

Christ Church CofE Primary School

Shieldfield Green, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE2 1XA

Inspection dates

7 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's high aspirations and clear view of just how successful the school can be has helped to create a dedicated team of staff who are all keen to improve. An active governing body adds to the effective school leadership.
- Good and occasionally outstanding teaching enables pupils from all starting points to achieve well. This includes those supported by pupil premium funding and those learning English.
- Pupils really enjoy school life in the happy, friendly atmosphere. The high quality of care and support ensures that pupils settle quickly and confidently when they start school.
- The pupils' good behaviour is obvious in classrooms where they are enthusiastic and keen to work hard. They are well-informed about risk and danger. Their positive attitudes are supported by the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The good curriculum and excellent range of interesting, first-hand learning experiences meets the wide range of need and background of pupils really well.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance and are decisive. Their actions have improved most teaching from satisfactory to good since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Rapid progress and higher achievement are not yet sustained consistently over time. Progress is uneven when teaching is a little mundane and tasks less well matched to individual need.
- Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to use questioning to probe pupils' thinking, especially when they are applying their mathematical skills to solve problems. At times pupils are less certain how they can improve their work quickly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed seven lessons of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short walks around the school to check the quality of what is provided for pupils, including for those with special educational needs and those learning English.
- The inspection team held discussions with: pupils, parents and carers, members of the governing body, school staff, including those with responsibilities such as leadership of subjects and the local authority achievement partner.
- Inspectors took account of the five responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspection team observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation including the school's own records of pupils' current progress, records from the observation of lessons and checking of pupils' work, improvement planning, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Horne

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Christ Church is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (which is provided to support the learning of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or the children of members of the armed forces), is over double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils whose learning needs receive the level of support known as school action is close to twice the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than the average.
- Close to two-thirds of the pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups with a few who are at an early stage of learning to speak English. A higher-than-average and increasing proportion of pupils join or leave the school at other than the normal time.
- The school extends its services in that it provides a breakfast club each day.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set out the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching particularly in Years 1 to 4 by:
 - making certain that all pupils' make rapid and sustained progress
 - increasing the proportion of imaginative and inspiring teaching that already exists in the school
 - ensuring that all work is carefully adapted so that it constantly challenges pupils' thinking
 - extending the quality and variety of opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills
 - ensuring that all questioning checks and tests pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - making certain that all pupils know how to improve the quality of their work rapidly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children typically enter Nursery with low starting points for their age, particularly in their speech, language and number skills. A small minority are at the early stages of learning English. Children make good and sometimes rapid progress developing self-control, independence and acquiring early reading and writing skills. Despite the rate of progress slowing a little in Key Stage 1, increasingly resourceful approaches enable pupils to continue to make good progress.
- In Key Stage 2 progress accelerates, particularly in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 6, although pupils attain broadly average standards overall, mathematical skills are not always consistently well developed, such as when using more than one method of calculation to solve a problem.
- The writing skill of pupils of all abilities is improving strongly. Speedy progress is made in fostering pupils' enjoyment of reading. Although attainment by the age of six is well-below that typical for their age, pupils' strengthening knowledge of letter and sound relationships helps them to read new words accurately. Older pupils are keen to describe their choice of reading book and are mastering the more complex skills of describing an author's style or the use of themes to captivate the reader. Skills at the end of Year 6 are average for their age, but improving quickly over time.
- Rigorous checking systems frequently scrutinise pupils' development to make certain all pupils do as well as they should and none fall behind in their lessons. Any gaps in pupils' learning are quickly identified and promptly addressed, although the practice of tailoring tasks to meet individual need is a little variable.
- The effective use of themes to make subjects more interesting is increasingly successful. For example, their study of the poisoning of Lizzie Dowson as a result of working in the close by former Victorian lead works, inspired pupils to read the horrible experiences in the book, 'Street Child'. This encourages pupils to be thoughtful and sensitive in both their thinking and their writing. Lessons are increasingly thought-provoking, but opportunities are missed to bring learning to life and spark pupils' imagination to produce a more consistent pattern of rapid progress and higher achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs, those potentially at risk and those learning English make good progress and achieve well, because their needs are accurately identified and help is effective. In individual cases progress is outstanding, especially in developing essential social and communication skills. Those at risk of falling behind, such as those pupils supported by pupil premium, do just as well as other pupils. Pupils who join the school at other than the usual time quickly fit in, because they are so well cared for.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The good and occasionally inspiring and thought-provoking teaching ensures pupils from all starting points achieve well. Classrooms are happy, friendly places in which staff enjoy the confidence and trust of pupils. Their good and sometimes high levels of engagement and hard work are clear to see. The improving rates of progress and rising achievement are the result of increasingly well-thought out approaches to teaching which challenge pupils' thinking, although inconsistencies remain.
- A wide variety of first-hand experiences, interesting visits and visitors, and lively partner discussion in lessons, add to the momentum of pupils' improvement. For example, painting their vision of heaven which were exhibited in a nearby contemporary art gallery. This also contributes really well to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with staff and respond very positively to the ever increasing expectations set for them.

- Progress is more rapid and sustained in lessons when:
 - imaginative, dynamic approaches are adapted to suit individual needs and interests
 - pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn
 - speaking and listening skills are a strong feature in all learning
 - searching questioning builds upon earlier learning and requires pupils to explain their thinking.
- In lessons where the demands are less challenging and the pace of progress a little more variable, especially in Years 1 to 4:
 - activities are less well shaped to the age and ability of each pupil
 - teacher’s explanations are less well-structured and clear
 - questioning does not constantly draw out pupils’ knowledge and understanding
 - written help in books does not provide clear steps for rapid improvement, especially in mathematics.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage thorough checking of children’s development enables staff to provide a good and sometimes excellent range of opportunities to learn quickly. Children speedily develop the confidence to explore and find things out for themselves. Highly effective teaching of letter and sound relationships develops early reading and writing at a fast pace.
- Pupil premium funding helps to target support for individual pupils adding to the richness and range of opportunities to learn. For example, pupils confidence, self-esteem and coordination skills are developed rapidly in regular sessions with members of the community based circus. The excellent engagement of parents and carers helps to bolster the school’s drive for a more consistent pattern of higher achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Typically behaviour is good. In lessons there is very little disruption to the flow of learning because pupils are set clear boundaries for their conduct. Consequently classrooms are happy and friendly places to work.
- Around school pupils are polite, friendly, helpful and considerate. They feel extremely safe in school, not just because adults take outstanding care of them, but also because they take great care of one another. For example, older pupils require no prompting in being helpful and kind to new arrivals or younger children. Each morning, the breakfast club provides a well-organised and calm start to the day.
- Staff provide excellent role models for pupils and the mutual respect between them is evident throughout the day. In conversations it is clear that pupils understand what constitutes bullying. They know how to respond and resolve any worries or concerns they may have. They observe that staff are always on hand to help. Pupils know that their views matter and so feel valued.
- Pupils appreciate the excellent levels of support and help they receive from all staff. This includes those whose needs are complex or who start school at times different to the normal. Displaying respect for difference is second-nature to pupils. They are knowledgeable about how to recognise and avoid risk and danger.
- Attendance is average and improving. A consistent and relentless approach by staff has successfully reduced persistent absence. Individual pupils and families whose circumstances might put them at risk are extremely well supported by staff. This includes effective working with local authority support services and specialist agencies.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with passion and relentless drive. She receives unreserved support from staff, governors and parents. The checking of the school’s performance is thoughtful and self-critical.
 - The issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. Pupils’
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progress and development is accurately and frequently examined to pinpoint any gaps or slips in their learning. Consequently, the school's view of itself is precise and improvement planning provides the correct priorities for continued improvement.

- The efficient checking of the quality of lessons is perceptive and accurate. Staff performance targets are closely linked to rewards to raise achievement and standards. Those staff who are responsible for improvement in subjects are developing their expertise quickly, although their first-hand checking of the quality of teaching is not yet fully developed.
 - Staff respond enthusiastically to the sharply focused training programmes to extend their skills, such as developing the expertise of those responsible for subjects. Training has helped staff to be increasingly skilled at matching classroom activities to pupils' abilities and needs. Despite this improvement some inconsistencies in teaching remain, for example in presenting an appropriate level of challenge to stretch the thinking of all pupils.
 - The good curriculum and excellent enrichment is well-targeted on improving speech and language skills. The imaginative use of themes encourages pupils to practice their skills, such as after visiting the pantomime Aladdin, pupils excitedly described in their writing what happened when Aladdin's lamp was rubbed.
 - The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stage of learning English ensures all pupils are treated equally. Staff work unstintingly to make sure all forms of discrimination are eliminated. This includes successful partnership working with support agencies and families.
 - Procedures for safeguarding pupils including child protection arrangements meet requirements with much best practice adding to the high quality of care.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The effectively led governing body demonstrate an accurate grasp of school performance. They make positive contributions setting appropriate performance management targets. They share the headteacher's ambition and vision for the school and challenge and support the school in equal measure. For example, when checking the impact of pupil premium funding. Successful partnership working with the diocese and local authority, through good use of available specialist support, help to reinforce the drive for continuous improvement.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	108493
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	405174

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 of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Summersby
Headteacher	Sandra Furno
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2010
Telephone number	0191 232 8054
Fax number	0191 233 1828
Email address	admin@christchurch.newcastle.sch.uk

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