

Christ The King Catholic Primary School

Meadway, Wavertree, Liverpool, L15 7LZ

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Strong leadership by the acting headteacher, ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher and governing body, has brought about a rapid improvement in the achievement of pupils.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body have returned the school to its previously stable footing, following a period of change. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and the previous underachievement of pupils has been reversed.
- The school is well placed to improve further as seen in the recent rapid improvement. Teaching is good and ensures that most pupils make good progress, including the most able pupils, those who are disabled or have special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- Teachers know the abilities of the pupils well. They check how well they are learning and make sure if any pupils fall behind, they catch up quickly.
- From typical starting points, pupils achieve well. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is accelerating so that the gap between these pupils and other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally is now narrowing.
- Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to good behaviour and positive attitudes from pupils towards their learning. Their conduct around the school is exemplary and they make a good contribution to the school community.
- The curriculum offers pupils a wide range of exciting opportunities and experiences such as residential trips, bikeability, musical theatre and sports activities, which enrich pupils' learning.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They say that their children are happy, safe and well cared for in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The achievement of children in the early years is not as good as that of other pupils in the school.
- The quality of teaching of reading and writing is not consistently good throughout the school to ensure that pupils make outstanding progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons and part-lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the acting headteacher. Inspectors listened to pupils read and reviewed pupils' books.
- Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, other members of staff, 10 members of the governing body, pupils and parents. A representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and a representative of the local authority spoke with inspectors.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection and the school development plan.
- Inspectors scrutinised records of behaviour and attendance as well as information about the quality of teaching and the performance of staff.
- During the inspection, all pupils in Years 5 and 6 were taking part in an educational residential visit to Colomendy.
- Inspectors considered 52 responses to the online questionnaire, (Parent View), along with 13 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire. Letters received from parents were also considered.

Inspection team

Elisabeth Fenwick, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Desmond Stubbs	Additional Inspector
Terry Bond	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school has achieved the Sainsbury's Gold Games Award.
- In the previous 18 months, the senior leadership of the school has been affected by the serious illness of the previous headteacher. At the time of the inspection, the acting headteacher had been in that post for 18 months. The deputy headteacher was seconded from a local primary school in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in the early years by:
 - making sure that the activities provide challenge for all children to enable them to do as well as they should in their learning
 - making sure that the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is consistent and enables children to make rapid progress in their reading and writing.
- Ensure that the teaching of reading and writing is consistently strong throughout the school by:
 - providing opportunities for teachers to learn from each other and develop their expertise
 - giving pupils precise guidance about how to improve their work and making sure that pupils respond to teachers' marking.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The vision and determination of the acting headteacher, ably supported by her deputy and the governors, has secured the stability of the school. As a result, standards are rising rapidly. The school promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can.
- The headteacher and senior staff have tackled successfully the widening gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally. These pupils are catching up rapidly with others.
- School self-evaluation is robust and accurate. Priorities in the school development plan are clear and appropriate for improving early years and ensuring that all pupils make rapid progress, particularly in reading and writing throughout the school.
- Pupils' progress is assessed accurately and tracked very carefully. Leaders are beginning to put in place a rigorous way of assessing pupils' attainment, following the removal of National Curriculum levels. Leaders at all levels, including middle leaders, are quick to identify pupils who are falling behind in their work.
- The school works closely with a network of other schools. This allows teachers to share expertise and develop their skills. The benefits of this way of working are not used regularly by staff among themselves to improve the quality of teaching throughout the school, particularly in reading and writing.
- The school curriculum meets the needs of pupils. It is enhanced by a wide range of extracurricular activities before and after school and also by visits outside school. Residential visits such as the residential at Colomendy and a skiing trip provide pupils with opportunities to develop their social skills beyond the school day. All pupils have access to these activities and participation in the wide range of extracurricular activities is very high.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional and prepares pupils effectively for life in modern Britain. All pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and also for different tasks in school, as well as taking part in the school council. They do this with great enthusiasm.
- The school's use of the primary school physical education and sport funding is very effective in broadening the range of sporting activities for pupils and providing professional development for staff. It has also been used to train young leaders to encourage an active and healthy lunchtime. The school has been successful in gaining the Sainsbury's Games Gold Mark Award as a result of improvements brought about by the sport funding.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the gaps in attainment and in their rates of progress are closing rapidly.
- Leadership support from the local authority has been very effective and has enabled the acting headteacher to make sure that the school continues to improve. The Archdiocese of Liverpool has provided much needed and effective pastoral support to the school following staff bereavements and ill-health.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are rigorous to ensure that all pupils and staff are kept safe. They meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide exceptionally strong support for the acting headteacher and senior leaders. They have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what is needed to bring about further improvement. They are well informed about pupils' achievement, because they regularly review the school's performance data which they compare to national data. As a result, they are able to ask challenging questions about the progress of groups of pupils.
 - There is a range of expertise on the governing body which is used well to make sure all their statutory duties are met. They ensure that finances are well managed and hold the school to account for the way in which the pupil premium and sports funding are spent. Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and teacher appraisal. They have good systems in place to ensure that this is linked to pay progression. Where necessary the governors are robust in tackling underperformance. Governors have very close links with the community where the school is held in high regard.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct around the school is exemplary, particularly in corridors

and in the playground. They show a pride in their school through the way in which they look after the school environment and in how smart they look in their uniforms. Work in their books is well presented.

- Behaviour is not yet outstanding, because although pupils have mostly good attitudes to learning, this is not always consistent throughout the school. Where there is a lack of challenge in activities provided, particularly in the early years, pupils become distracted from their learning.
- Pupils make a strong contribution to the school community. Each class allocates jobs, so all pupils have the opportunity to be involved and to be a good role model. The older pupils act as buddies to the younger pupils and look after them on the playground and when they go out of school for events, such as going to church. One pupil wrote 'My buddy makes me feel like one in a million.'
- Pupils also make a strong contribution to the wider community. Pupils and their families sponsored staff and governors in a charity walk to raise funds for local respite care which has supported the previous headteacher during her illness.
- Records show that there are very few incidents of challenging behaviour. There are effective systems in place to deal with unacceptable behaviour, which means that there are no disruptions in lessons.
- Attendance is consistently much higher than the national average. School leaders are rigorous in following up absences and have a range of strategies to encourage pupils to arrive at school on time. This includes a number of before-school activities, such as the musical theatre.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They are aware of all forms of bullying and risk-taking behaviours. They are confident that there is very little bullying and, when there is any, it is dealt with swiftly.
- Visitors to the school are checked carefully to make sure that pupils are not put at risk.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are kept safe at school. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know what to do if they have a problem.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good and leads to most pupils making good or better progress. However, in reading and writing, teaching is not consistently strong enough for pupils to make outstanding progress.
- Learning in mathematics is particularly strong. Pupils enjoy the challenge of using their reasoning skills and knowledge to solve challenging problems. In Year 4, pupils showed a range of different strategies to solve number puzzles involving pyramids.
- Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching and support staff work together very effectively. The needs of the few disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early and given support where required. Teachers know these pupils' abilities well and make sure they set work for them which enables them to catch up rapidly with their classmates.
- Across the school, frequent assessments of pupils' progress normally result in work set at the right level and which challenges pupils to do even better. However, this is not consistent across the school, particularly in the early years and in reading and writing in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They use effective strategies when they come across difficult words, which helps them make progress with their reading.
- Pupils' work is marked frequently. It provides pointers as to how pupils should improve their work and what they need to do next. However, pupils do not always respond consistently to teachers' marking by correcting and revising their work and so do not learn consistently from their mistakes.
- Pupils develop their writing through other curriculum subjects. In science, for example, they write reports about their findings when carrying out investigations. This is starting to improve their writing and help them to make better progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In Key Stage 1, standards have risen rapidly and are now above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check was in line with the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 from their different starting points. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress increased. Progress in writing

was much better than for other pupils nationally and was similar in reading and mathematics.

- The current assessment information kept by the school shows that progress is improving rapidly in Key Stage 2. However, there are some differences between year groups and subjects. Progress in reading and writing is not currently as strong as it is in mathematics.
- In 2014, the attainment of the very small proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium was about a year behind other pupils in the school and almost five terms behind other pupils nationally in mathematics. In English, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was almost two years behind other pupils within the school and nationally for reading, and one year behind in writing within school and nationally. The gap is now narrowing significantly as a result of the effective use of the pupil premium funding.
- In 2014, the rate of progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs was much slower than for other pupils nationally. However, leaders have put in very effective strategies to support these pupils and current tracking information shows that, throughout the school, these pupils are now making rapid progress.
- The most able pupils are supported effectively so that they make good progress, particularly in mathematics. Just as with other groups of pupils, their progress in reading and writing is not as fast as it is in mathematics.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge typical for their age, except in writing where they are below typical. Although a majority of children reaches a good level of development, this proportion is below the national average. In reading, writing and mathematics, children do not make the progress they should and so too many are not prepared well for moving into Key Stage 1. This includes the very few children who are most able, or who have special educational needs or who receive additional funding.
- Children settle into the routines of school quickly and many of them are confident and articulate. In an assembly about autumn which they led, the children spoke confidently and clearly to their parents who were watching them. Children are not always given enough opportunities to use this level of confidence in their learning so that they make as much progress as possible.
- The children behave well and have good attitudes to learning. However, in many lessons, they are not tackling work which is hard enough. Expectations of them, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, are too low.
- Children do not do well in reading, because in phonics they have to repeat letter sounds they already know. Currently, they are not moving along at the faster speeds of which they are capable and this is slowing the development of their reading skills.
- Children enjoy using the good range of indoor and outdoor resources to support their activities. However, the activities outdoors often lack a purpose and so too many children do not make the gains in their learning that they should.
- Children have opportunities to follow their interests and many of them work well on their own or with other children. They show great enthusiasm for writing letters and post them at the post office in the classroom. Outdoors, they play at being postmen and women, putting parcels in a bag and delivering them. On one occasion, inspectors saw two girls who love books and were in the cosy book area quietly looking at their favourite story books and talking excitedly about them.
- The early years provides good quality care. The children are very well behaved. They know how to keep themselves safe, because they understand that they must wait for an adult to take them into the outdoor area. Once they are outside, they are careful when riding bikes and scooters to keep these away from other children who are not using them.
- The 'learning journals' which are records of a child's achievements during the early years, are informative for parents and include their comments about their own child's progress. One parent had commented on her child's achievement in climbing Mount Snowdon as being a 'wonderful WOW moment'.
- Relationships in early years are very good. Children say they feel safe and that their teachers look after them when they fall over or hurt themselves. They happily go to a familiar adult when they are unsure of something or need help.
- The leadership of the early years has been affected by the recent staff changes. However, the acting deputy headteacher has made a good start in looking at what needs to be done to improve the early years. She is putting in place the changes necessary to make sure that all the children make at least good progress.

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	104629
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	449131

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	307
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Howell
Acting Headteacher	Kate Griffin
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2010
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