

# Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103424
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	323821
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gerald Griffin

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	398
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Devaney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barry Desmond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Lytelton Road Stechford Birmingham B33 8BL

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 March 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	323821

**Telephone number**  
**Fax number**

0121 675 2784  
0121 675 1961

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large primary school. Half of all pupils are from White British heritage and half are from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is at the national average. None are at the early stages of acquiring English. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises two Reception classes. The headteacher has been in post for one year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Corpus Christi is a satisfactory school. Standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. The school has been through a difficult few years during which there were several changes of headteacher and staff turnover was high. As a result, standards fell and pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, were not achieving as well as they should. The school is now improving under the good leadership of the new headteacher whose unrelenting drive to raise standards is shared wholeheartedly by staff. Rigorous evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses has resulted in rapid action to bring about improvement. In the past year the school has successfully tackled underachievement by accelerating pupils' progress and improving attendance. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the recent improvements that it has made.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and working in the school's supportive Christian atmosphere. One said, 'Being part of Corpus Christi means a lot. It means being part of one big happy family!' Bullying is very rare and this makes pupils feel very safe. They are polite to each other and to adults. A minority of parents voiced concerns about behaviour in the inspection questionnaires. The inspection found behaviour to be good overall and in many lessons it was outstanding. Pupils grow into mature young people and their personal development and well-being are good.

Teaching is satisfactory overall but there are many signs that it is improving. Teachers plan relevant and interesting work and relationships in lessons are good. In many lessons work really stretches pupils and they make good progress. Occasionally lessons do not offer this level of challenge and pupils' progress is slower, although satisfactory. This happens, for example, when the teacher talks for too long so that learning becomes too passive. The curriculum is satisfactory and supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. It has an appropriate focus on improving standards in English and mathematics. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of each child effectively to provide a good standard of pastoral care. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support. The school works well with other schools and agencies to support pupils' welfare and education. Academic advice given to pupils to show them how to improve their work is satisfactory but the quality varies too much. The guidance is often of high quality, as in Year 6, where it is helping pupils to rapidly improve their work. Elsewhere, the advice is not always detailed enough to accelerate progress and, as a result, care, guidance and support overall are satisfactory.

The headteacher receives enthusiastic support from middle leaders. Some of these are new and have made a good start in checking pupils' progress. However, they are not all yet taking full responsibility for standards and guiding improvements in their areas of responsibility to secure good progress. This means leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The recent improvements in pupils' achievement show the school has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children enter school with skills and knowledge below the levels expected for their age. Their learning moves on at a satisfactory pace and, by the time they start Year 1, they reach levels that are a little below the national average. Children make good progress in their personal and

social development and reach the levels expected for their age. There are good links with parents and local nurseries, which help children to settle quickly into school. Children thrive in the very safe and caring environment created in the Reception classes. They enjoy school and work and play together well, treating each other and adults with respect. Teachers and the well-trained teaching assistants work together well and rightly give high priority to the development of children's skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy. The recently introduced daily sessions focusing on learning letters and their sounds are working well and helping to boost early reading and writing skills. Occasionally, the teacher-led activities are too long and, as a result, children do not get sufficient time to explore and find things out for themselves.

The recently developed outdoor area is secure and well resourced, especially for the development of children's physical skills. Although staff plan activities for learning in this area, it is currently underused. This means leadership and management are only satisfactory. There is a clear focus on raising standards and the recently introduced arrangements for assessment enable staff to plan activities which are more closely matched to children's abilities. This is beginning to accelerate children's progress.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure pupils are challenged well in lessons so that they make better progress.
- Ensure subject leaders take full responsibility for standards and improvements in the areas for which they are accountable.
- Improve the academic advice given to pupils so that they better understand how they can improve their work.

A small proportion of the schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement, including that made by those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is satisfactory. Children's skills and experiences on entry to Reception are below the levels expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress overall in the Nursery and Reception to reach standards that are closer to national averages, though still below them, by the time they start Year 1. Throughout the school, pupils' progress is satisfactory overall and accelerating. This is especially so in Year 6, where progress is now good. Standards are rising and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, they are broadly average.

Standards in English are rising because pupils' ability to express their ideas clearly in a range of styles, such as stories, reports and persuasive letters, is improving. Reading standards have improved in the last year because pupils now have a clearer understanding of the meaning of the text. Pupils are making good gains in some aspects of mathematics, but their skill in solving mathematical problems and slow recall of simple multiplication are relative weaknesses. Improved research and investigation skills have raised standards in science and new computers have broadened pupils' skills in information and communication technology.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall. They reflect maturely on their feelings and respect other people and their property. A well-developed understanding of right and wrong supports their good behaviour. Pupils show good social development and they readily help each other by sharing resources and working together well in teams. Pupils' awareness of the diversity of British society, though satisfactory, is a weaker area of their development.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet. They take great care to ensure others are safe in the playground and during lessons. They are well informed about healthy lifestyles and most eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise. They are fully aware of the dangers of drug misuse, alcohol and smoking. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school, including their lessons, meeting friends, educational visits and school clubs. As a result, most pupils are keen to come to school and have good attendance records. Attendance is average overall because a few pupils do not attend regularly, despite the school's best efforts. Pupils readily accept responsibility as prefects, monitors and members of the school council. They are proud of the way they have helped the school develop its new uniform policy and the improved playground facilities. Pupils generously collect money to support a village in Rwanda and other charities. They keenly participate in the church and local events. Pupils' positive attitudes towards learning and their average standards mean their preparation for secondary school and future employment is satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teachers manage behaviour well and pupils are keen to learn. Teachers use computers effectively to engage pupils and develop learning. They plan many opportunities for pupils to discuss and clarify their ideas in pairs, and this promotes their understanding well. In most lessons pupils work hard and make good progress but in a minority of lessons pupils are not really challenged by their work. This happens, for example, when the teacher talks for too long and learning becomes passive or the pace of the lesson is too slow to accelerate progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Lively assemblies, links with the Catholic church, physical education, swimming and health lessons promote aspects of pupils' personal development well. The school recognises that there are too few opportunities for pupils to encounter people from different backgrounds and is planning more visits, for example to a mosque, to promote this aspect of learning. Changes to make the curriculum more interesting and relevant are making work more enjoyable for pupils. The focus on improving English and mathematics is showing signs of success as standards rise. The school recognises that there is more to do to improve pupils' recall of multiplication facts and to extend opportunities for problem solving in mathematics. The wealth of sports and other clubs add to pupils' enjoyment of school and the many educational visits broaden their horizons.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Pupils feel confident when they approach an adult with a problem because they know their worry will be quickly and effectively resolved. The learning programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are accurately matched to their needs. The school uses experts well to support pupils' learning and welfare. For example, educational psychologists have helped staff plan work to improve support for pupils with autistic disorders. The school is working successfully with education welfare officers to secure improved attendance. Child protection arrangements are robust and regularly updated and the school is rigorous in checking staff's suitability to work with children.

In some classes, teachers' marking and other feedback provides pupils with a clear understanding of how to improve their work. This is contributing well to pupils' accelerating progress. However, this is not a consistent picture and occasionally pupils are unsure of what specific steps they need to take to make their work better.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher's rigorous monitoring and evaluation provides the school with an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school sets challenging targets and has effective procedures to check pupils' progress towards them and to help those who fall behind with their work. This is having a significant effect on improving standards. Middle leaders are helping to raise standards by providing training to sharpen staff skills in planning work for pupils who speak English as an additional language to help them make better progress. However, some middle leaders are new in post and are not yet taking full responsibility for standards and improvements in their areas of responsibility. Attendance at parents' consultation evening is high, showing the school is successful in involving parents in their child's education. The school is a harmonious society and its plans to promote community cohesion more widely are satisfactory.

The governors take a keen interest in the school. Their understanding of data is improving and they are not afraid to hold the school to account.

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## Annex A

## 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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

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

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B33 8BL

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. We especially enjoyed seeing your enthusiasm for the five-a-side football competition at lunchtime. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We think Corpus Christi is a satisfactory school. We also think it is improving. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make a sound start to school in the Reception classes.
- Satisfactory teaching helps you make sound progress in your lessons.
- Standards have improved and are now average in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel safe.
- You behave very well and most of you attend very regularly.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard in your lessons.
- The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits out of school that you enjoy.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- The headteacher and staff are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help you do even better in your learning.

- Make sure teachers give you interesting and challenging work in lessons.
- Show you exactly how you can improve your work.
- Make sure the headteacher gets plenty of help from the other leaders to check how well you are learning.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well, trying your best and attending regularly.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector