

Inspection of Christ Church Primary School, Hampstead

Christ Church Hill, London NW3 1JH

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since May 2009.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and their parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school, and rightly so. Christ Church Primary provides an education for its pupils that is exceptional in every way. Everything that happens in the school is deliberate and every action has a purpose.

Pupils said, without hesitation, that they feel safe in school. They said this is because there are always adults around to talk to. The school promotes pupils' safety rigorously. This ensures that pupils are kept safe.

One of the school's many strengths is the systematic way it ensures that all decisions benefit pupils' education. For example, subjects are interwoven seamlessly with extra-curricular activities, visits and events. Activities are chosen to benefit pupils' learning and, while they are enjoyed hugely by pupils, they all have an educational purpose.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Pupils are highly respectful of others and listen carefully to their teachers. At the same time, they are encouraged to be independent and creative, contributing their own ideas to their work.

The high-quality curriculum is at the heart of the school's work. It exemplifies how attention to detail is used to ensure that every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), gets the very best education possible.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The bedrock of the school's excellence is the highly ambitious curriculum. It has been honed over the years to ensure that pupils gain the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed. The thinking that goes into devising this curriculum is both profound and pragmatic. Staff use up-to-date and credible research to keep the curriculum, and its implementation in the classroom, sharp. The curriculum goes well beyond national expectations so that pupils' learning is both broad and deep.

Key to this learning, and to the planning that goes behind it, is the expertise of staff. They understand the subjects they teach in the fullest sense. Staff know the nuances of the subject content and how different bits of knowledge fit together to ensure high-quality outcomes. In art, for example, pupils are taught techniques and skills as a prelude to more advanced work. This sequencing of activities extends to all subjects, including history, music, physical education and design and technology. Pupils learn the essential knowledge and skills they need to tackle increasingly complex and demanding work.

The carefully planned curriculum goes hand in hand with the highly effective way it is translated into classroom practice. Staff check that pupils remember what they have learned in the past and can apply it new topics and ideas. These checks allow misconceptions or gaps in learning to be picked up quickly and dealt with effectively.

This ensures that the needs of disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, are identified swiftly and that support is well targeted. The excellent provision for pupils with SEND is one of the school's many strengths.

The school puts early reading, and reading for pleasure, at the heart of its work. All the staff are trained to use the phonics programme, which is applied consistently from the start of Reception. By the end of Year 1, pupils use their phonics knowledge to read with increasing fluency. This is built on as pupils get older, with a deliberate focus on reading often and widely. Visits to a local bookshop and buying books for pupils ensure that everyone gets the same high-quality provision. As a result, pupils read fluently and accurately.

The early years curriculum is tied closely to the rest of the school's programme. It is exceptionally well considered and planned. Routines and expectations are high. The curriculum provides children with a thorough grounding, ensuring that they move smoothly into Year 1. Staff track children's learning rigorously, checking the development of their skills and providing additional support where needed. As a result, all children achieve very well.

Pupils' personal development is given the same high priority as their academic learning. The excellent personal, social and health education programme promotes pupils' understanding of areas such as democracy, ethics and keeping healthy and safe. The wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and trips to places such as Buckingham Palace and museums, contribute hugely to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Leadership is methodical and reflective. Everyone is involved in helping to take the school forward, from teachers and support staff to parents and governors. No stone is left unturned in finding a better way of doing things. The work to secure teachers' well-being, and to ensure that their workload is manageable, is innovative. The constant refinement of the curriculum and the uncompromising focus on learning contribute to ensuring that pupils' attendance is strong and that they achieve the highest outcomes. Pupils are fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100028
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10242357
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Oliver Chesser
Headteacher	Katy Forsdyke
Website	http://www.christchurchschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	21 May 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Christ Church Primary School, Hampstead is smaller than the average-sized school in the London Borough of Camden.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school within the Diocese of London. Its last section 48 inspection was carried out in November 2019.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at the wider curriculum and visited lessons in other subjects.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with the chair of governors and other school governors. They also spoke with representatives of the Diocese of London and the local authority.
- Inspectors considered 156 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school. There were 77 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 22 to the staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sophie Healey-Welch

His Majesty's Inspector

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