



Christ The King Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119601
Local Authority Blackpool
Inspection number 291476
Inspection dates 23–24 January 2007
Reporting inspector Eileen Mulgrew

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bathurst Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Grange Park, Blackpool
Age range of pupils	3–11		Lancashire, FY3 7RJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01253 395985
Number on roll (school)	232	Fax number	01253 398667
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Arthur Phillips
		Headteacher	Ms Susan Bartlett
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 23–24 January 2007	Inspection number 291476
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Christ the King is an average sized primary school serving an area of high social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils are from families who live near the school. There are a few pupils at an early stage of learning English. Since the last inspection there has been a change in the pupil population, resulting in an increased number of pupils with learning disabilities and/or difficulties.

The school has Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People, National Healthy Schools Status and Active Mark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Christ the King Catholic Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. A major strength is the primacy the school places on care as well as education, with the headteacher and staff striving to provide a supportive environment that has pupils' learning as its central goal. Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. The enthusiastic headteacher is committed to raising standards and the personal development of all pupils. Visitors immediately notice the calm, purposeful approach of a school that rightly prides itself on being a happy, secure place of enjoyment and learning.

'This is a family school' correctly summarises the view of parents, who comment that they are well informed and supported. This support is projected beyond the school into the local community. The parents particularly value the information they receive about the progress of their children. A developing strength is the introduction of whole-school provision maps. Each map outlines the support available to each child, including those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. It is an inclusive school which places high emphasis on pupils' personal and social development. Although many pupils begin school with skills which are below those expected for their age, they make good progress and standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6.

Children enter Nursery with skills which are below those typical for their age. By the time they enter Key Stage 1 they have made good progress because their social and literacy needs have been well catered for. Standards in Key Stage 1, however, are below what they should be in reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching and learning is good overall. The robust assessment and tracking systems check pupils' progress each half term. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, comments are not always specific enough to move them on in their work. The high expectations of staff secure good behaviour. Pupils show a thirst for learning, tolerance and respect. They are keen to express their views through the school council. After recent discussion on the issue of bullying they introduced a 'worry box'. Any comments placed in the box are discussed at school council and the 'playground pals' help to sort any problems.

The school successfully delivers a curriculum which places high importance on basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum matches the needs and interests of the pupils, encouraging them to be ambitious and to develop strong self-esteem. 'Your best is always good enough' is accepted by all and made clear on the front of a booklet for children starting school, produced by the school council. The school is starting to link subjects together, such as the effective work in Year 3 to link the use of laptop computers, numeracy and ancient history. The pupils appreciate the variety of extra-curricular activities available to everyone.

Leadership and management at all levels, including governance, are good. The changes brought about by the increase in pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have given management new challenges which they have fully embraced. The recently restructured management team, consultation group and governors share a corporate

vision for the future of the school. The school has made progress on all issues from the previous inspection, and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the marking of pupils' work so that all understand exactly what they need to do to make further progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

During the school year, the frequent movement of pupils joining and leaving affects standards, but the staff work hard to counteract this. The trend over recent years has been steady improvement in pupils' achievement, including those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Given pupils' low starting point, they achieve well in their time at school.

The majority of children enter Nursery with skills which are well below those typical of children of their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception years) children make good progress. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, pupils have made good progress because of the emphasis that teachers place on developing their social and literacy skills.

Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. Over the last few years standards in Key Stage 1 have varied but are broadly below average. In the most recent test results two thirds of the pupils did well for their age. Inspection evidence indicates the current Year 2 pupils are doing better and standards are on the rise.

In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. Standards, although variable, are now above the national average in mathematics and science. In English, there has been a slight drop in overall standards to below the national average, although the growing number of pupils who do better than expected for their age has been a success. This improvement is due to the focus the school has placed on developing writing skills throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school has been modest in judging the quality of pupils' personal development, which inspectors judge to be outstanding. Pupils show their enjoyment for school in their improved attendance and eagerness to be involved in all aspects of school life. Attendance records for the autumn term 2006 show an improvement on the previous year. These are major factors in why learning is good and why they are so well prepared for the future. Pupils appreciate the importance of healthy lifestyles and their efforts have been rewarded with the National Healthy School Status. Pupils choose healthy snacks and enjoy their 'wake and shake' sessions. Pupils learn about possible dangers and as one pupil said, 'We feel safe because we know we can go to adults or to our

friends if we have worries'. Membership of the school council, acting as playground 'pals' to younger pupils and a willingness to raise funds for charity are just some examples of the way pupils learn about their role in the community.

Pupils' personal qualities reflect exceptional support for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spirituality is strong. Pupils are successfully encouraged to accept responsibilities for their own personal development and that of others, for example pupils' attendance at a local conference to discuss anti-bullying issues and the resulting 'charter for school action'. Respect and consideration are central to the work of the school and lead to good behaviour and a very caring school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In the Foundation Stage good teaching is based upon a strong understanding of how young children learn best. In Key Stage 1 teaching is good. Planning for pupils to become independent builds on the good start made in the Foundation Stage. Good teaching overall in Key Stage 2 stems from high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers have good subject knowledge, for example in French, where enthusiasm for the subject resulted in pupils' eagerness to speak in the language.

Lessons are typically lively and include a range of enjoyable activities to stimulate pupils' interest. Strong relationships between adults and pupils are a positive feature of all lessons. Team planning means that activities are well matched to the needs of every pupil. Singing lessons across the school are matched to the topics pupils are studying in class, for example, Year 5 singing pirate songs which linked to their investigation work on pirates. Highly effective teaching assistants and other classroom helpers, and resources, are well deployed to support learning. Those pupils with additional learning needs have work well-matched to their needs based upon a good assessment of their progress. Good relationships support parents in helping learners to succeed.

Pupils' work is marked regularly. Comments, although encouraging, do not always explain how the pupils can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum. It matches pupils' interests and needs and fully meets requirements. In the Nursery and Reception classes there is a good balance of activities between those taught by the staff and those children choose themselves. Children use the activities board to check which activity they do next. At the end of the session, they check which activities they have covered. This attention to the development of personal, social and independent skills is a strength of the school. The school curriculum ensures that there are good opportunities for practical activities for all ages. Pupils with learning difficulties as well as those who have English as an

additional language receive good support so that they can take full part in the life of the school. Targets are set for groups of pupils in literacy, mathematics and behaviour. The pupils know these targets and are starting to assess their own progress towards them. Education for safety and health is good. The school has introduced the teaching of German, Spanish and French in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy these aspects of the curriculum. The curriculum is further enriched by the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits, for example, the annual trip to Borwick Hall to experience a range of outward bound activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is good care, guidance and support for pupils which is rightly recognised and valued by parents and carers. This level of care enables children to feel happy and secure. Relevant required procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are in place. The school gives careful attention to the needs of its vulnerable children and provides them with very good personal support. Children's attainment is carefully assessed and their progress regularly tracked. However, pupils need to understand more about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and school events through regular bulletins: they are encouraged to be involved in supporting their child's learning. The induction of children into the Nursery and Reception is eased by opportunities for them to visit before they begin school. Many parents take up these opportunities and welcome the home visits made by staff. Strong links with the local high school and good communications with other secondary schools in the area underpin good arrangements to support transition at the end of Key Stage 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led with purpose, direction and enthusiasm by the experienced headteacher, who, with the effective support of the deputy headteacher and all staff moves the school forward systematically towards its well defined objectives. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and provide good governance. They have a firm grasp of the school's performance. The many challenges the school faces, which could act as a barrier to learning, are met head-on and tackled with determination, for example the frequent movement of pupils joining and leaving the school. Many of these challenges are deep rooted and the school is vigilant, but the introduction of new ideas and strategies keeps development fresh and alive. The innovative consultation group enables all staff to play a full part in the evaluation of the school's performance and to contribute to decisions. The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected effectively focusing on raising standards in writing. Data about pupils' achievement and progress is analysed thoroughly, realistic conclusions drawn and resources carefully allocated. This is shown in the effective deployment of teaching staff to support individual and groups of pupils. As a result,

standards have risen due to the well managed development. There is no complacency and the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Christ the King Catholic Primary School

Bathurst Avenue

Grange Park

Blackpool

Lancashire

FY3 7RJ

24 January 2007

Dear Children

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. When we came to see how well you are learning you looked very smart in your uniform. You made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed meeting and talking with you. Your parents are very pleased with your school and are happy for you to go there and we agree with them. Everyone works together to give you a good start to your education. It really is a 'family' school.

These are the things we found best about your school:

- you have a good headteacher who has lots of exciting ideas
- all the adults look after you exceptionally well
- you are polite, friendly and well behaved
- you have lots of fun
- in lessons you show how much you want to learn.

Your teachers will be trying to make sure that:

- the younger pupils get better in reading, writing and mathematics
- you all know exactly how to make your own work better.

We hope you continue to enjoy your learning at Christ the King.

Best wishes for the future.

Eileen M Mulgrew, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools

Michael Onyon, Additional Inspector