

St Christopher's Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123190
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340303
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2010
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dominic Shaw
Headteacher	Sarah Anne Nisbett
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They saw 10 lessons taught by five teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. The school's work was observed as well as documentation including the school plan and information about pupils' progress. The inspectors also talked to governors, pupils and staff in leadership positions. The views of 16 school staff, 70 pupils and 73 parents and carers, expressed in their responses to questionnaires, were also taken into account.

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

- the quality of teaching and learning to see if all groups of pupils, particularly the higher attainers, are making good progress and achieving well
- the impact of monitoring at all levels to see if it is sufficiently rigorous to raise achievement and improve the quality of learning
- how well teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning.

Information about the school

This is a small, village school where almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. The pupils come from the village of Langford and nine surrounding villages and hamlets. Many start school in the Reception class, but some children transfer to the school in Year 3 from a local infant school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities varies from year to year, but is broadly similar to that found nationally. These pupils' needs cover a wide range, including moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social problems. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are included in the Reception and Year 1 class. The school has achieved Healthy School Status and the Eco Silver Award. There is a small breakfast club run by the local partnership. This is not managed by the governors and was not part of 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Christopher's provides a good quality education for its pupils. One of the parents/carers wrote that, 'The staff are fantastic, they are approachable at anytime' and every morning (my children) are eager to go to school and look forward to the day ahead.' The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are also happy with their children's experience of school. Much of this success is due to the effective leadership of the headteacher and her senior managers who have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on accurate self-evaluation. Constant appraisal of the school's performance has enabled it to continue to improve rapidly from its low point five years ago when it was identified as having serious weaknesses. The headteacher and governors continue to be diligent in identifying areas where changes are needed so that decisive action can be taken to address any weaknesses. This ensures that all groups of pupils achieve well and enjoy learning. This confirms the school's good capacity to continue improving.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the vast majority exceed the levels expected for their age by the start of Year 1. This good progress and attainment is built upon well in Key Stage 1. Attainment has improved and is significantly higher than average overall by the end of Year 2 and has been for the last two years. This success is being sustained in Key Stage 2. School data show that these pupils now in Years 3 and 4 continue to achieve well. This is further evidence of the school's good capacity to maintain improvement. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is currently above average in English and broadly average in mathematics and science. However, this too represents good progress and achievement from the pupils' starting points.

Teachers provide pupils with interesting and varied tasks that increase the pupils' enjoyment of school and their enthusiasm for learning. Teachers have high expectations of how much pupils can achieve and ensure that work is well matched to the pupils' needs. However, there are occasions when teachers miss opportunities to exploit pupils' abilities, especially those of higher attainers, to explore their own ideas, to work independently or they do not give the pupils enough time to do so. This means that progress is not always as rapid as it could be.

Good levels of care and support are another reason for the school's continuing success. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe, secure and happy. As a consequence, they enjoy coming to school, attend regularly and behave well. The school's strong emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles and care for the environment, recognised in its national awards, ensures that pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy and remain enthusiastic about caring for the world around them.

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Pupils find the targets they are given are very helpful because, 'Teachers explain what we have to do and we can see how well we are doing.' However, teachers' marking, whilst supportive, does not always show the pupils how they can improve their work. Teachers are working successfully to increase the opportunities for creativity and enjoyment within the curriculum by making links between subjects which helps pupils to see how the different parts of their learning fit together. However, there are missed opportunities within planning to increase understanding of cultural diversity in contrasting locations within the United Kingdom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers capitalise on opportunities during lessons for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to work independently to explore their own ideas and use their initiative in order to sustain their rapid progress.
- Strengthen the links with contrasting locations within the United Kingdom to deepen children's understanding of cultural diversity.
- Ensure that marking shows pupils how to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

All groups of pupils, including the most able and those most in need of additional help, make good progress and enjoy learning. As one pupil said, 'I really enjoy school because it is fun, you get to work with your friends and the teachers really want you to do well.' During a science lesson, for example, a group of Year 6 pupils were excitedly devising their own experiments to find answers to a challenge given to them by the teacher. They were unanimous that, 'This really is a very enjoyable way to learn because it makes you think and you feel much more responsible for what you achieve.' Other pupils echo this sentiment and are adamant that, 'Teachers are always there to explain things we are not clear about.'

Relationships between staff and pupils are good and contribute to a positive ethos for study. As a result, the atmosphere for learning created by the whole staff is supportive and caring. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities work confidently in small groups and enjoy learning because they are well supported. Although their progress occasionally slows temporarily when they are not fully challenged, the most-able pupils also make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils say they feel safe and have a trusted adult they can go to if they need help and support. Behaviour is good. A few parents and carers and some pupils consider that behaviour could be better. However, inspectors found that almost all pupils conduct themselves well. The very few who find it difficult to behave well always are well supported by the adults to help them improve. Pupils agreed this has been very helpful. Those with behavioural difficulties are given programmes of support that allow them to remain in school.

Pupils are proud of their school and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils' good basic skills, together with their positive attitudes for learning, mean that they are well

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prepared for the next stage of their education. As one pupil said, 'I really enjoy school because as well as learning about facts I can do things to help others by becoming a school councillor or playground helper. It is good to take on responsibilities as you get older.'

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
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 sharing objectives and targets with the pupils at the beginning of lessons so they all understand what they have to do and what they are aiming for. This not only encourages pupils' involvement in their own learning but also helps them take on more responsibility for their own progress. In addition, teachers' move from group to group to check pupils' understanding of previous learning and to clarify and explain new ideas. This ensures that pupils are not left behind. Teachers' planning is detailed and related to pupils' age and ability levels so that work is well matched to meet pupils' individual needs within the mixed-age classes. However, teachers sometimes fail to capitalise on the pupils' abilities, especially those of the higher attainers, to use their own initiative and explore ideas, or they do not give them enough time to do so because

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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explanations and introductions at the beginning of lessons are overlong.

The care and welfare of pupils are of central importance to all members of staff. The school's commitment to this is evident, for example, in the work of the home-school community link worker who provides an important bridge between home and school. This work is invaluable in supporting families experiencing difficulties. Pupils know the school's expectations of their behaviour and are adamant that any instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. There is a good range of effective strategies to help those who find learning a bit more difficult and who are in danger of falling behind. The school's provision for the development of basic skills, including information and communication technology, is good. Pupils' experience is considerably enhanced through additional activities, notably in sports, and visits and visitors to the school. The way that teachers link different aspects of the curriculum together is developing well. As a consequence, pupils see how their learning fits together. However, there are too few opportunities within planning for pupils to increase their understanding of cultural diversity in contrasting locations within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have a clear understanding of what works well and what needs to be developed next. This information is used effectively to embed ambition and to drive improvement. Teaching and learning are monitored by various leaders and good support is given to help teachers extend their skills. The school is good at promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. Last year, for example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities did much better than similar groups nationally at age seven and eleven. Recent improvements to the systems for measuring attainment within year groups are preventing dips in progress and allowing teachers to address quickly any underachievement for groups and individuals.

Governors are knowledgeable and supportive and provide a good level of challenge for senior leaders. They ensure that safeguarding procedures are rigorous and that all statutory requirements, including child protection and risk assessment, are regularly reviewed and approved. Leaders have good relationships with external agencies enabling them to provide good support for pupils who are finding life difficult. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils currently have a limited awareness of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom. The school has suitable plans

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to extend pupils' understanding by increasing links with schools in contrasting locations, but these are at an early stage of development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and children achieve well against the national expectations by the time they start in Year 1. A key factor underpinning this success in this setting, which is shared with Year 1, is the outstanding leadership of the coordinator. When children join the school, their skills and understanding vary from broadly similar to the levels expected for their age to some that are above. The vast majority exceed the level expected by the start of Year 1. Provision is outstanding, including the learning environment indoors and out. The quality of planning for individuals ensures that all children are offered an enjoyable experience across all the areas of learning. There is an excellent balance between activities chosen by the pupils and those directed by the adults. Children genuinely enjoy learning and discovering through play because adults encourage them to make their own independent choices. One group of higher attaining children, for example, excitedly, devised ways to solve a mathematical problem involving three birds who always laid uneven numbers of eggs. They had to find out how many eggs each bird could have laid knowing the total was nineteen in all. They organised themselves very well and selected a range of counting equipment to help with the calculation. Adults are extremely good at building on children's responses to develop and increase the children's language and communication skills. Very effective induction arrangements ensure that all staff gain a clear understanding of the social, personal, emotional and academic needs of the

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children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children are happy, are kept safe and are taught well. The inspection team agrees with parents and carers that pupils are safe and happy and that teaching is good. The school provides ample opportunities for parents and carers to find out how well their children are doing. A small minority of parents and carers expressed the view that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. However, behaviour during the inspection was found to be good and no unacceptable behaviour was observed in classes or the playground. Governors have kept parents and carers fully informed about behaviour strategies and have sought parents', carers' and pupils' views by questionnaire. Those pupils who were interviewed were clear that misbehaviour involves only one or two older individuals who find it difficult to always behave well. They were adamant that the school usually sorted out any problems quickly. One parent/carer wrote thanking the school for helping them improve their child's behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Christopher's 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 116 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	58	27	37	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	53	30	41	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	22	51	70	3	4	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	30	40	55	7	10	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	27	37	41	56	0	0	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	25	43	59	4	5	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	37	43	59	2	3	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)	20	27	43	59	5	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	26	44	60	4	5	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	18	32	44	15	21	7	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	25	41	56	2	3	6	8
The school is led and managed effectively	21	29	39	53	5	7	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	41	33	45	3	4	2	3

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. 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"> ■ 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.



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langford CofE Primary School, Lechlade GL7 3LA

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking to so many of you. I was pleased to hear that you like your school and especially the many clubs and activities that are organised for you. I was pleased that some of you enjoy playing golf as it's my favourite sport'.but I'm not that good at it!

Yours is a good school where staff and governors are working hard to make it even better. This means that there are lots of things that it does really well, but also that there are some things that could be even better.

I agree with the comments of your parents and carers when they say that you like school and that it is a welcoming, caring place where you feel safe. You get on well with each other and help the school to run smoothly.

You also told me that you find your lessons interesting and usually challenging. To make it even better, however, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities to use your own initiative during lessons and to work independently so that you can make even faster progress. I have also asked them to make sure they always explain how you can improve your work when they mark your books. You also told me that you find your lessons interesting and usually challenging. To make it even better, however, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities to use your own initiative during lessons and to work independently so that you can make even faster progress. I have also asked them to make sure they always explain how you can improve your work when they mark your books.

Your teachers are also going to build even more links with contrasting communities within the United Kingdom so that you can have first-hand knowledge of what it means to live in a multiracial community. Each of you can play your part in making this school even better by continuing to work hard to meet the targets teachers set you.

Yours sincerely

John Earish

Lead inspector

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