

Christ The King Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119601
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	379849
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Steve Isherwood HMI

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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Leyland
Headteacher	Sarah Smith Lynsey Ankers (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons and parts of lessons, taught by eight teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and representatives from the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including: the school improvement plan; the tracking of pupils' progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also analysed 81 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and took account of those completed by staff and pupils.

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

- The team investigated whether all groups of pupils are making expected or better progress from their starting points.
- How well teaching takes into account the different needs of learners.
- Inspectors evaluated the quality of pupils' learning in lessons and across the curriculum.
- The team assessed the effectiveness with which leaders at all levels evaluate the impact of actions taken to drive improvement.
- Inspectors examined the proven capacity of senior leaders to secure further improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from minority-ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. An above average number of pupils leave or join the school other than at the start of the academic year. The school has a hard federated governing body with shared arrangements with St Mary's Catholic College. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was on maternity leave but returned as part of her 'keeping in touch days' to assist in the process.

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

Christ the King is a satisfactory school that takes good care of its pupils. Pupils are happy to get there in the mornings. They feel safe, have positive attitudes to their work and behave well. When asked to express their views on how they see things they found it very difficult to think of any improvements they would like to see. Their pride and enthusiasm for the school came shining through. There was strong praise for staff and the wide range of opportunities on offer. 'We have the nicest teachers.' and 'They really help us.' were typical of their comments.

Parents and carers echo these positive views and engage well with the school. 'My son loves attending.' and 'The staff are very supportive to me and my children.' are just some of the comments that reflect their high regard.

Although pupils are making better progress than previously their achievement is currently only satisfactory. Attainment, although influenced by the constant movement of pupils in and out of the school, remains low at Year 6, especially in mathematics. This is because not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work and the progress pupils make in mathematics is not rapid enough. In addition, there are inconsistencies in how well work is matched to pupils who are capable of working at a higher level. Too often, tasks for these pupils are not demanding enough and are restricted to composing a longer piece of writing or tackling a harder sum with insufficient attention given to the higher-order thinking skills that pupils need. Nevertheless, increasing numbers of pupils are making better progress from their starting points. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and there is convincing evidence in other classes that learning and progress are at least satisfactory and improving securely and quickly. This has come about because teaching is improving. Although not yet consistent, over time the number of good and better lessons is increasing. Where teaching is strongest, expectations are high, learning is fun and pupils are given every opportunity to discuss and share their ideas with others. Where teaching is less strong, there is insufficient challenge for higher-ability pupils and less attention is given to the development of their independent learning skills.

The school is moving forward from a relatively new beginning with a new staff under the determined leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have battled hard to get the school to this point. As a group they keep a close eye on the school's performance and are clear about the direction the school must take to

secure its momentum. For example, they correctly recognise that maintaining the focus on improving teaching and learning is a key priority and is central to accelerating pupils' progress and raising their attainment. In addition, they are also aware that increasing the opportunities for subject leaders to check on the quality of teaching and learning would assist them in improving provision further.

Considering the advances in provision and because there is a trend of improvement in pupils' outcomes, despite a few remaining weaknesses, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to be broadly average by:
 - maintaining the focus on improving teaching and learning and increasing the consistency of good and better lessons
 - ensuring that more pupils reach the higher levels in their work
 - using assessment information consistently to match work more closely for higher-ability pupils and ensure greater rigour in the planning to promote pupils' independent and thinking skills
 - accelerating pupils' progress in mathematics.
- Strengthen leadership and management to be good by:
 - developing the role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter the school with skills and abilities well below those typically seen. By the time they leave in Year 6 their attainment is low, particularly in mathematics. Nevertheless, this currently represents satisfactory achievement considering their starting points. However, increasing numbers of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are catching up and making better progress than previously, especially in writing, as a result of recent improvements to their teaching and learning. In lessons, pupils usually try hard and apply themselves well. Their enjoyment of learning picks up when tasks are exciting and stimulating. They particularly enjoy activities where they can test and deepen their knowledge by investigating and finding things out for themselves and by discussing and sharing their ideas with others. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked effectively in groups to identify the key points when considering a controversial issue such as whether to wear school uniform or not. Elsewhere in Year 1, the atmosphere buzzed with excitement as pupils made good progress in describing their own setting for a 'Bear Hunt'.

Pupils speak highly of staff and feel safe and secure in school. They get on well with each other and are maturing into thoughtful and caring young people with clear values of honesty, respect and tolerance. They are confident that staff will listen to their concerns should problems arise. Pupils commented, 'Playtimes are good, everyone gets on.' and 'If there's any messing about teachers sort it.'

Levels of attendance are adversely affected by local authority guidelines to keep certain groups of pupils on the school's register after they have left the school. Taking this into consideration attendance is broadly average and beginning to improve, although there are still some pupils who do not attend as often as they should despite the best efforts of the school and particularly the family liaison and attendance officers.

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	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
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
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 has improved of late but is only satisfactory overall. The proportion of good and better teaching is increasing but needs to develop further to overcome the legacy of underachievement and to make up for the gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers have improved their understanding of what constitutes effective practice through training and support and have established their own vision of learning. As a result, a number of common strengths are emerging in lessons. Teachers are skilled in developing most pupils' thinking through effective questioning which keeps pupils on their toes. Teaching assistants provide an effective layer of extra support, particularly for those that find learning difficult. New skills build well on prior learning. Increasingly pupils have opportunities to help and support each other and to check each other's understanding. Pupils are supported more effectively in knowing how to improve their work through effective comments from teachers in their books, particularly in Year 2 and Year 6. When the planning and teaching are at their best, the impact on pupils' work is significant as when pupils in Year 4 were developing their understanding of using their senses to write a descriptive piece of writing about walking through an African jungle. With skilful

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

prompting from the class teacher, using videos and sounds of the jungle, pupils made good progress in using a range of vocabulary to improve their writing. This lesson confirmed how well the pupils can do when expectations are high and the teaching imaginative.

Where teaching is less strong, tasks for higher-ability pupils lack challenge and precision, which reduces their ability to work independently and use their thinking skills.

The curriculum is improving and is adequately matched to pupils’ needs. Careful attention is being focused on improving cross-curricular provision and linking subjects together. For example, pupils in Year 5 made good progress in developing their poetry skills using information and communication technology. Pupils enjoy a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, including a residential break for pupils in Year 6 and a weekly gardening club that produces vegetables for the pupils’ school meals. These add considerable enjoyment and excitement to pupils’ learning and are much appreciated by the pupils.

No stone is left unturned to ensure that all pupils, including those whose circumstance make them most vulnerable and those who leave and join the school at different times, are well cared for and supported. Procedures for the early identification of pupils and families at risk are orchestrated well by the school’s special needs coordinator and family liaison officer. Careful attention is given to the particular needs of all pupils, including their emotional needs, through a range of activities including circle time and the use of the ‘Bubble’ intervention room. There are effective procedures for introducing children to school and for ensuring their smooth transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1 and when pupils leave the school in Year 6 and move on to secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported effectively by the deputy headteacher, has shown great resolve in leading the school through a period of much change and disruption to staffing. Together, with the strong support from other professionals and middle leaders she is leading the school down the right path. As a group, they are committed to see the school improve further and are beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel.

Staff are focused on improving the life chances and in removing barriers to learning for all pupils whatever their circumstances. For example, effective action has been taken to accelerate pupils’ progress further in writing following a whole-school focus on improving their skills. These actions are beginning to bear fruit as increasing

numbers of pupils are making better progress in their work. However, although the school has satisfactory and improving procedures to promote equality and tackle discrimination, senior leaders are well aware that some weaknesses remain, particularly in the rate of progress made in mathematics and in the provision for higher attainers across the school.

The governing body is well organised and is committed to see the school improve further. Governors are increasingly confident to act where necessary to support improvements or to question proposals.

The school actively promotes community cohesion within the school community and it is reaching out to other communities through special themes, celebrations of different festivals and links with another school in Tanzania.

The school has good safeguarding arrangements. Staff are vigilant in identifying and responding to any potential dangers that pupils may encounter. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately in child-protection procedures. They work in close cooperation with colleagues to protect all children, particularly those most vulnerable, through early intervention, effective liaison with other professionals and through the Common Assessment Framework.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in the Nursery what they know and what they can do varies, but overall their skills are well below those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. They get off to a good start, are well taught and settle quickly into routines. This is because of the warm and caring ethos that prevails where every child is known as an individual and is well supported and looked after. Relationships are strong which allows children to grow in confidence and self-esteem. As a consequence, children are encouraged to become more independent through an array of activities that are well targeted on their key stages of development. For example, children showed increasing maturity in taking their own photographs of the 'naughty bus' and by making their own models. Elsewhere, children joined in with storytelling and made their own bus-shaped biscuits. Staff are enthusiastic and well

organised and are skilled in knowing when to intervene and how to interact with young children to enhance their learning. For example, they develop children’s language well through effective questioning in a range of practical activities both inside and outside. This means that children become absorbed in their learning as they play and have the confidence to chose activities for themselves as well as follow clearly established routines.

Staff in both Nursery and Reception classes continually assess children’s progress using a range of recording procedures including digital photographs. These observations are used well to plan further challenges. As a result, by the start of Year 1, although still below the levels expected for their age, children have made good progress from their own starting points. Leadership is good. Senior staff are forward thinking and reflective. They have a clear understanding of the strengths in provision and where further improvements can be made. For example, they correctly recognise that further work is still required to ensure that the learning in the outdoor areas mirrors the activities inside the classroom more closely. Parents and carers are involved in contributing to their children’s learning through the use of log books and are fulsome in their praise for what goes on. As one parent commented, ‘My child loves this school and can’t wait to get there in the mornings.’

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire declared themselves to be satisfied with the school. There is strong agreement that the school keeps their children safe and that children enjoy their learning and are well taught. A very small minority of parents and carers raised some anxieties about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school, held discussions with staff and pupils and scrutinised records. Their findings are in the report. Similarly, a few parents and carers expressed a few concerns about the school not taking their views and suggestions into account. Inspectors judged the effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers as good and are of the opinion that the school goes out of its way to listen and act on parental concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ The King Catholic 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	64	27	33	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	69	25	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	59	32	40	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	58	32	40	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	54	36	44	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	52	36	44	0	0	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	53	32	40	3	4	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)	40	49	32	40	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	51	37	46	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	40	40	49	8	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	47	35	43	4	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	44	54	30	37	1	1	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	63	27	33	1	1	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 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 is 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.



18 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ The King Catholic Primary School, Blackpool, FY3 7RJ

Thank you for the kind welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. It was obvious to us just how proud you are of your school when your head boy and girl showed us around when we first arrived. We really enjoyed our guided tour and it was very helpful to us because none of us got lost over the two days and we were able to see all the things that are important to you. We really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, on the playground and in the pupil interviews. You expressed your views very clearly and we learnt a great deal about your school. This is what we found out.

You go to a satisfactory school that is improving. You make expected levels of progress in your work and some of you are making better progress than before, particularly in your writing, because your lessons are getting better. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress from when they start school. You are well looked after and feel safe in school and your parents or carers told us this too. We were very pleased to see how well you behave and how you help one another in class and around the school.

You told us that your lessons are increasingly interesting and often fun. We could see this with our own eyes when those of you in Year 3 were reading scales and estimating the weight of different ingredients, when you were checking on each other's work in Year 2 and when the boys and girls in Year 1 were singing and doing the actions about going on a 'Bear Hunt'. We were also impressed when those of you in Year 5 showed us your blogs on the computer. Is it not amazing that people from all over the world can sign in, leave comments and see your work on Zimbabwe, for example? We also liked your carefully designed hand-stitched canvasses on the wall in the hall which point out all the important things we should do to keep ourselves fit and healthy. I really liked the strong man using the weights in the background and the energetic looking carrot at the front.

Your teachers are working effectively to improve the school. To help them we have asked whether you can make faster progress in your work, particularly in mathematics, and if some of you could be given harder work to improve your thinking skills. This will help more of you to reach the higher levels. We have also asked whether more of your lessons could be like the very best ones we saw when you were very involved in working on your own and making your own decisions about how you learn. We have also asked that some of your teachers look more closely at how well you learn in lessons to keep a close eye on the progress you are making. You can help by telling your teachers what makes your lessons interesting and what helps you to learn.

Thank you once again for helping us. We can see why your teachers love working with you every day. Keep trying hard.

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood
Her Majesty's Inspector

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