



Christleton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111149
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278609
Inspection dates 8 March 2006 to 9 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Margot D'Arcy CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Quarry Lane
School category	Community		Christleton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Chester, Cheshire CH3 7AY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01244 332324
Number on roll	212	Fax number	01244 332145
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Andrea Mageean
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Harker

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is situated in the village of Christleton on the outskirts of Chester in Cheshire. When compared with the national picture the area is fairly advantaged, both socially and economically. Virtually all children are of white British background and speak English as their first language. A very small minority is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. When children begin school their overall level of attainment is generally above that expected for their age. The school has been successful in attaining a School Achievement Award in 2003, Healthy Schools Award and the Active Mark for sport and physical development.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It judges itself to be good and inspectors agree. Children are very happy at school and thoroughly enjoy learning. This is because the teaching is consistently good and there is a rich and stimulating curriculum. Good quality provision in the Foundation Stage leads to children achieving well and attaining good standards by the end of the Reception year. As they get older, children continue to make good progress in all year groups. By Year 6, standards are generally well above average. Whilst there was a dip in the most recent Year 6 test results, these still reflected mostly good progress for that particular group of children. However, writing results were much lower than the school expected so a rigorous investigation occurred to find out why and put things right. Inspectors found that children develop their writing skills well in English lessons, but not as well as they should in other subjects. The school is very successful at promoting children's personal development, which is outstanding. The high level of care and support provided ensures that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English make good progress. Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features and the school has moved on well since its last inspection. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and has identified the right priorities for improvement. Strong relationships exist with parents who are extremely happy with the education and care that their children receive. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Plan and provide more opportunities for children to use and develop extended writing across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well. They get off to a good start in the Reception class and by the end of the year all reach the standards expected for their age and a good proportion exceeds them. Good progress continues in Years 1 to 6. Standards by the end of Year 2 are well above average and these are maintained through to Year 6. The 2005 Year 6 test results were lower than usual, being broadly average overall. In mathematics, science and the reading element of English, achievement was generally good but writing results were less positive and suggested some underachievement in this element. Rigorous analysis by the school showed that this was linked to some children's, notably boys', competence in one particular aspect of writing. In the last year a good plan for improvement has been devised, with standards and achievement being checked closely. The resulting whole school focus on writing, including planning work that particularly appeals to boys' interests, is proving successful. Standards are set to rise again this year to meet challenging targets. Children make good progress in other subjects, especially creative areas, such as art and design and physical education. Skills in

information and communication technology (ICT) are good and are developed well across the curriculum. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve at the same good rate as others. Those at an early stage of learning English make rapid progress in this area. Higher attainers and children with particular gifts and talents are extended well to reach their potential.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development is outstanding. They show high levels of interest in their work and are confident and self-assured in their approach to others. Behaviour is exemplary, with older children setting a good example to younger ones. Children's very good rates of attendance show just how much they enjoy school. As one child said, 'It's interesting and good fun because we learn new things nearly every day.' Children speak highly of their teachers and are proud of their school and their achievements. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children's sensitivity to others' feelings means that relationships are excellent. They are adamant that playtimes are enjoyable and free from bullying. Lessons in art, music and religious education help children to appreciate the richness of different cultures. The wide range of visits, visitors and well attended extracurricular activities also enhance children's all round development. The school's provision gives children a very good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle. Children display sensible attitudes towards diet and exercise and are aware of the dangers surrounding drugs and other substances. The good progress made in literacy, mathematics and ICT, combined with the many opportunities children have to develop other important life skills ensures their readiness to face future challenges.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

During the inspection, all of the teaching was at least good and some was outstanding. In all lessons the children are very keen to learn. This is because work is carefully planned to meet their interests, with realistic challenge for children's different abilities. Teachers make particularly good use of interactive whiteboards to motivate children and maintain their interest. Teachers' secure subject knowledge ensures that they explain things well and good questioning helps them to identify children who need more help or greater challenge. At the start of lessons teachers share the learning objectives with children and revisit these frequently so that children understand what they are aiming for and how well they have achieved. Clear, regularly updated, targets and opportunities for children to evaluate their work ensure that they are well involved in the learning process. Marking is satisfactory overall, but inconsistent in terms of telling children how they might improve. Teachers treat all children sensitively and with respect. In response they behave very well, try hard and show confidence in learning new skills and discussing their work. Teaching and learning in the Reception

class is good with some outstanding features. Play and practical activities underpin all work and give children a good start to their education. Teaching assistants play an important supportive role here and throughout the school, especially in helping those who find learning more difficult. Opportunities for children to show initiative and to work collaboratively are good and much improved since the last inspection. Homework provision is good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good curriculum is provided for all children. Strong emphasis is placed upon ensuring that children are well equipped with the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. There are pockets of good practice in providing opportunities for children to use and develop writing skills in subjects other than English. Overall, however, the potential of the wider curriculum to develop this specific aspect of literacy is not capitalised upon enough. Creativity has a high profile. This is seen in the varied and rich opportunities children have to engage in poetry, drama, music and physical education. Learning is also enhanced by the wide range of out of school opportunities, including residential visits for children in Years 4 to 6. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned well, enabling them to become willing and independent learners. Whilst very good links are made between the different areas of learning, outdoor provision is limited. The school has identified this as a priority for development. Detailed work programmes for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure that they are able to achieve well. Additional provision is also made to extend learning opportunities for gifted and/or talented children. The excellent provision that is made to promote children's personal, social and health education and citizenship is seen in their high standards of personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All staff are highly committed to ensuring children's health and safety. Arrangements for fire safety checks are robust and children know the established routines for evacuating the building. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory. The building is clean and well maintained. Within a very caring, family ethos, children are looked after well. Adults ensure that vulnerable children are given the pastoral support they need. Older children are strongly encouraged to help keep the playground safe and act as 'buddies' for younger ones. Children are full of praise for the way midday supervisors take care of them and join in their games. Good systems for assessing children's progress means that teachers know their varying capabilities and provide the right level of support and challenge in lessons. Children know their targets and appreciate the help that they get in working to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Children's academic and personal progress and their well-being underpin all that is done and are positively reflected in their standards and achievements. The headteacher knows the school well. His clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses is well considered through a rigorous process of self-evaluation, which includes taking good account of the views of children and their parents. Whilst acknowledging its strengths, the school is not complacent. Procedures to monitor performance are good and have become much sharper during the last 12 months. Analysis and use of performance data is perceptive and leads to very clear foci for checks on children's standards and progress and the quality of provision. Strategies introduced this year to improve writing are already having a positive effect. Notable strengths in leadership and management include the excellent commitment to ensuring that all children are fully included in what is provided and the extremely good thought given to the deployment of classroom assistants.

Governors are supportive, have a good understanding of the school and contribute well to its successes. Financial management is prudent and directed towards the school's priorities. Governors deliberate thoroughly about spending decisions, to achieve best value whilst maintaining high standards. A good example is the decision to ensure a trained teacher covers teachers' professional development time away from their classes. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed our visit and want to share with you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most:

- your headteacher wants the best for you all and works extremely hard to ensure that you enjoy school and achieve well
- your teachers also work very hard to plan interesting and exciting lessons. They set you useful targets to help you improve
- you put lots of effort into your learning, which shows how much you enjoy school. Your hard work pays off and you achieve good standards
- you are sensible when you work together and are kind and helpful to each other
- your school provides a great range of things for you to participate in outside of lessons and teaches you how to stay safe and keep healthy.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- the variety of writing that you do in English lessons is great, but we think that teachers could help you to develop and make better use of your writing skills in other subjects.

We appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you well for the future.