

# Chrishall Holy Trinity and St Nicholas CofE (Aided) Primary School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 115195         |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Essex          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 379034         |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 6–7 March 2012 |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Rob McKeown    |

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 aided                                 |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 107   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                              |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Helen Williams                                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Sharon Williams                                 |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 17 January 2007                                 |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Palmers Lane<br>Chrishall<br>Royston<br>SG8 8QE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01763 838592                                    |
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|                           |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 4–11           |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 6–7 March 2012 |
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Rob McKeown

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent time observing teaching, which included visiting nine lessons taught by four teachers, and observing group activities taught by teaching assistants and other staff. The inspector heard some pupils from Years 1 and 2 read. He held meetings with pupils and staff, including the headteacher and members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, monitoring reports, attainment and progress data, teachers' planning and pupils' work. He observed pupils' behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures. The inspector also analysed 62 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, 59 from pupils and 19 from staff.

## Information about the school

Chrishall Holy Trinity and St Nicholas is a village primary school that is smaller than average. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below the national average. The school attained Healthy School Status, the ECO Schools Silver Award and the Royal Horticultural Society Level 3 Award in the last two years. The headteacher has led the school for almost two years, following a period of acting headship. The school meets the current government floor standard.

**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 with a strong emphasis on pupils’ enjoying their learning and developing a full range of personal skills. It is an important partner within the local community and almost all parents and carers returning the inspection questionnaire would recommend this school to another parent. It has maintained its overall effectiveness since its last inspection and is well-placed to continue to do well. The school is not outstanding because attainment in writing is not as high as it could be.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. By the time they leave the school in Year 6 their attainment in English and mathematics is above average. Attainment in reading is particularly strong and better than it is in writing in all key stages. Disabled pupils and those who have special education needs also make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the good support they receive.
- Most of the teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Leaders are providing helpful professional development and support to strengthen aspects of teaching which are occasionally satisfactory. The school makes very good use of the specialist teaching skills of a number of staff to broaden and enrich pupils’ curricular experiences and provide additional challenges, for example in mathematics.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Older pupils provide excellent role models for younger pupils and make very positive contributions towards pupils’ strong spiritual, moral and social development. Attendance is above average and instances of persistent absence are very rare. Pupils’ safety and well-being are given a suitably high priority by all staff.
- Leadership and management are good and particularly strong from the headteacher and governing body. Leaders have a clear view of how well the school is doing because of the well-organised systems for monitoring and

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evaluation. Performance management and staff professional development are used effectively to help improve provision and raise standards.

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

- Raise attainment in writing, particularly for pupils capable of reaching higher levels, by:
  - embedding the changes already introduced in the teaching and assessment of writing in all key stages
  - developing more consistency in marking, so that pupils receive clear guidance on how to improve their work and have the opportunity to respond and make improvements
  - extending the use of criteria for success to introduce more challenge for able pupils.
  
- Increase the overall proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
  - improving the pace and challenge in learning for pupils in lessons where the teaching is satisfactory
  - consolidating the improvements made in teachers' use of assessment for learning.

**Main report****Achievement of pupils**

Pupils' achievement is good. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children make good progress. Children's individual skills and aptitudes vary on entry to the Reception class but are broadly at expected levels overall. By the end of their first year in school, most children have made good progress and reached or exceeded the expected level of development in all the areas of learning, although last year fewer children managed this in writing. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 their attainment is above average in English and mathematics. All pupils reached the expected Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2011. Most pupils managed to attain the higher Level 5 in reading and almost half did so in mathematics; in contrast, few pupils managed a Level 5 in writing.

Attainment in reading is particularly strong because it is taught well. A systematic approach to teaching letters and sounds (phonics) in the Reception and Year 1 class is helping pupils to develop effective early reading skills. Attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2 and continues to progress well in Key Stage 2. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, their reading standards are well above average. Pupils have become highly competent and avid readers, able to talk about the different authors and genres they prefer. Writing is not as strong and attainment is lower than in reading in all key stages. The school has introduced improvements in the teaching of writing, which are proving successful, but leaders acknowledge that there is still work to do to raise the proportion of pupils reaching the higher attainment levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

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There are few gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils within the school; all make good progress from their starting points. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable have good teaching and pastoral support. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the clear identification of their need and the good quality support they receive to help them succeed. Pupils who are more able in mathematics are receiving excellent teaching in small groups to provide them with additional challenges and extend their mathematical thinking.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and almost all parents and carers rightly believe their children are taught well. The monitoring of the quality of teaching completed by the school over the last two years matches this judgement. Most of the teaching seen during the inspection was good and some of the teaching for groups and individual pupils was outstanding. In the small amount of teaching that is satisfactory, the pace of learning is not fast enough and higher-ability pupils could learn more. Teachers make it clear what pupils will be learning at the start of lessons and pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers organise tasks and activities that make learning interesting. The school's highly effective team of teaching assistants are deployed well to work with individuals and groups. This ensures that all pupils are involved and those who require support are able to make good progress. Pupils have many opportunities to work cooperatively and talk together about their learning. This is helping them to develop excellent verbal communication skills, and to generate and organise their ideas to stimulate their writing. Teachers complete regular assessments to check pupils' attainment and record their progress. This information is used well to identify any gaps in understanding or dips in progress. Improvements in teachers' use of assessment for learning have been introduced this year and are beginning to be more consistently applied. There is some inconsistency in teachers' marking and how pupils respond to it, and in the use of criteria for success, particularly for showing able pupils how to reach the higher levels in writing.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through the excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and the high expectations made for good behaviour and full engagement in learning. Teachers' strong subject knowledge and opportunities for pupils to work with visiting experts help pupils achieve well in many subjects of the curriculum, for example, in learning to speak French, in science and in art and design. Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outdoors and with specialist teachers are enriching their learning experiences; for example, through visits to the local wood, in an excellent programme of before- and after-school activities, and in transition links with local secondary schools. Children in Reception are getting a good start to their education. Adult led sessions are taught well with a strong emphasis on children acquiring a good foundation in literacy and numeracy. More early writing activities have been organised this year to raise children's attainment.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils behave well and all parents and carers correctly believe that the standards of behaviour at the school are good. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development in their first year at school. The conduct of many of the older pupils is excellent and they provide outstanding role models for younger pupils. Pupils have positive attitudes, are polite and show good levels of respect for each other and the adults who work in the school. Pupils in Year 6 take responsibility for organising play activities for younger pupils and for leading and supporting weekly assemblies. Pupils make very strong contributions by giving their views on school improvements and by engaging in sustainability and ecological projects. Assemblies are used well to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The themes selected help pupils to reflect on their personal qualities and relationships, and celebrate their many achievements.

Parents and carers believe that their children feel safe in school and the responses from pupils in their questionnaires indicate that most agree with this. Pupils learn about how to use the internet safely and older pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the different types of bullying. The school keeps detailed records of any rare incidents of bullying that occur and logs any instances of unacceptable behaviour; there have been no exclusions since the last inspection. The governing body has evaluated the school's approach to anti-bullying, including by gathering the views of pupils about how the school keeps them safe. Attendance is above average and persistent absenteeism is very rare. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of school and the good systems to promote attendance and follow up any occasional absence.

## **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are good. Morale is high among staff and all the adults working in the school contribute to its overall success. Leadership from the headteacher is characterised by a clear vision, high expectations and the drive to tackle any weaknesses in provision. Other key members of staff make good contributions towards developing the curriculum and keeping the school running smoothly and efficiently. The pastoral care and support of pupils are outstanding and contribute well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is no discrimination and all pupils are given equal opportunities to be successful. There are effective systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching, which have been used well to raise the overall quality. Pupils' attainment and progress are tracked systematically and analysed rigorously by staff. A positive investment has been made in engaging additional support for individuals and groups of pupils to boost their achievement successfully. There is a clearly structured approach to self-evaluation and development planning, which includes staff and governors working together to review improvement plans and set priorities for the future. The improvements made since the last inspection and the strengths in leadership and management demonstrate the good capacity for further improvement.

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The curriculum is good with some outstanding features. There is a strong focus on practical and outdoor learning and this promotes positive engagement from all pupils and meets their needs well. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in sports and creative arts activities. Positive links with other primary and secondary schools help to extend pupils' learning experiences and ensure successful transition. Governance makes a very strong contribution to the overall effectiveness of leadership and management. The governing body is well organised and achieves a high level of involvement with the school. It knows how well the school is doing and what needs to be strengthened. It maintains very good links with staff, pupils, parents and carers. It conducts its monitoring and evaluation role systematically and rigorously, providing well-balanced challenge and support for school leaders. The governing body ensures, together with senior staff, that safeguarding procedures are robust and meet requirements.



## 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.  |
| Attendance                 | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.   |
| 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.**



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Chrishall Holy Trinity and St Nicholas CofE (Aided) Primary School, Royston, SG8 8QE**

Thank you for making me feel very welcome when I visited your school recently. Thank you also to those of you who returned questionnaires about your school. I enjoyed visiting your lessons and the assembly, talking with you about your learning and looking at your work. This helped me decide that you attend a good school. These are some of the best things.

- You make good progress and reach above-average levels of attainment, especially in reading.
- Your attendance is good, you get on well together and behave well.
- Most of the teaching is good and you enjoy the interesting lessons your teachers prepare for you.
- There are lots of outdoor, sporting and creative arts activities for you to enjoy.
- All of the staff care a lot about you, give you good support and want you all to be safe and do well.
- The headteacher and members of the governing body lead and manage the school effectively. They keep a close check on how well the school is doing because they want it to be even more successful.

To help your school improve I have asked the staff and governing body to:

- help you to know how to improve your writing to make it even better
- make sure all your lessons are as good as the best ones, so you learn quickly and receive plenty of challenge.

Yours sincerely

Rob McKeown  
Lead inspector

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