

Christ The King Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103423
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	286654
Inspection dates	7–8 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

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 on roll	
School	362
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Adam Hardy
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2002
School address	Warren Farm Road Kingstanding Birmingham B44 0QN
Telephone number	0121 4649800
Fax number	0121 4649824

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Attainment on entry to this large school is well below that expected for the children's ages. The school has a unit for pupils with visual impairment and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those at the early stages of learning English, is above average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone. It has three National Leading Aspects Awards for promoting different aspects of promoting healthy lifestyles. It also has a Healthy Schools Award, the Investor in People Award, the Artsmark Gold Award and a Activemark Award. It is working towards an Eco Schools Award. The headteacher is in his fourth year at the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This improving school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Pupils achieve well because they are taught well. Their progress has improved significantly this year. Standards were below average last year, mainly because of weaknesses in mathematics. They too have improved and are now broadly average in Year 6. Good provision ensures that children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, although standards are below the national expectation at the end of Reception. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The work of the unit for pupils with visual impairment is outstanding, enabling the pupils to participate as fully as possible in school life. Excellent provision is made for pupils with little or no English, enabling them to work productively alongside their classmates. The school's excellent links with other schools and relevant external agencies contribute greatly to the progress of all of these different groups.

While pupils' ability to write at length has improved, their spelling and punctuation remain relatively weak and, in Years 1 and 2, progress is slower in reading than in writing or mathematics. Additionally, more able pupils do not always do as well as they might because not all teachers provide suitably challenging tasks at all times. The school recognises these problems and has already begun tackling them. Its good curriculum, which is readily adaptable to pupils' different learning needs, promotes the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) well.

The excellent care, guidance and support pupils receive contribute greatly to their good personal development and well-being. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding. Pupils have a strong sense of their own identity and of how to improve their learning and personal development by themselves. Their behaviour is good. They thoroughly enjoy school and eagerly participate in the excellent range of additional experiences provided in and beyond the normal school day. Pupils have an exceptionally well developed understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and are justifiably proud of having won the local schools' Olympics for the sixth successive year. They know how to keep themselves and others safe and are well prepared for life beyond school.

Leadership and management are good. Exceptionally strong teamwork is evident throughout the school. While the headteacher provides the driving force, he is very ably supported by governors, senior and subject leaders, all of whom fulfil their roles well. Because of this, the school's capacity for further improvement is good. Its own evaluation of its effectiveness is somewhat cautious because of the very high expectations it sets itself.

What the school should do to improve further

- Achieve consistency in the teaching of more able pupils so that they always make the best possible progress.
- Implement the plans to accelerate progress in reading in Years 1 and 2, and improve spelling and punctuation throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils throughout the school achieve well because the actions taken in the past two years to improve teaching and learning have really begun to take effect. The low standards in

mathematics last year brought standards overall down to below average in Year 6. Pupils' work and data from the school's comprehensive tracking of their progress show that standards are now broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are below average in Year 2.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress but their attainment remains below the national expectation at the end of Reception, especially in writing and calculation. Challenges such as the '99 Club' and a greater focus on practical, investigative work have significantly improved calculation skills throughout the school. The 'Big Writing' project has done the same for writing, although pupils' spelling and punctuation remain relatively weak. Plans are well under way to accelerate pupils' currently satisfactory progress in reading in Years 1 and 2.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with visual impairment, make good progress. The school sets itself challenging targets and works very hard to meet them. Pupils use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills well in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school's strong Catholic ethos and its determination to celebrate the uniqueness of each child underpin the pupils' good personal development and well-being. This is reflected in their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This starts with the strong emphasis placed on personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage, where children successfully learn to play together, share, take turns and respect each other. Behaviour is good throughout the school.

Pupils greatly enjoy school because, in their words, 'Teachers help us', 'School keeps our brains warmed up', 'We get to learn loads', and 'Playtime is friendly'. Pupils are eager to talk about the 'Food Forum', their influence on school lunches and how to keep healthy and safe. They readily accept responsibility, for example, as school councillors, by designing their own summer uniform. They also willingly help to improve the local environment by, for example, planting 'Conker Island'. Their involvement in the community is exceptionally good, supported by the school's very strong links with the parish. Attendance is satisfactory but improving. It is affected by a small number of families who take holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Improved teaching is the key factor behind the pupils' improved achievement. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and, throughout the school, teachers understand that they are each accountable for pupils' overall progress. They track each pupil's progress carefully and most use the information well in planning and to set targets for pupils. Marking usually helps pupils move closer to achieving their targets.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' learning, behaviour and personal development, instilling in them good work habits, such as completing classwork and homework, and doing corrections to consolidate their learning. In most classes, activities meet the needs of pupils' different ages and stages of learning. Teachers use teaching assistants well to support less able pupils and, increasingly, to help more able pupils move on faster. However, this good practice is not yet wholly consistent throughout the school. More Year 6 pupils are working at the higher

levels than previously but in some other classes, more able pupils were seen to 'drift' because they lacked the additional challenge they needed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In all age groups, the curriculum is well planned yet flexible enough to be easily adapted to pupils' different learning needs. For example, the continuation of the Foundation Stage curriculum for some Year 1 pupils this year has been particularly beneficial to their progress. Very good emphasis is placed on developing basic skills in all activities. However, some of those activities do not provide more able pupils with the challenge needed to ensure their best possible progress at all times.

The curriculum promotes pupils' health, safety and well-being effectively. It promotes racial harmony exceptionally well as it looks at 'where', 'when' and 'who' in the world, often drawing on pupils' own backgrounds as starting points in their learning. An excellent range of visits, visitors, clubs and activities enriches and enhances pupils' learning and personal development in and beyond the normal school day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Governors and staff are passionate about giving every child, regardless of background, ability or disability, the best possible start. They go the extra mile to do this, working extremely closely with parents, the parish, the community and external agencies to do so. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust. The school does everything possible to care for, guide and support pupils personally and academically. Its resolute actions to increase attendance have resulted in it exceeding the target for improvement set by the local authority. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets and of how to improve their own learning in every subject. Assessment procedures are good in all age groups and all subjects. These measures have had a very positive effect on pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

All leaders and managers, including governors, take their roles very seriously. They all check teaching and learning regularly and their monitoring is robust and accurate. The well-planned initiatives are also checked rigorously to ensure they do lead to improvement. All of this has been achieved by really good teamwork under the exceptionally clear direction provided by all leaders and managers, and especially the headteacher. The school has improved since the last inspection. It has finally and successfully eliminated well-documented weaknesses in teaching that were affecting pupils' progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and significantly raised the quality of teaching and learning. Reasons for any underachievement are now thoroughly investigated. Help and support are given to teachers, pupils, and, if relevant, their parents, and further checks are made to ensure things have improved. Parents are highly satisfied with the school.

The school knows what it needs to do to improve further. Having successfully improved the curriculum, and within it, writing and mathematics, it has rightly turned its attention to improving reading and the provision for more able pupils. Its cautious self-evaluation is the result of the

very high standards it sets itself, for example by aiming for teaching to be 100% good or better before judging it to be good overall.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	1

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.

Annex A

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	1
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

9 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ the King Catholic Primary School, Kingstanding, B44 0QN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. You told us how much you enjoyed school, that your teachers help you, and that school is a friendly place. You and your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school but there are some things that it could still improve. Here is a summary of the good things we found.

- You are taught well, you are given interesting things to learn, which are usually at the right level for you, and you know how to improve your own work. As a result, most of you are now making good progress and reaching the levels you are expected to reach by the end of Year 6.
- The excellent care, support and guidance the school gives you really help you to realise the importance of caring for and respecting yourselves and others regardless of your different cultures or beliefs.
- Your behaviour is good and you really know how to keep yourselves and others safe, fit and healthy. You eagerly take part in the excellent range of activities provided for you in and out of the school day, and you make an excellent contribution to the community. You are well prepared for your future.
- The headteacher and governors lead and manage your school well. They try very hard to do their best for each one of you. They keep a very close check on how well your teachers teach you and how well you are doing.

Here are the things we have asked the school to do to improve your learning more.

- Make sure that all of you who can make faster progress always have the opportunity to do so.
- Put into place its plans to help younger pupils make better progress in reading, and improve spelling and punctuation in all year groups.

We hope that by doing these things, you will all do even better than you do now. You can help by attending school regularly and working hard at all times. We wish you well for the future and hope you will always enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Yours faithfully

Doris Bell Lead inspector