

# Christ Church CE First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123757
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	340417
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Billington

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kevin Hampton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Bullmore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Feltham Lane Frome BA11 5AJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 13 lessons, sampled a variety of small-group activities and saw seven teachers teaching. They held discussions with pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including curriculum planning, the school improvement plan and records of pupils' progress. Forty-seven questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- the extent to which all groups of pupils are making at least satisfactory progress
- the impact of strategies to improve attainment in literacy, particularly in reading, and in numeracy
- ways in which the school meets the needs of pupils with a range of specific difficulties and supports their families.

## Information about the school

Information about the school

This is an average sized first school in which the majority of pupils are White British. A small minority are of Gypsy/Roma heritage. There are also a few pupils from other minority ethnic groups, some of whom are learning English as an additional language. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or learning difficulties. Most of these pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties: a minority have emotional and behavioural difficulties or need support with speech and communication; and a few have physical disabilities. A small number of these pupils are supported in a nurture group.

A children's centre, managed by the headteacher, shares the school site. The centre, and the nursery class which is based there, were subject to separate inspections in 2009 and therefore were not included in this inspection.

**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

A significant strength of the school is the good pastoral care provided, an aspect praised by many parents and carers. Several made comments such as, 'I am very appreciative of the extra help given to me and my child' and commended 'a welcoming and supportive ethos'. The school's efforts to engage with parents and carers are outstanding. Pupils and their families are very well known and the school is proactive in supporting those who need additional help. Close links with the children's centre and with a range of agencies ensure that programmes of support for individuals are carefully tailored to their needs. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities and from special events such as the recent celebration of Gypsy/Roma traditions. They make a good contribution to the school and local community and regularly participate in fund-raising for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils feel very safe in school and have a good understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy.

The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, usually between 50% and 60% in each year group, has an impact on the school's performance in national tests and assessments. Attainment is low in English and mathematics. School leaders recognise that, while it is unlikely that performance will match national average levels, attainment is below average in comparison with similar schools. Most pupils who do not have learning difficulties attain levels in line with expectations by the end of Year 4, but there are some that could be doing better, particularly the more able. Recent meetings to discuss progress have focused particularly on these pupils and their end-of-year targets have been revised upwards.

Senior leaders have accurately identified where improvements are needed and have introduced effective measures to improve pupils' skills in literacy. These are already having a marked impact in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where provision is good. The strong focus on developing children's language and the introduction of a well-structured programme for teaching letters and sounds are underpinning good progress in reading and writing. Regular opportunities to learn about the number system have already resulted in children's attainment in this aspect of learning being close to national averages by the end of Reception. This good start is beginning to be reflected in Years 1 and 2, where progress is accelerating. Predictions for the attainment of current Year 2 pupils at the end of this academic year show that the upward trend seen in 2009 is set to continue, particularly in reading and mathematics. The success of these recent initiatives and senior leaders' continuing commitment to raising attainment for all pupils demonstrate the school's sound capacity for sustained improvement.

Lessons throughout the school are characterised by good relationships and effective

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strategies for behaviour management. Teachers are keenly aware that they are catering for a wide range of needs in each class. Activities are adapted to take account of this but there are occasions when the pace of learning is too leisurely and teachers' expectations are too low, particularly of more able pupils. Pupils are not always aware of the purpose of the activities they are undertaking. While teachers set targets for the next steps in learning, pupils themselves rarely know what these are and what they need to do to improve.

The school has comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress. The information is well used to identify individuals who need extra support and to provide a wide range of interventions to meet their needs. However, the information is not summarised to evaluate the overall gains made by different groups of pupils throughout the school.

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

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics so that by 2012 these are broadly in line with schools working in similar circumstances by:
  - building on the good start that children are making in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - accelerating the progress of more able pupils
  - raising expectations of pupils' potential to achieve more in lessons.
- Improve pupils' engagement in their learning by:
  - ensuring that they are aware of their targets and of what they need to do to improve
  - making sure that lessons are conducted at a good pace
  - sharing the aims of each lesson so that pupils understand what they should be learning.
- Develop more rigorous systems for checking on the school's effectiveness by
- implementing sharper analysis of data to check on the performance of different groups through the school.

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

Pupils generally enjoy learning, particularly when they are engaged in practical and collaborative activities. This was apparent in a Year 4 lesson when several pupils worked well in pairs to 'round up' a random series of two- and three-digit numbers to enable them to add and subtract more efficiently. Most pupils are making progress at expected rates, albeit in very small steps for those with significant learning difficulties. Pupils who have had additional support to improve their reading skills have made rapid progress as a result of a well-structured intervention programme. More able pupils sometimes mark time in lessons, particularly in introductory sessions, when they revisit concepts that they have already grasped.

Pupils are keen to participate in competitions and sporting activities and are proud of

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their school's successes. Many show sensitive awareness of the needs of others, for example, those who find it difficult to control their behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in all activities. Pupils in the early stages of learning English develop a good understanding of the language and often demonstrate a good degree of confidence in contributing to class and small-group discussions.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching and the curriculum are being increasingly well adapted to engage pupils' interests and meet their diverse needs. Links across subjects are developing well, allowing better opportunities for pupils to research information, for example, in history, and to write for a variety of purposes. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is more limited, but the school recognises scope for further development in this area. A wealth of opportunities for pupils to participate in sports-related activities, to get involved in special events, to learn to play an instrument and to work with artists and authors extends their experiences and enhances their

<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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personal development.

Teaching assistants are well used to support learning. They have a significant impact in supporting individual pupils with specific needs and in contributing to good management of behaviour in lessons. Lessons are generally more successful in taking account of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs than in providing challenge for the more able. While learning objectives are identified in planning, these are not routinely shared with pupils so they are not always clear about what they need to achieve in a lesson. The lack of targets that are easily understandable inhibits pupils' ability to identify what they are aiming for and what they need to do to improve.

The nurture group has a significant impact in supporting several pupils who find it difficult to benefit from what the school offers. Good systems support their reintegration into mainstream lessons and there are some striking examples of ways in which barriers to learning have been overcome. Parents praise the inclusive nature of the school, making comments such as, 'My child has learned acceptance, tolerance and empathy.' The school works hard to promote regular attendance, involving relevant agencies to support individual families who find it difficult to get children to school on time each day.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels share a determination to improve attainment and to ensure that pupils of all abilities make the best possible progress. Weak teaching has been eradicated as a result of determined action and additional support from senior leaders. A range of initiatives has been introduced to address this aim. While it is too early to see the impact of many of these, the school is moving firmly in the right direction.

Governors are well organised to fulfil their responsibilities but lack detailed information on the school's performance, and thus are not in a position to ask challenging questions about the achievement of different groups of pupils. While the school has pertinent information on the performance of pupils in each year group, this is not summarised to enable an overall evaluation of, for example, the extent to which boys and girls are making equally good progress throughout the school.

Good arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. Good liaison with a range of agencies contributes effectively to supporting individual pupils' well-being. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, and with a variety of specific and sometimes complex needs, are welcomed and the school is a cohesive community. Links with the local

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community are also strong. Pupils' awareness of different traditions and lifestyles around the world is raised through specific initiatives such as a link with a school in Warsaw.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</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>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception classes are very well organised to provide a range of stimulating activities that encourage children to explore, experiment and extend their understanding. A good balance between adult-led and child-initiated tasks supports learning for children of all abilities. A high level of adult support means that children's confidence and ability to express their ideas are well supported. There is a good focus on developing language and on teaching key skills in early literacy and numeracy. Regular work on letters and sounds, for example, is resulting in children transferring their knowledge to read captions and simple texts and to begin to write independently. Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally very limited. They make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge of number. While attainment by the end of the Reception Year is still well below expectations, it is improving, particularly in communication, language and literacy. The proportion of children that are on course to reach expected levels at the end of this year is higher than in previous years.

Individual children's progress is carefully tracked through regular observation and focused assessments. Information is shared with parents and they are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning diaries and to follow up activities at home. Good teamwork across the Reception classes ensures that resources are well deployed and allows children to make good use of the outdoor area. Stimulating activities are provided



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that are particularly successful in supporting children's personal and social skills and their physical and creative development, as well as extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. A large tray of semi-set jelly, for example, engaged a good deal of interest and provoked lively discussion about its colour, texture and feel, as well as being a lot of fun!

*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

Almost all parents are positive about every aspect of the school. They are all happy about the quality of their children's experiences. Many commented on the approachability of staff and expressed appreciation of the work that they do to ensure that their children's individual needs are met.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ Church CE First 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	73	13	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	76	11	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	76	11	22	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	82	8	16	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	86	7	14	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	80	9	18	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	65	17	35	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)	32	65	14	29	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	76	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	76	10	20	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	71	14	29	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	90	4	8	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 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.**



18 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church CE First School, Frome, BA11 5AJ

You may remember that three of us visited recently to see how you are getting on. Thank you for talking to us about your work in lessons and what goes on around the school. Particular thanks to the groups of Years 3 and 4 pupils who met with us. I thought you might be interested in what I am saying in my report. Your school provides you with a sound education and does some things particularly well.

Some of the highlights are these.

- The school takes good care of you and staff make sure that you get extra help if you need it.
- Most of you behave well in lessons and around the school and you help each other when you can.
- You know how important it is to keep safe and healthy. We were impressed with the variety of sporting activities and special events in which you take part.
- Children in the Reception classes are getting off to a good start and learning lots of new things very quickly.
- Your parents and carers are very positive about everything that the school does and they get lots of information to show them how to help you at home.

We have suggested three things that the school needs to do now.

- Make sure that you all make as much progress as you can in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Help you to understand what you should be learning in each lesson and give you clear targets so that you know what you need to work towards.
- Use all the information about your progress to check that you are all doing equally well and to find out what really works well in helping you to learn more.

You can help by making sure that you know what to do to reach your targets. Thank you again for all your help.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Billington

Lead inspector

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