

Christ Church Academy

Old Road, Stone, ST15 8JD

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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.

- Pupils enjoy learning and feel safe and happy at the school.
- They achieve well and attainment is above average by the end of Year 8. Pupils make good progress as they go through the school and outstanding progress in mathematics.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. In the best lessons, pupils learn quickly because teachers get them really interested in the work.
- Teachers use questioning well to help pupils develop their understanding of topics and subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They work well together and are keen and enthusiastic.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly and those who are not making enough progress get extra help and support. This is then carefully checked to see it is working and helping pupils to learn.
- Leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and of how it could improve further. Their careful checks on teachers' work are helping to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- There are many exciting opportunities for pupils to learn beyond lessons, particularly in sport, music and art.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils act on the advice they give in their books on how to improve their work.
- In some lessons, teachers do not match work to pupils' different needs and abilities.
- A small minority of teaching requires improvement and not enough teaching is yet outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons taught by 27 staff. Some of these were joint observations with the Principal, Vice-Principal and head of English and mathematics.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, senior leaders, staff and members of the governing body. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with an external consultant who works with the school.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 30 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including hearing pupils read, looking at records of pupils' progress, improvement plans, safeguarding documentation and pupils' work.

Inspection team

Davinder Dosanjh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Graham Marshall

Additional Inspector

Patrick Walsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average middle school though smaller than most secondary schools.
- Christ Church Academy converted to become an academy school in August 2012. When its predecessor school, Christ Church CofE (A) Middle School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is low. An above average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and increase rates of progress to outstanding by:
 - ensuring pupils are allowed time in lessons to respond to the advice given by teachers in their books on how to improve
 - making sure that work is matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils
 - getting the best teachers to share their skills across different subject areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils join the school in Year 5, they have the skills and knowledge typically expected for their age. They make good progress to reach standards that are above expectations by the time they leave.
- At the end of Year 6, pupils reach levels of attainment that are average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. By the time end of Year 8, attainment is above average in English and well above average in mathematics.
- Progress in reading and writing speeds up in Years 7 and 8. This is due to well-focused reading programmes and an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work in other subjects. Pupils are articulate and effective readers who read widely.
- The gap is narrowing between most pupils and those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and their achievement is rising rapidly. The additional pupil premium funding is being used effectively to provide one-to-one support, and to employ additional staff to work with small groups of pupils intensively on reading and writing. It has also been used to fund school trips so pupils can take part in new experiences. The extra support has meant that the achievement of these pupils has improved and matches that of all pupils.
- Additional adults provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Specific support matched to pupils' individual needs includes help in learning letters and sounds, one-to-one academic mentoring and the 'safe-zone' where pupils receive social and emotional support. Pupils' progress is carefully checked and the school has been very successful in meeting a wide range of needs and enabling these pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to share their ideas and answers. They work well independently and in pairs and groups. The work in their books shows clear progress in their knowledge and understanding of topics across many subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good in the vast majority of lessons and some is outstanding. Consequently, pupils make good progress and achieve well although there is still a small amount of teaching which is not yet good.
- Teachers consistently display high expectations for behaviour and achievement. In outstanding lessons, the teachers excite and challenge pupils so they make exceptional progress. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were given different levels of work, based on current learning levels and the teacher's questions on shape and volume were challenging. Pupils had to carefully explain their answers to the whole class using the interactive white board. They were totally engrossed in the lesson.
- Teachers plan carefully and display good subject knowledge. However, not all lessons take into account the different abilities and needs of pupils.
- The majority of lessons have a strong focus on developing appropriate language and key terminology for the subject. Key words are used continually in lessons and displayed on

classroom walls.

- Teachers often use questioning well during lessons, to check what pupils have learnt and get them to explain their answers further. This helps pupils to develop a good understanding of subjects and increases their confidence in speaking.
- Marking is consistent across the school. Pupils' books are regularly marked with good advice about how they can make further progress. There are examples of marking picking up errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation in a range of different subjects. Teachers are working hard in marking the books but have not allowed sufficient time in lessons for pupils to respond to their comments and advice.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. Assemblies allow pupils to reflect on spiritual issues. Teachers make the most of opportunities for pupils to reflect on cultural differences in art and humanities. Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and moral issues. Lessons provide many good opportunities for pupils to work together in groups and pairs. They develop good social skills and awareness by considering important events in history. acting as mentors and being on the school and eco council.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and are ready to learn, and they almost never disrupt the learning of others. Pupils act responsibly and reading buddies in Year 8 provide excellent support for younger pupils.
 - In the best lessons, pupils have fun and become excited by the teaching they receive, they are eager to please and show a strong work ethic. In a small minority of lessons, pupils at times drift off task and do not always listen to the teachers' instructions.
 - The school is a very orderly community where pupils are polite and courteous. They take great pride in their school. Parents and carers are universally supportive of the school and consider behaviour to be well managed.
 - Pupils respond well to rewards for good behaviour and work. They know appropriate behaviour is not tolerated by teachers. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils.
 - Different groups of pupils say they feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet.
 - Pupils say there is no bullying and the school's records indicate that it is rare. Pupils have a clear understanding of the different types of bullying and they have all signed an anti-bullying pledge.
 - Senior leaders check very carefully all aspects of behaviour and safety. Exclusions are very rare and there have been none this year.
 - Pupils attend well and are punctual to school and lessons. They enjoy coming to school because, as they told inspectors, there are a lot of things to do.
 - The school has very good procedures and support for pupils whose circumstances make them
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vulnerable. The 'safe-zone' allows them to have lunch in a quiet space and there is a focus on manners and building up pupils' confidence.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership team provides a strong direction for the school. Staff are proud of their school and supportive of the Principal. There is good understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need further improvement. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance.
 - Parents and carers say that the school is well led and managed and inspectors found this to be the case.
 - School actions have focused on improving achievement and the quality of teaching. There is good support and help available to enable teachers to make improvements, but the expertise of outstanding teachers is not fully used across different subjects.
 - There are good systems for checking the quality of teaching which are giving subject leaders a bigger role in monitoring their subjects. Joint observations carried out with inspectors showed leaders are accurate in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
 - Systems for managing teachers' performance are much improved and closely linked to the school improvement plan. The governing body ensures that those teachers who successfully meet their targets are suitably rewarded.
 - Leaders at all levels track pupils' progress extensively and measure the success of any extra support given to pupils.
 - The 'break out' weeks engage pupils' interest and imagination. They relish the opportunity to work in a different way and have visitors and guests in from different backgrounds. The clubs before, during and after school are well attended by pupils. They enjoy the broad range of sporting activities, and the choir is popular, as are other music-based activities. Learning opportunities ensure that pupils achieve well and make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - The values and ethos of the school are reinforced by staff and pupils. The school promotes equality well. Discrimination is rare. The school fosters very good relationships with parents and carers.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well. They bring a wide range of expertise to the school and regular training enables them to help it to improve. While they are supportive and very committed, governors provide appropriate challenge. Finances and resources are well managed and pupil premium funding is allocated carefully to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. The committee structure ensures there are regular checks on teaching, and subject leaders are held accountable for performance in their subject areas. The governing body's knowledge of data helps its members to understand how the school is performing when compared with other schools. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding.
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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	136961
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	395545

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

Type of school	Middle Deemed Secondary
School category	Academy Converter
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	522
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Puxley
Headteacher	Chris Wright
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01785 354049
Fax number	01785 354055
Email address	office@cca.staffs.sch.uk

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