

The Lambs Christian School

Independent school inspection report

DCSF registration number 330/6105
Unique reference number 134091
Inspection number 343907
Inspection dates 10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector Susan Lewis

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

Age group: 3–11

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.¹

Information about the school

The Lambs Christian School is a small, independent primary school located in Birmingham. It was last inspected in April 2007 and there was a visit to monitor the school's progress on October 2008. It is led and managed by the headteacher, who is also the senior trustee and proprietor of the school. There are 30 pupils on roll, aged between three and 11. Seven children are in receipt of nursery education funding. All pupils are of a Black African or Black Caribbean heritage. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language and none has a statement of special educational needs. There are two classes: one for children aged three to five (Early Years Foundation Stage) and the other for those aged six to 11 (Years 2 to 6). Year 1 pupils may be placed in either class, according to need. The school has a distinctive Christian ethos, using the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) programme for planning the majority of its curriculum. Its main aim is 'to enable (God enabling us) all our children to reach their full potential in a safe, stimulating and Christ centred environment.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of the education provided by The Lambs Christian School and the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The school meets its aims and ensures that pupils' welfare is safeguarded effectively. Good teaching and a good curriculum ensure that pupils make good progress. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils and provision for welfare, health and safety are also good. This is because school staff work so well together as a team, are totally committed to the school's aims and because of the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. The school has addressed fully the regulations not met at the last inspection. It now meets all regulatory requirements except one.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good. The quality of the curriculum is good, including that for the youngest children and provides the full range of opportunities to enable pupils to learn well and make good progress. The ACE system is used to deliver the

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

main body of the curriculum to older pupils. This means each pupil working systematically through tasks designed to match their ability each morning. In the afternoon, small group work, musical activities, work around themes and topics, visits and clubs, all support pupils' learning further. Practical activities are focused upon to ensure that the skills learned through their ACE work are able to be applied. Pupils say they enjoy this work and that they know what they are learning. Parents say that their children enjoy coming to school and have a good range of activities to support their learning. The school has recently adapted its approaches in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and a good balance of opportunities in each of the areas of learning is provided, including opportunities to choose and to follow their own interests.

Pupils have access to the full range of learning experiences that they should. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, including French. Every pupil learns to play a musical instrument and is part of the choir; even the youngest children sing tunefully and with joy. There is a good emphasis on literacy, numeracy and social studies and pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in these areas. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning; the youngest children use a mouse and access simple software with great confidence. The curriculum is enhanced by the use of local facilities for weekly swimming and regular walks and visits, for example to the library. Although the school does not submit pupils for national assessments, it does carry out a good range of other assessments and optional tests. These show most pupils, from average starting points make good or better progress and leave the school very well prepared for their secondary education. Subjects are underpinned by appropriate schemes of work and short-term lesson planning, although there is variety in the depth of these and in the ways in which such information is kept.

Teachers are appropriately experienced in the ACE system and knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. They also know pupils very well and mostly adapt the pace of lessons and the material well to support everyone's understanding. As a result, the pupils, whatever their age or needs, make good progress. From the youngest age, pupils quickly adopt positive attitudes to learning and are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils respond well to this. They work hard and try their best, for example, really trying to work out answers to the teacher's challenging questions in a literacy lesson about characterisation. Their behaviour is excellent.

Procedures for assessment are good overall, although some aspects of the new approaches to this are still developing in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The established framework for assessment within the ACE programme is used well to target those pupils who might need additional support. The school tracks pupils' progress in relation to this and to national norms. Pupils and parents are involved in reviewing this and setting targets. This all helps those pupils who do have greater

difficulty in learning than others to receive appropriate support and make similarly good progress towards their targets.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all its children, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is a welcoming, friendly school where pupils work hard but also are encouraged to enjoy life. Everyone is given small tasks of responsibility and few need reminding to carry these out. Pupils are proud of their work and progress and are quick to offer to help. They are polite and courteous and there is no bullying. Pupils enjoy school life and feel well supported to achieve in it. Their attendance is good. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and there is a great aura of care and concern for each other and for the world. Through visits and visitors, and the carefully thought out curriculum, they are able to celebrate their own cultural traditions, celebrating great black preachers or authors for example, but also those of others. This all helps them to have strong aspirations for themselves but also to respect people's differences. They regularly raise money for charities, including for recent earthquake victims and through the school council, their different responsibilities and their progress meetings make strong contributions to the school itself. Older pupils have a good understanding of the different services and institutions in England.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is good. All of the required safeguarding requirements are fully in place and pupils feel extremely safe. An effective child protection policy and regular staff training are in place. Risk assessments are carried out in relation to the premises, activities within and outside school, including outings. Although satisfactory overall, there are some inconsistencies in the depth of these. Teachers are vigilant, working closely together and with parents and other agencies to ensure the highest level of safety in the school environment. Pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and staying safe and take good care of themselves and of each other. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils follow school rules to the letter. For example, when going up and down stairs and when playing outside or going to the toilets, they stand still whenever anyone needs to pass. There is a suitable three-year plan to promote the school's disabilities and discrimination policy. The school has good regard for the Every Child Matters outcomes and pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets all the regulations. It carries out appropriate checks prior to the appointment of all staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. All the required information is held on a single central register.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are suitable and welcoming. The facilities for the youngest children now allow them to move freely from activity to activity. Older pupils have access both to a main room where their work stations for their individual study of ACE work are appropriately arranged. This is a rather cramped room but well supported by further small rooms for other subjects and group learning. The school outdoor play area is appropriately equipped and being further developed. Good use is made of local facilities, such as a swimming pool. Although the school has improved its washroom and toilet facilities these are still insufficient, and the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, do not have as easy access to these as they should.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

All regulations are met. The school provides the parents and carers with a good range of information through its prospectus and parent information pack. Parents are very supportive of the school and commented to inspectors expressing their great satisfaction with the school.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school meets all the regulations in this area. Parents confirmed that they have had the relevant information and know what to do. There have been no complaints.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skills that are broadly typical for their age, although a few are weaker in some aspects of language, communication and personal development. The great sense of fun and excitement in learning in this class means that the children are quick to benefit from the experiences provided. They make good progress in all aspects of their learning and development, and particularly in their early literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. They also make good progress in aspects of creative development such as art, singing and the use of the computer. Relationships are excellent. Children work and play well together, because of the ways in which their teachers help them to be more aware of others' needs. Behaviour is excellent; children share resources and take turns very willingly. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The teachers have recently reorganised the ways in which they support children's learning and there is an appropriate balance of child and adult-led activities. This means children have sufficient opportunities to explore and make choices for themselves and staff are becoming more skilled in recording and planning for how to support this. All the required elements of assessment are in place, although there are some inconsistencies in how these records are kept. Nonetheless, staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs and levels, and an increasing knowledge of the new

requirements so that the teaching supports children's learning and development well. All the welfare arrangements meet current requirements. The new covered area in the outdoor learning environment allows for good extension of children's learning outside, whether replicating 'road works' and carrying out 'road safety' activities or for quieter, thinking activities.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- improve washroom and toilet facilities so that they are appropriate to the age range and numbers of pupils (paragraph 5(k)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the consistency in the way teachers draw up their schemes or work and plan their lessons to ensure that there is sufficient depth to these documents
- ensure that children's records and photographs of achievements in the Early Years Foundation Stage are always annotated to indicate which area of learning is represented in that achievement and at what level.

Inspection judgement recording form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS?		✓		
What is the quality of provision in the EYFS?		✓		
How effectively is the EYFS led and managed?		✓		
Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS?		✓		

School details

Name of school	The Lambs Christian School		
DCSF number	330/6105		
Unique reference number	134091		
Type of school	Christian		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	22 January 2003		
Age range of pupils	3–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 12	Girls: 17	Total: 29
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3600		
Address of school	The Lambs Christian School Soho Hill Hockley Birmingham West Midlands B19 1AY		
Telephone number	0121 554 4744		
Fax number	0121 554 3790		
Email address	lambschristianschool@yahoo.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Ekhuemelo		
Proprietor	Mrs Patricia Ekhuemelo		
Reporting inspector	Susan Lewis		
Dates of inspection	10–11 March 2010		