportunities promoting child-chosen activities. However, currently the balance of adult-led or child-chosen activities is not entirely effective and there are not enough opportunities for staff to teach the children how to develop specific skills. This particularly limits the development of early mark-making and writing skills, as this area does not have a high enough focus either in planning or general activities. Whilst the children are very happy running around, making noises and using

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the tricycles, opportunities are missed for them to record what they have done or found out.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers think well of the school, they like the small school ethos and say that their children are happy here. They believe that teaching is good and that the school meets their children's needs well. While few added comments to the inspection questionnaire, their positive responses indicate there are few things they think need to be changed. The few concerns noted were mainly of an individual nature and sometimes related to safety issues near a busy road and of the small site. Inspectors agree with the responses of the parents and note that the school takes seriously its responsibilities for safeguarding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ Church CofE Infant 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 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 73 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	82	5	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	61	9	32	2	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	61	11	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	68	8	29	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	71	8	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	64	10	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	71	8	29	0	0	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)	14	50	11	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	68	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	64	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	57	11	39	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	61	11	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	82	5	18	0	0	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

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). 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"> ■ 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.



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Infant School, Newark, NG24 4UT

Thank you very much for making me welcome when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed talking to many of you, including the group I chatted to who were good at explaining what they know and do. I also liked meeting several of you in lessons, at break and when I attended assembly. I particularly enjoyed chatting to some of you at lunchtime. Thank you also for the questionnaire returns some of you filled in for the inspection - that was nice because the questions are written for older boys and girls and I was pleased you had a go at them. These are some of the findings from the visit.

You go to a good school. I was pleased to see that you behave well and this helps you to concentrate and try hard with your work. You make good progress, especially in reading and numeracy. There are lots of adults to help you and the staff look after you well. I liked seeing how well you all play together even though the playground is very cramped.

To improve your school further, I have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- help you to improve your writing by providing more ways that you can practise your skills in all the classes and by checking what you do a bit more carefully
- do everything that they can to encourage your parents to make sure you attend school regularly

You can help your school by encouraging your parents to make sure you come to school regularly. After all, if you do not come to school, you cannot make as much progress as your friends. Also, I'd like you to think about what you eat and try more vegetables and fruit so that you have a healthy diet.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

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