

Christ Church CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103997
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	377005
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Mike Thompson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Rogers
Headteacher	Michaela Long
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2008
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Introduction

Three additional inspectors carried out this inspection. The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by ten teachers, and held meetings with the headteacher, members of the teaching staff and the governing body, a representative of the local authority, and pupils. They looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires returned by 56 parents or carers, 78 pupils in Key Stage 2 and 10 members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent is the school able to demonstrate that pupils make at least satisfactory progress, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- How effective has the school been in responding to the previous inspection findings by ensuring that teaching and the curriculum meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and provide consistently challenging work for more-able pupils?
- How effectively has the school responded to the findings of the previous inspection?
- How skilled are leaders other than senior leaders in monitoring and evaluating, and what is their impact on pupils' achievement?

Information about the school

This is an average-size, one-form entry primary school in which a large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is about three times the national average and is rising steadily each year. At the time of the inspection, those pupils comprised almost 50% of the number on roll. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. Most of them have general learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.

There have been very recent and significant changes in the deployment of staff and in the organisation of some year groups. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are now taught in three mixed-age classes for most of their lessons. As a result of staff reorganisation and new appointments, almost all teachers are new to the class and year groups that they teach. At the start of the inspection, the pupils had been back at school for five days.

The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and has an Activemark accreditation for its promotion of physical education and sport. It is a 'Green Flag' Eco-school. The school provides a breakfast club during term-time.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Improvements in provision over the past few years have had a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress, but inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress overall. The school invests a great deal of time and resources in ensuring that pupils make good progress in developing their personal and social skills, thus providing a climate within which learning can take place. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, and discussions with pupils confirm this. Pupils say they are well cared for and feel secure. They have a good awareness of how to be healthy. Parents and carers are greatly appreciative of the welcoming, safe and supportive environment provided for their children.

When children join the Nursery, their starting points are well below those expected for three-year-olds and many have limited comprehension of English and little knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Although children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, their attainment is below average by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average. Since attainment at the beginning of Key Stage 1 is also broadly average, this represents satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Teaching is satisfactory. There is some good teaching and inspectors observed good features in all lessons. Teachers relate well to their pupils and explain tasks clearly. However, their expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. In some instances, when all pupils have the same task, teachers miss opportunities to ensure good levels of individual challenge because they do not vary the criteria for completing tasks according to pupils' different levels of attainment. Generally, teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to help develop pupils' understanding of new concepts. That occurs most often through effective use of the interactive white boards available in all classrooms. However, pupils do not use ICT routinely as a day-to-day tool to support their learning.

The curriculum provides pupils with memorable experiences that capture their imaginations. Work to develop the 'Irresistible Learning' curriculum is continuing. It does not yet take full account of the way in which pupils' knowledge and skills in different subjects are to be developed progressively within a cross-curricular framework. In addition, the new organisation of mixed-age teaching groups for Years 4, 5 and 6, together with teachers' lack of familiarity with their teaching groups,

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sometimes results in tasks being pitched at too low a level for some pupils. Strengths of the curriculum are the extra help given to pupils who are in the early stages of learning English and the well-constructed programmes used to help pupils who are falling behind in developing their skills in literacy or numeracy. As a result, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress during these interventions. In lessons, these groups of pupils progress at the same satisfactory rate as their classmates.

The impact of the school's leadership on pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The headteacher is driving much of the strategic improvement currently taking place. Leaders at other levels are yet to develop the full range of skills needed. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met and provides adequate challenge. At all levels of leadership, there is a need for sharper and more systematic monitoring and evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Nonetheless, the impact of actions taken to improve pupils' achievement, demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that teachers:
 - make clear reference to skills to be developed in lessons and make use of success criteria to set specific, measurable targets matched carefully to the abilities of all pupils
 - plan for pupils to use ICT as a day-to-day tool for learning.
- Review the planning of the new curriculum and the way in which pupils are grouped to ensure seamless continuity and progression in learning.
- Ensure more systematic and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and curriculum development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Standards of attainment improved at the end of both key stages between 2008 and 2010, but dipped slightly at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011. It is clear from the lessons observed and the work in pupils' books that pupils learn satisfactorily. Barriers to learning are countered successfully through individual support. For example, in an English lesson for Years 4 to 6, pupils were challenged to use a range of adjectives to describe items that a pirate might use. Learning support staff played a key role in ensuring the inclusion of lower-attaining pupils by providing the help

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needed by discussing the items chosen by the pupils. The standards of writing observed in Years 4 to 6 are too low. Letter formation is insecure; too many pupils print, rather than writing cursively, and standards of presentation are below those expected normally.

While pupils make satisfactory gains in learning in lessons, those identified as in need of extra help in literacy and numeracy make good and sometimes outstanding progress when withdrawn from lessons. That is because of the quality of the individual attention they receive and the well-structured materials used. For example, a well-established programme of intensive support in reading has resulted in pupils improving their reading age by as much as 18 months within a ten-week period. Although most pupils are technically competent readers, their lack of vocabulary affects their comprehension adversely. That, in turn, limits the progress they are able to make in other subjects, for example when solving problems in mathematics. The school is aware of this issue acutely, particularly in relation to the underperformance of Pakistani boys, and is working to improve the situation. The strategies adopted include a strong focus on developing subject-specific vocabulary through, for example, guided reading and written prompts in lessons.

Pupils’ strong commitment to adopting healthy lifestyles is evident in their enthusiastic participation in physical activities and their very clear understanding of what constitutes a sensible diet. Pupils’ achievements in promoting health and well-being are recognised through the Healthy Schools status and the Activemark accreditation. The school has well-established and consistently applied procedures for promoting good behaviour; these are reflected in the politeness and consideration shown by all pupils. A clear moral code permeates the daily life of the school and clearly pupils know right from wrong. They show great empathy for the wide range of cultural traditions celebrated within the school.

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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

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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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?

Teachers are good at developing pupils' confidence as learners. They use questions well to develop pupils' understanding. However, teachers' practice in using assessment to develop learning is inconsistent. Lessons lose pace and direction when teachers do not set out precisely what they expect of pupils of different levels of ability. Where teaching is most successful, there is a strong focus on ensuring that the pupils know precisely what they have to achieve and how to do it. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, the teacher's good use of a poem written by one of the pupils provided clear direction about the criteria that they needed to use when assessing their own work. A scrutiny of pupils' books showed that generally teachers' marking is effective in helping improve pupils' work.

The curriculum contributes satisfactorily to pupils' academic attainment and provides the required balance between subjects. It is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and to capture the interest of boys. Its main strengths are in the promotion of pupils' personal development and in providing activities to enrich pupils' learning and life experiences. For example, the local authority music service provides violin and cello tuition for pupils. The newly adopted 'Irresistible Learning' curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy within other subjects. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory. Individual education plans for pupils at the School Action stage are set out clearly and in accessible language, with clear targets to be achieved. However, the plans for pupils with more complex needs are less clear and lack precision.

The needs of individuals are known well and pupils feel valued members of the school family. There are very clear, well-established arrangements for the induction of pupils into school and smooth transition to the next phase of pupils' education at the end of Year 6. However, transition from the Reception Year to Year 1 is not managed well enough and this results in some inadequate aspects of provision in Year 1. The school provided compelling evidence of the way in which potentially vulnerable pupils and their families benefit from carefully targeted support. The breakfast club provides a caring and safe start to the day for the pupils attending.

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

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The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The positive views expressed by staff, parents and carers, and pupils indicate that they have confidence in the leadership. Leaders embed ambition and drive improvement satisfactorily. Regular tracking of pupils’ progress helps inform the school’s actions. Target-setting is based on secure assessment information, but is only adequately challenging. There are suitable plans in place to improve on areas of weakness and eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Senior leaders have a very clear view of what constitutes good teaching, but quality checks are not systematic enough. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that staff update their skills constantly. The governing body takes a keen interest in the work of the school and is well informed. However, it has yet to develop the full range of skills required to help it become even more independent in holding it to account, for example by making links between national data about pupils’ progress and the impact of teaching. A good feature of governance is the way in which the governing body is organising the induction of new governors. Safeguarding procedures are secure, but are not audited thoroughly enough.

Parents’ and carers’ overwhelmingly positive views about their children’s positive experiences reflect their appreciation that this is an inclusive school in which discrimination has no place and which gives their children a sense of belonging and equality of opportunity. The school is committed strongly to developing partnerships with parents and carers. Good examples of current initiatives are the improved engagement of Pakistani mothers, including a weekly keep-fit session, and the great success of adult education focused on GCSE and NVQ qualifications for parents, carers and family members. Work to improve the promotion of community cohesion is continuing. There is a very good awareness of the needs of the local community and pupils have a satisfactory understanding of other communities within the United Kingdom. The school acknowledges that more needs to be done to broaden pupils’ horizons within a global context.

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

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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

Despite the changes in teaching staff, children in the Nursery and Reception classes continue to make good progress. That is because of the successful, well-established systems in place and the continuity provided by the experienced and effective teams of learning support staff. The children have ready access to a good range of interesting and enjoyable activities that encourage independence and initiative, both indoors and out. Basic skills of number and letter recognition and formation are taught well. The good pace of direct teaching and good opportunities for active, investigative learning mean that children focus their attention well on the tasks in hand. In the Nursery, for example, observation of a hedgehog resulted in good concentration as children made well-proportioned models of the animal. Generally, adults are good at developing learning through constant dialogue with children about the activities being tackled. However, they are less adept at seizing opportunities to develop children’s learning further by modelling grammatically correct responses for them to repeat. Children’s progress is monitored carefully so that provision can be adjusted in response to learning. High priority is placed on ensuring good-quality care. Good links with parents and carers contribute strongly to the good start to children’s education. In the Nursery, for example, they are enhanced through workshops for parents and carers in order to help promote support for children’s learning at home. Leadership is good, despite changes in staffing, because of the strong teamwork and the clear direction provided by following proven practice.

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

A very large majority of parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive in their views of the school. There is no common theme within the very few negative responses. Inspection findings support most of the positive views expressed by

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parents and carers, particularly with regard to the good aspects within the care and welfare of pupils. However, teaching and the progress made by pupils are satisfactory rather than good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	59	20	36	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	59	22	39	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	19	34	35	63	0	0	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	27	33	59	4	7	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	13	23	38	68	1	2	3	5
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	20	36	33	59	0	0	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	32	35	63	1	2	1	2
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)	16	29	32	57	1	2	3	5
The school meets my child’s particular needs	20	36	30	54	2	4	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	36	26	46	3	5	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	32	31	55	2	4	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	21	38	28	50	0	0	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	20	36	31	55	1	2	3	5

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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.

19 September 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School, Oldbury, B69 4DE

I would like to thank all of you for being so welcoming and helpful to the inspectors when we visited your school. The school gives you a satisfactory education; this means that there are a lot of things that the school is doing right and some things that need to be improved. I know that all the adults who help to run your school want it to be a good school. For this to happen, you need to make better progress in your work.

Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You are making good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- We were impressed by your good manners and behaviour.
- You know a lot about how to be healthy and you said that you feel safe in school.

To help you to make better progress, we want the school to do three things.

- Your teachers need to make sure that you understand your targets in each lesson and know how to reach them. Also, we want them to make you use ICT much more often in lessons. I am sure that you will look forward to this!
- You enjoy your Irresistible Learning lessons, but some of you told us that you would like to have some harder work in these lessons. We have asked your teachers to look again at their plans so that they give you work that makes you think hard and helps you to learn more quickly.
- We would like all of the people who help run your school, including all the teachers and the governing body, to make even closer checks on what is happening in school and how well you are learning.

You can play your part in helping the school to become even better. The best way for you to do this is by listening carefully to what your teachers have to say and working hard to reach the targets that your teachers set for you. We are sure that you are ready for these challenges! We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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