

Christ Church (Church of England) Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	104362
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	377072
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2012
Lead inspector	Lois Furness

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janette Lewis
Headteacher	Wendy Large
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2007
School address	Shaw Lane Tettenhall Wood Wolverhampton WV6 8EL
Telephone number	01902 558945
Fax number	01902 558947
Email address	H.Wheeler@wolverhamptoncyp.org.uk

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Introduction

Inspection team

Lois Furness	Additional inspector
Enid Korn	Additional inspector
David Shears	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 29 parts of lessons and eight teachers. These included short visits to a range of phonics (teaching of letters and sounds) sessions. They also sampled pupils' work and heard a number of pupils read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, the safeguarding policies, and the school's analysis of pupils' progress. They also analysed 85 parental questionnaires and 22 completed by staff. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to consider when planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This school is a larger than average. Although the majority of pupils are White British, approximately two fifths of pupils are from other minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which is Indian. Although the proportion of pupils who speak an additional language is well above average, the proportion of those at the early stages of learning English is low. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below average. There are very few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided in two part-time nursery classes and two reception classes. The school has attained Activemark, an Eco Silver Award and Investors in People.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Its overall effectiveness is good rather than outstanding because there are some weaknesses in teaching, pupils’ achievement in writing and in aspects of the curriculum. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their praise for the school.
- Attainment is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics by the time pupils leave school in Year 2. Progress is good from their starting points, although it is stronger in reading than in writing. This is because not all teachers teach the skills of writing as well as they do those of reading.
- Teaching is good. All teachers have a good understanding of pupils’ needs. Skilful questioning helps pupils to clarify thinking and build upon previous learning. On a few occasions, activities lack the rigour to challenge the more able in writing, and teachers’ marking is not consistently effective.
- Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and a safe, welcoming environment for learning promote good behaviour. Pupils are eager to learn and they know how to keep safe.
- The leadership team’s drive to improve the school is enthusiastically shared by staff. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are good. Robust checks on teaching and learning are used well to plan successful actions to overcome any emerging weaknesses in English and mathematics. The curriculum is broad and balanced and interests pupils. They learn many exciting things, but the method of recording learning from Nursery through to Year 2 is not yet fully effective, and opportunities for outdoor learning are restricted by the lack of a covered area.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in writing by:
 - improving all teachers’ subject knowledge in the teaching of writing
 - providing regular guided writing sessions whereby assessment information

- is used precisely to plan individualised tasks which will improve pupils' writing skills
 - clearly identifying through marking what pupils have done well and how they might improve
 - giving time for pupils to respond to the feedback given.
- Improve the curriculum by:
- implementing a more effective method of recording learning in subjects other than English and mathematics that enables pupils to refer back to previous learning
 - involving parents and carers more in their children's learning, for example by introducing 'learning journeys' in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - increasing the opportunities for Reception age children to learn in the outdoor environment
 - enabling leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics to efficiently monitor pupils' progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Inspection findings endorse the views of the vast majority of parents and carers that their children are making good progress from their starting points. For the last three years, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 has been well above that found in most schools. Nearly all pupils listen well, speak confidently and articulate their ideas very clearly. They enjoy reading and speak enthusiastically about their books. They are taught phonics (letters and sounds) through a structured programme and are able to use a range of strategies to understand text. More-able pupils read fluently, while less-able pupils demonstrate correct techniques in sounding out unfamiliar words. Pupils could tell inspectors about the types of books they find most interesting and why.

In reading and mathematics, a higher proportion of pupils attain the higher level than in writing. This is because work is more tailored to pupils' needs in these subjects. In mathematics, all pupils are set challenging work as was seen when more-able Year 2 pupils explored number sequences using negative numbers whilst others worked on less complicated sequences. Regular guided reading sessions are implemented whereby pupils of the same ability work together to improve their reading skills. This was seen in a reception class and in Year 1 classes where small groups of pupils interestedly discussed the features of the text they were reading. This focused small group work however does not happen as often in writing and too often all pupils are provided with the same learning experiences, as was seen in most writing lessons observed and books scrutinised.

The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress as a result of a good emphasis on developing their spoken language skills. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same good progress as their peers. All pupils' progress is tracked very carefully, and interventions

implemented immediately at the first signs of any underachievement. There are no important differences in the attainment or progress of boys and girls in Years 1 and 2. However in the Early Years Foundation Stage boys do not attain as highly as girls in most aspects of learning, although progress is still good. The school is aware of this and intends to narrow this gap through adjustments to the curriculum and accommodation.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good. Pupils say the school helps them to do as well as they can and they learn 'lots'. Almost all the parents and carers who returned questionnaires said that their children are well taught and make good progress. The inspection findings support these positive views.

The good quality of relationships between all adults and pupils is a common feature in all lessons. The best lessons are planned carefully and teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn. The large majority of lessons move forward at a good pace. This was seen in a good science lesson for Year 2 pupils. Although pupils found the task hard, as a result of effective questioning pupils were challenged and successfully devised criteria for grouping animals. Not all teachers are fully confident in their teaching of the strategies they can use to improve pupils' writing, and this slows progress especially for the more able. Teaching assistants are deployed carefully and provide unobtrusive and sensitive support for pupils who have any difficulties with aspects of their work. Teachers use a suitably varied range of techniques and resources, including the interactive whiteboard to introduce and reinforce concepts. Pupils' work is marked regularly but clear advice is not consistently given about why work is good and how it can be improved. Teachers do not always give enough time for pupils to respond.

Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. Throughout the day pupils are required to collaborate with each other to solve problems and to share resources. Time for reflection is built into many curriculum activities as well as during the acts of collective worship. Within the planned curriculum there are good opportunities to promote pupils' basic skills in other subjects. Evidence observed by inspectors in pupils' topic books and folders show that all subjects, apart from English and mathematics, are recorded in the same book alongside a folder of work sheets. In these documents, a good range of work is available and teachers' planning shows that this work is complemented by many speaking and drama opportunities. However, the way it is organised means it is difficult for pupils to refer back to previous learning and to learn from past experiences. Also it is difficult for leaders of these subjects to efficiently monitor pupils' progress.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage frequent assessments are made but these are not collated in a user-friendly way to show the child's learning over time, for example through a 'learning journey'. This makes it difficult for parents and carers to contribute fully to their children's learning. The outdoor area at times is used well especially in Nursery. However the lack of a covered area limits the opportunities for Reception age children to learn outdoors. Good plans are in place to rectify this.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils, typically, behave well in classrooms, in the playground and in the dining hall. The good behaviour in classes ensures that little or no learning time is wasted. Pupils are keen to work and this supports their learning well. This enjoyment of learning starts in the nursery where at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions children enter the classroom eagerly, ready to start their independent activities. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and they appreciate the importance of having a sensible attitude to taking risks. They say it is important to eat healthily and they are clear about the benefit of taking regular exercise. They are aware of most different types of bullying, but are less confident about cyber-bullying and internet safety. Pupils feel safe because they are, rightly, confident that adults will help them should they have worries or problems and will deal effectively with any bullying should this occur. School records confirm that bullying is unheard of, and parents and carers agree. They also think their child is kept safe and is well cared for. Inspection evidence supports these opinions.

Leadership and management

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaire would recommend this school to others. The headteacher and senior managers have a very clear vision for further school improvement which is focused firmly on raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress. This vision is shared by the governing body and all staff. The well above average attainment noted in the previous inspection has been maintained, the key issues of the previous inspection have been rectified well and staff morale is high. These factors alongside effective performance management indicate that capacity to improve is good.

Teaching and learning are monitored carefully and, through thorough self-evaluation, senior leaders accurately identify key strengths and weaknesses in provision. The governing body is supportive of the school, and is involved in its strategic development. Arrangements for safeguarding are fully in place and meet requirements. Staff are well trained and fully aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures. This is a very inclusive school where the talents of all pupils are recognised and nurtured so all have good equal opportunities to succeed. This is reflected in the way that the very few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make as good progress as their peers. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

The school provides a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum which is effectively enriched through visits and visitors to the school. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. This results in thoughtful pupils who appreciate literature, art and music and welcome opportunities to work, play and learn together. For example, players performing 'Midsummer Night's Dream.' In the Early Years Foundation Stage a good range of activities promotes children's learning well, despite the shortcomings in the outside environment.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



28 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ Church (Church of England) Infant and Nursery School, Wolverhampton WV6 8EL

Thank you for talking to us and helping us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and hearing some of you read. I agree with your parents and carers and with what you told us about your school. Yes, your school is good. It is very clear you enjoy your lessons and your behaviour is good. You say you feel safe in school and everyone is kind to each other. You say adults will always help you if you are upset or worried. We saw you help each other, for example when someone was stuck with their number work. That is very thoughtful of you.

You make good progress in your work because of good teaching and by the time you leave in Year 2, you are attaining standards in your work that are higher than those usually found in most schools. Well done! However I think you could do even better in writing and so I have asked your teachers to help you with this. Also, although you do many interesting things in your topic work, it is sometimes difficult for you to check how well you are learning in subjects such as history, geography and science for example. So I have asked your teachers to find better ways of showing you how well you are learning. I also want those of you in the nursery and reception classes to have a book which will show you and your parents and carers the progress you are making in all areas of learning. They could also add their comments to this 'learning journey'. Another we think we think should happen is that you should have more time to learn outdoors especially those of you in the reception classes.

Thank you for your help and I am sure your school will continue to improve in the future because you are all working so hard together to make it successful. Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness
Lead inspector

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