

# SEN Review

Christ Church VC School Skipton

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## Abbreviations

SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SA School Action

SA+ School Action plus

EHCP Education Health and Care Plan

TA teaching assistant

## **Reason for review**

The review was undertaken at the request of the school. Christ Church CE VC School received an outstanding judgement from Ofsted in 2011 and they have not been re-inspected since, as Ofsted have no cause to believe that the school is not still outstanding.

The school has a high proportion of children with additional needs and the head and governors wanted to be sure that they continue to make best provision and accelerate progress for this group of children. The head, staff and governors continue to be self-evaluative and all welcomed an objective, external review of provision.

## **Information obtained before the visit**

### **Data analysis from DfE nationally reported information**

(RAISE on line, latest at September 2015 which only includes data up to 2014)

The proportion of pupils supported at school action has been decreasing and has been below national average for three years.

The proportion of pupils at SA+ and statement has been above national average for three years and has slightly increased. The relative percentage of pupils with statements has risen from 1.4% in 2012 to 3.3% in 2014.

Absence for pupils with SEN is substantially lower than the national figure and there were no exclusions. The national average for exclusions for SEN with a statement is 9.67%.

In 2014 the percentage of all pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of the reception year was 45% compared to 61% nationally. (As yet unpublished data for 2015 shows that 52% of children reached GLD, a substantial improvement and closer to the national average. The trend has risen significantly over three years)

In Y1 50% of children with SEN achieved the phonic level compared to 39% nationally. Two out of three children with SEN achieved the phonic level in Y2.

At the end of Y2 (2014), pupils without SEN had similar attainment to national. One child (SA) had low attainment while three children with SEN attained higher than similar pupils nationally. Attainment for all pupils in Y2 has been on an upward trend over the last five years and for the last four years has been maintained close to national.

In Y6, all children (100%) with SEND made 2 levels of progress in reading, writing and maths. National progress for children with a statement is only 48-51% making two levels progress. The attainment of all children with SEN in Y6 was at or above the national average. For all children in the school, attainment has been higher than national since 2010.

## **Parentview**

Over the last 365 days 10 parents have responded to parentview. Overall there have been 48 responses over time. All parents were very positive about the school. Three didn't know if the school

dealt well with bullying, but this is likely to be because they have had no experience of this issue. 100% would recommend the school to others.

### **School website**

Schools are required to publish their SEN policy, their SEN information report and have a link to their Local Authority's Local Offer. These documents and information were relatively easy to find on Christ Church School's website, thereby making them accessible to parents of children who have SEN. Christ Church has an updated policy which can be found under the heading 'Policies'. Under the heading of 'Parents' and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) the SEN information report can be found easily. There are two links to the NYCC Local Offer. However, the SEN information report is not fully compliant with the final Code of Practice which came into place in April 2015.

School has also helpfully supplied a link to NYPACT for parents to access. It would also be helpful if there was an additional link for parents to SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities information and advice support service) at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/25378/SEND---advice-and-support>

### **Evidence base**

The findings are based on the following evidence collected on the day:

- 5 lesson observations
- 2 drop ins to classes
- 4 observations of group teaching/ interventions
- Observations in the playground and dining hall
- Meetings with stakeholders including school council, parents, governors, local SEN support services.
- Internal school data
- Extensive SEN paperwork
- Meetings with the SENCo/headteacher, Inclusion Manager, teaching assistants, the play worker and the Early years pathways coordinator.

**The advisers would like to thank the staff for their thorough preparation for the review, their transparency and the wide range of evidence provided. All parents were invited to speak with the team. Ten parents took this opportunity.**

### **Review findings**

**Children with SEN are welcomed at Christ Church School. They achieve well, are happy and included.**

Children in class and the school council could describe how individuals were helped and supported socially and academically so that they could achieve and be happy. They reported that any signs of bullying were dealt with immediately and discussed in detail with all children involved. They felt all issues were resolved to their satisfaction. They described a variety of buddy schemes to support younger or vulnerable children, and children joining school mid-year. The play worker has had a

major impact on playtime behaviour, reducing incidents to almost nil and improving attendance for some vulnerable children.

The school seeks many ways to work with families to support their own children. The home learning boxes and the PACEY bears are excellent examples of initiatives to involve whole families in the child's education.

The SENCO role is currently being transferred from the headteacher to the Inclusion Manager in anticipation of her achieving qualified teacher status in the near future. The Inclusion Manager has had a positive impact upon progress in school. Paperwork and systems are exemplary. This is an area of good practice which should be shared.

**Children and parents feel listened to. Their views are valued. The detailed knowledge which parents have of their children is recognised by staff. Parents feel that all adults working with their children are well qualified and empathetic to additional needs.**

The ten parents interviewed were overwhelmingly positive about the school, all the staff and especially the headteacher. One parent said: 'I can't thank them enough. They gave me my son back'. They gave many examples of support which went beyond their expectations, including continuing to support a family with their child now in secondary school. All parents felt total confidence in the staff's knowledge, and that staff knew where to go for additional advice when children failed to make expected progress.

**Children with SEN achieve and attain well. In general they make more progress than children without SEN, meaning that they close the attainment gap with their peers.**

Over the last three years the percentage of children at a good level of development at the end of reception has increased. Outcomes at the end of key stage one have improved and almost all children with SEN have made two levels of progress in reading, writing and maths over key stage two. Many children with SEN made more than two levels of progress. 2015 data is in school but not yet published nationally and validated. However an analysis has already identified slightly lower progress in maths this year and an action plan to address this is in place as part of the school development plan.

**All teachers take full responsibility for the children in their class and personalise learning. This means that all children benefit from excellent, personalised approaches which allow them to thrive.**

SEN children observed in normal classroom activities were fully included. Groupings and seating were thoughtful and paired work was supportive. Planning identified a wide range of individuals and in every case except one child downstairs, reasonable adjustments were fully implemented in line with the individual provision map. A positive ethos in every class meant that any differences were celebrated and valued and children were extremely supportive of each other.

**Teaching assistants are skilled and well trained and qualified. They feel valued and in return give freely of their time to ensure children are well supported.**

TAs skilfully supported learners to enable maximum independence. They were deployed with a range of children and this allowed some time for the teacher to work with the least able or the children with SEND. Adults are fully utilised at intervention time which allows work to be very precisely targeted to small groups or individuals. Some excellent questioning was observed in a guided reading session led by a TA. One intervention which was observed was not having maximum impact. This is because it is not being delivered with fidelity to the original programme and attendance at refresher training is recommended.

TAs engaged very positively with the teachers to ensure they understood the learning planned for the lesson. They were able to give feedback on their observations made during the learning.

**The school has developed considerable expertise in making provision for children with a wide range of needs and has shared its expertise with other local schools. The staff are involved in a number of local collaborations and the head has been instrumental in setting up headteacher collaborations. The school works well with support services and appropriately seeks further help from specialists.**

A teacher-in-charge from an enhanced mainstream school described the very positive relations she has with the school. They are open to new ideas and follow through suggestions which have been made. They make excellent provision for some very high needs pupils.

**The school has very committed governors. There has been some change on the governing body and new governors are currently being supported and mentored by more experienced peers. The governors support the school's inclusive ethos and support the staff and head in maintaining high expectations for all children.**

The governors could describe a number of ways in which they monitor the performance of the school. Some of these need to be formalised to provide a strong body of evidence. It would be useful for governors to be more involved in listening to pupil voice, particularly the views of some vulnerable groups, including SEN. They are very committed to an inclusive ethos and the school budget is used creatively to find a range of solutions to meet additional need. SEN funding (which is only £48,000) is used creatively alongside Pupil Premium Funding to support children to achieve their full potential.

### Recommendations

The SEN Information Report should be updated in line with the April 2015 amendments to the SEN Code of Practice. Developing this document would be a useful collaboration between the two SEN governors and the Inclusion Manager as part of their induction. (Please refer to 6.79 of the code of practice Jan 2015, particularly to the bullet points on p106-107).

Outstanding schools are defined not only by practice in their own school but also by their impact on other schools (sector led support). The school already undertakes a range of collaborative and supportive roles, but the expertise of the SEN staff, teaching assistants and the play leader could be more widely shared.

The governors should formalise some of their monitoring and support the school by seeking pupil views, including the views of children with SEN. This would be in line with the Children and Families Act 2014.