

Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118848
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358457
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	493
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Blakemore
Headteacher	Graham Howard
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons and 15 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation including the school's self-evaluation form, monitoring records, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress records and safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 182 parents and carers were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Progress and consistency of teaching throughout Key Stage 2 and the effectiveness of assessment strategies, including marking and feedback. ♦
- How well pupils develop responsibility and independence in their learning.
- How well the curriculum provision meets pupils' needs, as well as their interests, by making learning memorable, meaningful and relevant.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels demonstrate the capacity for sustained improvement.
- How well procedures support a smooth transition as pupils move up through the school.

Information about the school

Holy Trinity is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The largest groups of pupils are from White British or Indian backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these difficulties relate to communication and language. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Nursery class that children attend for a morning or afternoon session and two Reception classes. The school provides a breakfast club and has gained the Healthy Schools and Sportsmark awards. In addition, it has won an award for its work as a 'Reading Recovery' school.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Holy Trinity is a good school where pupils develop as well-rounded individuals who are happy and confident. They receive outstanding care, guidance and support and really enjoy coming to school, as reflected in their high attendance rates. Pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors are rightly proud of their school. Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to stay safe and they demonstrate this in lessons and in their exemplary behaviour, consideration and respect for others. These qualities, as well as good and well-established links with the church, make a considerable contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

By the time they leave the school in Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average and they make good progress from their starting points. However, the rate of pupils' progress is uneven across Years 3 to 6. The school has correctly identified that it needs to build more rapidly on the skills pupils have when they move into Year 3, particularly in mathematics, to ensure that the pace of learning and progress is maintained more consistently throughout Key Stage 2 and there is less 'catch up' to do in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are given well-planned and often highly skilled support, mostly from teaching assistants. Their needs are rapidly identified whenever they start school. As a consequence, they make good progress and achieve well.

Special events such as the Egyptian Day seen during the inspection and a wide range of visits, visitors to school and after-school clubs provide good enrichment experiences. While there are a number of strengths, the curriculum is satisfactory rather than good because not enough lessons are planned that link different subjects together in a meaningful way to provide pupils with creative opportunities to learn new skills or apply their skills across a range of subjects.

There is a good capacity for sustained improvement by all leaders. Clear and rigorous systems for monitoring and self-evaluation have enabled the headteacher and senior leaders to focus on the most important areas for development and take effective action to bring about improvements. For example, the continuing focus on writing has increased the number of pupils gaining the expected and higher levels at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by:
 - ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress in all classes in Years 3 to 6. ♦

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- Ensure that across the school, pupils are provided with more opportunities to link their learning across different subjects in a meaningful and memorable way. ♦

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start at the school with attainment below that expected for their ages. Learning and progress are good and pupils achieve well. Pupils make more rapid progress in Key Stage 1, resulting in above average attainment in writing and mathematics. While attainment is broadly average in Year 6, there was a significant rise in national test results in 2010. Progress for these pupils was good, as they came from much lower starting points in Year 2. There is a similar pattern of good progress emerging for those currently in Year 6, as seen in progress-tracking data and pupils' work. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils worked at a good pace, enjoyed opportunities to work well together and met challenging targets in developing their skills of using inverse operations and solving problems using direct proportion.

Pupils do better in English than they do in mathematics, partly because the school has focused on writing and successfully improved pupils' skills and also because the school participates in national initiatives, such as 'Reading Recovery', to raise levels of reading skills. Pupils enjoy learning and this, along with their positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour, makes an important contribution to their good achievement. For example, pupils in Year 6 thoroughly enjoyed a discussion leading into writing a balanced report. They listened well to the views of others and clearly demonstrated their knowledge of the features required to make their writing successful.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make similar good progress to others in the school. For example, in a reading session, a group of pupils learning to speak English as an additional language were supported well by a teaching assistant who shared the same first language as the pupils. This ensured that they understood what they were reading as well as developing their skills in letters and sounds (phonics). The school's continued focus on writing at all stages is bringing about considerable improvement, as seen in work in some lessons, displays around the school and pupils' books. Independent learning skills, taking responsibility for their own learning and a willingness to help each other help pupils to learn well. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils, without prompting by adults, collaborated well during an investigation into square numbers.

Pupils respect and understand the beliefs and views of others from different backgrounds and have an excellent understanding of different cultures within and beyond the school community, as seen in the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Pupils champion issues affecting society as a whole, for example through the work of the 'Green Club'. They enjoy the responsibilities they are given and take them seriously, for example as house captains, school council members, playground monitors and 'buddies'. They work well in groups and teams, are cooperative and happy to take on leadership roles. They are enthusiastic in their work and feel that their voice is valued and that they make a difference. The awards the school has received reflect pupils' good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy. They take part in many fundraising events for a range of charities and causes and this helps them develop an understanding of people who are less fortunate than they are. The good progress made in basic skills and their good personal qualities prepare them well for later life.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Special event days, such as the Egyptian Day, are used well to stimulate pupils' interests and learning. Teaching mostly engages pupils well and teachers' good questioning skills extend thinking and learning. There is a good pace to learning in most lessons where teachers encourage pupils to be resourceful and independent learners. In these lessons, pupils make good progress and learning is challenging and memorable for them. In a few lessons, however, teaching is less inspiring and this can slow the progress pupils make, especially in Years 3 and 4, giving them more to do to catch up later. Within the curriculum, opportunities are sometimes missed to enliven learning by connecting subjects in a purposeful and meaningful way or for pupils to apply their skills to a range of subjects, for example using information and technology skills to support English and mathematics work. Pupils generally know their targets for learning and there are some examples of good feedback and marking that inform them of what they need to do to improve. This is, however, inconsistent across the school.

In addition to the work of senior leaders and managers, the work of the Family Liaison Officer makes a considerable contribution to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils and their families, particularly for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Good links with other agencies and well-targeted support ensure that these pupils integrate very well and make good progress relative to their starting points.

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Pupils attending the breakfast club get a good healthy start to the day and a good social time where older and younger pupils play well and happily together. The school's Christian ethos promotes a culture of care, responsibility and high aspirations. Transition procedures into school, through the year groups and into Year 7 are good and ensure effective levels of support for pupils and their families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The inclusive, caring and Christian ethos of the school and its clear detailed policies ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and develop without fear of discrimination. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through formal observations and regular checks on pupils' work and, where weaknesses are observed, effective support is provided. Systems for tracking pupils' progress have recently been revised, enabling senior leaders to have a clear idea of where additional support is required to meet individual needs. The headteacher and senior leaders, including members of the governing body, share the vision and good ambition for the school that drives its improvement. Members of the governing body have a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and hold the school to account well. Along with staff, they ensure that safeguarding procedures, which are well established, are effective. The school engages well with parents and carers. Communication is through a range of channels both formally and informally, and they are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. One parent wrote, 'We have seen great strides in many areas of how the school has developed, in particular the increased parental involvement in classrooms and on school trips.' Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive, harmonious community in which pupils show tolerance and respect for others. There are strong links with local churches and community groups; for example, the school worked with the Sikh community to secure the funding for 'The Studio', a provision that houses a Sikh dance group and other community groups as well as providing an extra space for activities for pupils. There are several international links, for example with Cuba and the Computers for Africa project. Pupils learn about French life and culture as they learn the French language in Key Stage 2 and pupils have penpal links with French children. Good partnerships with local schools, organisations and external agencies are well established, enrich the curriculum and contribute effectively to pupils' well-being and learning opportunities.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress and reach the goals for their learning by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They clearly enjoy learning and settle well in a happy, purposeful environment. They do particularly well in communication, language and literacy skills and linking sounds and letters (phonics) because of skilled and effective teaching. There are very good induction procedures enabling good links with parents and carers and a smooth transition into school life. One parent commented, 'Children were given the opportunity to meet teachers and come into school so that transition from pre-school was smooth. The school felt like a community when I toured and this feeling of community has only been strengthened since my child started.' Good links between home and school continue once children start school, through opportunities for parents and carers to share their expectations and aspirations for their children by contributing to a 'Hope Tree'. For example, one parent wrote, 'My child would like to learn some new songs and make lots of friends, she would also like to learn to read.'

Children are successfully encouraged to develop confidence and independence, particularly when engaged in self-chosen activities. One parent wrote, 'My child has grown in confidence since joining the school thanks to the Nursery staff.' These opportunities are not always offered alongside the activities directed by adults and so do not develop skills further, particularly their creative development. Consequently, this area is not as strong as other aspects of their learning. Very close attention is paid to the children's welfare and there are good and trusting relationships between children and staff that ensure children feel safe and secure at all times. Children and their parents and carers are rightly proud of the learning journey books that provide an ongoing record of the milestones in their achievement at home and at school. Leadership and management are good and there is a strong team approach, which ensures that assessments made by all staff are accurate and information is used very effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Staff know the

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children well and meet their individual needs very well. A parent of a child in the Nursery wrote, 'My child's key worker is approachable, supportive and demonstrates a real knowledge of my child.'

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A slightly above-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Of these, the overwhelming majority agree that their children enjoy school, that the school keeps their children safe and healthy and that they are happy with their children's experience at school. Most agree with all of the other statements in the questionnaire and are, overall, highly satisfied with what the school offers their children. A very small minority expressed some concern with how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and how well the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection evidence found that pupils' behaviour is excellent and the school manages any inconsiderate behaviour very effectively and does listen to its parents and carers. One parent wrote, 'When we had a concern about a situation with another child's behaviour, the issue was dealt with in a sensitive and caring manner.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 182 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 493 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	107	59	71	39	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	104	57	73	40	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	65	36	104	57	13	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	42	92	51	12	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	80	44	95	52	5	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	40	98	54	9	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	43	101	55	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	78	43	84	46	6	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	33	110	60	9	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	32	104	57	15	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	29	107	59	17	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	61	34	113	62	6	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	85	47	92	51	5	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



4 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Gravesend DA12 1LU

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You are very polite and friendly and we appreciated the way you greeted us in the mornings and looked after us by holding doors open and making sure we found our way around the school. You are right to enjoy coming to Holy Trinity because it is a good school. These are some of the things that really stood out.

- Your behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school and this helps you learn well.
- You get on really well with everyone because you learn and play well together, listen to each other and respect everyone's views and beliefs.
- Your attendance is high. Well done for coming to school so regularly and not missing out on important learning.
- You know how to keep yourselves safe and all the adults in the school care for you extremely well.
- You have worked hard to improve your writing; well done for this.

There are two things the school could do even better.

- Raise your attainment in English and especially in mathematics by the time you leave in Year 6 by making sure that you make the progress you are capable of in all the classes in Key Stage 2.
- Make sure that all your work is exciting to help you learn as well as you can by planning lessons that give you opportunities to be creative and learn new things in a memorable and meaningful way. ♦

You can help the school even further by continuing to work hard and always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector

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