

# Gee Cross Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106226
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	377383
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Denise Shields

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nathan Lee
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Lane
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Higham Lane Gee Cross Hyde SK14 5LX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 368 2911
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Denise Shields  
Jean Tarry

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed nine teachers teaching 16 lessons or part lessons. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a few 'support lessons' where specialist help is provided by either a teacher or trained assistants. The inspectors listened to pupils from a range of different ages and abilities read. Meetings were held with five groups of pupils, three members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's strategic development plan, safeguarding documentation and minutes of the governing body meetings. Also, they analysed 139 parental and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff. There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to aid the planning of the inspection.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Since the previous inspection a new Early Years Foundation Stage Unit has been built and this opened in 2009. As a result, the school now accepts children who attend a Nursery class during the afternoons. Not all of these children transfer into the Reception class. About half who join the Reception class come from a range of pre-school providers and a few have not had any experience of pre-school provision.

A new headteacher was appointed in January 2010 and a new deputy headteacher in March 2010. Three new teachers have been appointed recently.

The school holds Healthy School and Investors in People status and has achieved the Eco Green Flag, for the fifth time, and Inclusion Quality Mark award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is a happy school where pupils thrive and grow in confidence. Relationships with almost all parents and carers are excellent. Leaders have established excellent partnerships with other schools, the immediate community and external organisations. These, together with the rich curriculum, add depth and interest to pupils' learning and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, are effective. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure the correct priorities for improvement are rigorously pursued.
- Children have a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress and achieve well. However, sometimes when children initiate their own learning, adults do not always seize the opportunity to take learning forward and, on these occasions, children's progress slows.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in these subjects is broadly average.
- Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. Basic skills are taught well in all classes. Lessons are carefully planned but sometimes do not take sufficient account of the school's good-quality assessment information. Consequently, work is not consistently well enough matched to meet the needs and abilities of all pupil groups, especially the more able. This prevents pupils making greater progress, which is why their achievement in English and mathematics is good rather than outstanding
- Attendance is consistently high. Overwhelmingly, pupils say they feel safe in the school, a view endorsed by almost all parents and carers. Behaviour is good, relationships are very strong and pupils are polite and courteous. Pupils are keen to succeed in their lessons. They state confidently that discussions with

their teachers help them to understand how well they are doing. However, they also comment, and inspectors agree, that marking and their learning targets are not always as helpful in indicating to them how to improve their work.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - assessment information is consistently used to adjust lesson planning and teaching so that work is always precisely tailored to pupils' abilities, particularly the more able
  - when children in the Early Years Foundation Stage choose activities for themselves, adults intervene to ensure that successful learning is always taking place
  - the school's marking policy and the arrangements to set pupils' learning targets are applied consistently in all classes, so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage children eagerly join in activities, learn to take turns and listen to the views of others. Children make good progress when they work with an adult, but their progress sometimes slows when they select their own activities. This is because, on these occasions, adults do not always intervene swiftly enough to ensure meaningful learning takes place. From average levels of attainment on entry to Year 1 all groups of pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6 attainment is above average in English and mathematics and a broadly average proportion attain the higher levels in these subjects. Pupils' achievement, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is good.

All groups of pupils make good progress in English and mathematics because basic skills are taught well. Reading strategies are taught effectively and pupils have regular opportunities to read to an adult, including to a number of volunteer helpers who regularly help in the school. Pupils' attainment in reading by Year 2 is average and by Year 6 is above average. Pupils have lots of opportunities to practise their basic skills in a range of situations. Pupils comment that using their writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in different lessons helps them learn a lot. Many use these skills well, for example, to undertake research activities. Most pupils try their best at all times and concentrate well. They have many chances to solve mathematical problems and use their investigation skills well in a range of contexts. These opportunities help them to develop good cooperation skills and are helping them to become confident and independent learners. Almost all pupils work well with a partner or in groups.

Overwhelmingly, parents and carers express the view that their children make good progress and the school meets their child's particular needs. Effective, targeted support in reading, writing and mathematics, for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who find learning more difficult, enables some of these pupils to make huge leaps in their learning and their progress improves dramatically. Overall, these pupils make the same good progress as other groups in the school. By the end of Year 6 successful school strategies are closing the gap between the attainment of boys and girls, especially in writing. The gap in the performance of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has narrowed considerably compared to similar pupils' nationally.

## Quality of teaching

Almost all parents and carers express the view that their children are taught well. Inspectors endorse these positive views. In all classes, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, basic communication, reading, writing and mathematical skills are taught well, including letters and sounds for the youngest pupils. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' good progress by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school relationships are very strong and so pupils are not afraid to ask for help if they should need it. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to take on responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school. They encourage pupils to express their views and to listen carefully to those of their peers. All this provides a strong contribution to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Teaching assistants and other trained adults guide the learning of individuals and small groups sensitively and effectively; this enables them to make good progress. In discussions disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who find learning more difficult comment that they value the support they receive from the adults who help them.

Homework is set regularly and supports pupils' learning well. In all lessons new technology is used effectively to engage pupils and extend their knowledge. This was apparent in one lesson, where pupils were learning 'tricky words'. The use of the interactive whiteboard to provide visual and fun clues, for instance, 'never eat cake eat salad sandwiches and remain young' captured pupils attention but also provided an effective prompt for them to remember how to spell 'necessary'. In discussion, later the next day, several pupils were asked if they remembered the prompt; virtually all did so.

In the best lessons teachers explain new concepts exceptionally well and are skilled at consolidating pupils' new learning quickly, and very effectively, through the use of well-chosen activities. Imaginative use is made of resources that capture pupils' attention and learning is often rapid. In most good lessons skilful questioning engages pupils' interest and extends their knowledge quickly. Opportunities for pupils to talk in pairs and to share their ideas successfully promote speaking, listening and cooperation.

Teachers make regular and accurate assessment of pupils' progress. In the main, this information is used carefully to plan work to meet the needs and abilities of all groups. Sometimes, however, work is not closely enough tailored to individuals'

differing needs or challenging enough for the more able in order to enable pupils to make greater progress. In discussions this is confirmed by pupils who say that occasionally their work is too easy.

In all classes teachers are quick to identify and quickly address any misconceptions. Pupils comment that discussions with their teachers help them to understand how to improve their work. Most pupils have learning targets, their work is marked regularly and constructive comments are generally included. However, there are variations between classes and so, sometimes, pupils are not certain what steps to take to improve their work.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Almost all pupils help and encourage each other. They understand and accept the need for rules because their views are sought when these are drawn up. For instance, pupils helped to devise the playground rules. Pupils enjoy the praise they receive from their teachers and other adults. As a consequence, their behaviour is good in lessons, around the school and during playtime. In discussions with different groups of pupils they indicate that behaviour over time is almost always good and their learning and progress in lessons are not disrupted. Parents and carers and members of staff confirm this and also express the view that behaviour is good and any occasional unacceptable behaviour is managed effectively.

In discussions and the responses to the pupils' questionnaire almost all pupils express the view that they feel safe in school and there is an adult they can turn to for help if they are troubled or sad. Overwhelmingly, pupils say that everyone gets on with each other and instances of bullying in any form are rare. In conversation most demonstrate they have an excellent understanding of the need to respect others' values and beliefs and for racial tolerance. Pupils, as well as most parents and carers, express confidence in the school's anti-bullying systems.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher provides calm and determined leadership. She is supported by capable senior and middle leaders, who all work together well. Morale is good. A regular cycle to monitor and evaluate the work of the school is well established. It is used effectively to set key priorities and successfully drive improvements. Professional development is closely aligned to school priorities and staff's own professional interests; this is a key factor in securing improvements in teaching and learning. Systems to track the progress made by pupils over time are robust. Careful attention is given to monitoring the progress made by the different groups of pupils. The areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. All these factors indicate a good capacity for sustaining school improvement.

The governing body works closely with the school. Members monitor the quality of provision regularly, are not afraid to ask challenging questions and help to set the future direction of the school well. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. Provision for equality of opportunity is good. Discrimination is not tolerated. Consequently, the school is a friendly, happy place in

which to work and learn. The very many positive views expressed by staff, pupils and their parents and carers confirm this. The good curriculum has been reviewed recently. It is rich and varied and now better reflects the needs and interests of all pupil groups. Excellent partnerships with other schools, external agencies and the wider community help to raise pupils' self-esteem, broaden their horizons and improve the quality of their learning. Extensive opportunities to participate in art, music and sporting events and to gain first-hand experiences, for example through educational visits and visitors, are diverse and very effectively integrated with pupils' work; this has a significant impact on their spiritual development and their understanding of wider national and global communities.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Gee Cross Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, Hyde SK14 5LX**

Thank you for the super welcome you gave the team when we came to inspect your school. Gee Cross is a good school. These are some of the things we found out.

- Your behaviour is good and you are all friendly towards each other. You told us that you feel safe, there is always an adult to turn to if you are troubled and that you are confident that very occasional instances of bullying are swiftly dealt with.
- You told us the activities beyond your lessons are excellent and we agree. They help you to develop outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes; they achieve well. Sometimes, when they choose their own activities, they do not learn quickly enough. We have asked your school to ensure adults always check that children are learning as much as possible.
- Teaching at Gee Cross is at least good and this helps you all to achieve well. By the time you leave school at the end of Year 6 your attainment in English and mathematics is above average.
- Some of you told us that occasionally your work is too easy and that you are not always certain how to improve your work. We have asked your school to ensure work is always just at the right level to help you learn more quickly. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that, when they mark your work, their comments are helpful and your learning targets always indicate how you can improve your work.
- Your headteacher, other staff and governors know the school well and they are good at finding ways to make your school even better.

Thank you for talking to us both and helping with the inspection. Please continue to try your very best in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely  
Denise Shields  
Lead inspector

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