

Trinity CofE VA First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132767
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	360433
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	139
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Sims
Headteacher	Jane Green
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons seeing six teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff. A sample of parents and carers were spoken to at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan and the school's own evaluation of its work. They also looked at records on pupils' attainment and progress, and documents relating to provision and outcomes for vulnerable pupils. The questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 77 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- Achievement in mathematics in Years 3 and 4 to determine if teaching is sufficiently challenging.
- The impact of the school's strategies to raise attainment at Year 2.
- Achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to determine how well the provision meets their needs.
- The impact of the story-making project upon children's attainment in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The impact of the story-making project upon children's attainment in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. Most pupils are of White British origin and come from the Verwood area. Few pupils are from other ethnic groups and none is at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. Most of this very small group have speech, language and communication needs or specific learning difficulties, but a few have other emotional difficulties that affect their learning. The school holds the Sportsmark and the Healthy School awards. An independent operator runs a pre-school and after-school provision on site. These are subject to a separate inspection.

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

Trinity C of E VA First School provides a good standard of education for its pupils, who develop into articulate and confident learners. It has some outstanding features. The outstanding care, guidance and support provided ensure that pupils not only feel very safe but also have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. Vulnerable pupils gain valuable additional support from the strong partnerships with external agencies, and well-developed links with other schools enrich the outstanding curriculum. Pupils' excellent behaviour ensures that the school is a welcoming and friendly place in which to learn.

Good teaching ensures that achievement is good and improving. Children get a good start to their education in Reception and begin Year 1 with skills above those normally found at this age, but communication, language and literacy skills, although satisfactory, are lower than skills in other areas of learning. The school's

story-making project is beginning to improve children's skills, but is not yet fully established. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, attainment is above that normally found at this age and progress overall is good. Achievement in writing, although in line with that normally found at age nine, is lower than in reading and mathematics; progress in writing in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory and improving. A temporary dip in attainment at the end of Year 2 has been reversed.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and uses this information to set out good quality strategies for improvement in the school development plan. A driving force behind this school's success and continued improvement is the strong leadership of the headteacher who ensures that all members of staff work as a collaborative team. The contribution of the governing body is outstanding. Together with the staff, governors share a very strong desire to raise standards and work together effectively to improve the provision. A much-improved system for recording and analysing data on pupils' attainment and progress has recently been introduced. However, this is not yet being used to its full potential to provide high quality information to senior leaders and governors, particularly in terms of how the school's performance compares with others nationally. Attainment in mathematics is improving year on year and key areas of provision have improved. The strengths of the previous inspection have been maintained and action is already in place to address areas for improvement noted in this report. These factors indicate a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage by embedding securely the story-making project.

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- Improve progress in writing in Years 3 and 4 by:
 - building upon the successful work undertaken in Years 1 and 2 to improve story-making
 - ensuring greater consistency in marking of writing so that pupils have clear guidance on how to improve their work. ensuring greater consistency in marking of writing so that pupils have clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Embed securely the new systems for recording and analysing data on pupils' progress, ensuring that the analysis of data provides senior leaders and governors with a clear picture on how performance compares with other schools nationally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils clearly enjoy school, as shown by their enthusiasm for learning and good attendance. Children start school with skills similar to those normally found at that age. They build securely upon this good start through the rest of the school. Achievement is improving steadily and learning in most lessons observed was at least good, and sometimes outstanding. Pupils in Year 4 are on track to attain well above that typically found, especially in mathematics, where progress this year is set to be outstanding, partly due to the high level of challenge in lessons. More-able pupils and those deemed gifted and talented are achieving well because the work provided challenges them effectively. For example, in Year 4, the more-able pupils were very confidently discussing the variation in their shadow length as the sun moved, when one asked why the shadow length was different from his height. This immediately set off a stimulating discussion that challenged the pupils very well. The introduction of a story-making project in particularly in Years 1 and 2 is starting to improve writing but this has yet to be extended fully into Years 3 and 4. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that they make good progress by the end of Year 4.

Pupils reported no bullying and they trust the adults to deal with any that might occur. They undertake a wide range of responsibilities, for example as school council members, that contribute well to school life. The school council reports regularly to the governing body with suggestions on how the school can be improved. Pupils show curiosity and interest in the wider community, as demonstrated by the letters to the local council to support the conservation of a local badger sett or in support of a cycling project that would make it easier for them to cycle to school. Pupils' excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and keep fit is recognised by the Healthy School award and the Sportsmark. It is also evident in the enthusiastic way pupils take advantage of the many opportunities for physical activity in the school grounds and after school, and the high proportion that cycle or walk to school. Pupils' excellent spiritual development is seen in activities such as the good quality display of painting based on emotions. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong, and work together extremely well. The school has identified in its community cohesion audit that, although cultural development is good, pupils do not have enough understanding of life in different parts of Great Britain and in other countries. The school is addressing this by developing links with an inner-city multicultural school and a school in Uganda, but this is at an early stage. Pupils' good basic skills, including their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	2
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	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Pupils learn well in this school because of good teaching and the stimulating curriculum that ensure many highly motivating experiences for pupils. Good partnerships with others enable such opportunities as inter-school sport. The provision for ensuring pupils' personal development is outstanding. The many improvements to the curriculum have contributed to attainment in mathematics having risen year on year and progress in writing is starting to improve.

Teachers prepare lessons that stimulate pupils to learn. ICT is used well to support teaching. Questioning often challenges pupils well and extends their learning while assessing what they already know. Very good opportunities are taken to develop literacy skills through other subjects. For example, a topic on Romans engaged pupils and provided a very good stimulus for writing. This included accounts of Roman life and writing in the style of a Roman governor in Britain reporting back to the Emperor. Activities such as this, together with visits and visitors, continually stimulate and motivate pupils, making learning relevant and fun. Pupils remembered particularly a recent visit in which they undertook role play as pupils in a Victorian school. They commented that the Victorian school inspectors were harsh. Nevertheless, teaching in English, although good and improving rapidly, is not quite as strong as it is in mathematics. Marking is generally good, especially in mathematics, but in English it is less consistent and in some cases does not make clear to pupils what it is they need to do to improve their work.

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Pastoral care is extremely strong. High quality child protection procedures are detailed and well known to all staff. The school works very closely with parents and carers to support their children's learning through parent teacher consultations, regular informal discussion and innovative systems to pass on relevant information, including email. Information evenings and 'learning walks' around the school enable parents and carers to learn how their children are taught and seek support in helping them to learn at home. For example, following one such activity, parents and carers requested help with mathematics and the school arranged an information evening for those who wanted to be able to help their children with mathematics.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The staff in this school work together as a cohesive team to bring about school improvement. With the headteacher and governors, they share a very strong ambition to ensure that the best possible education is provided for all pupils. Robust procedures are in place to tackle any incidents of discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity. The impact of these procedures is monitored rigorously to ensure no group is underachieving. Regular training for staff and governors, and close monitoring by the governing body, ensure safeguarding procedures are highly effective. Procedures to keep pupils safe are outstanding. Links with and beyond the local community help to promote community cohesion, which at a local level is very strong. A high quality comprehensive audit by senior staff and governors has identified that wider national and international aspects of community cohesion are not yet quite as strong, and decisive action has been taken immediately to address this.

The governing body supports the school extremely well. It has worked particularly effectively with the headteacher to manage the potential disruption to learning caused by unavoidable staff absences. All governors visit the school regularly and monitor its work closely. A high quality audit, supported by governors, on how teaching assistants are used has resulted in a change in their deployment to ensure even greater effectiveness. Governors undertake regular training and play a very active role in monitoring improvements and setting the strategic direction of the school. Parents and carers and pupils are consulted regularly and their views taken into account to support this process. A new system for recording information on pupils' attainment and progress contains a wealth of data that is already identifying individual pupils whose performance does not meet the school's demanding standards. Nevertheless, the system is just developing and analysis of data to enable cohort or school performance to be compared with schools nationally is not yet sophisticated enough.

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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	1
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	1
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

Close and positive relationships with the local pre-school groups, as well as with parents and carers, ensure that children settle quickly and happily into the warm and very stimulating environment. High quality care helps children to feel secure and confident, and welfare needs are met very well. The excellent partnership between children and adults, and a high focus on praise, ensure exemplary behaviour.

Children make good progress and enter Year 1 well prepared for learning. Their progress in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development is excellent. Children display very positive attitudes and learn to relate well to others. The school has identified that children start school with lower skills in communication, language and literacy, and do not make as much progress in this area. A programme of work based on developing story-making has been introduced and this is already starting to prove effective, but it is too early to see the full impact. Adults ensure a good balance between teacher-directed and self-chosen activities, which helps children to develop as confident learners.

Good quality systems for checking on children's progress are used effectively to plan work that challenges children to achieve well. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage, enabling highly effective support to be provided. The school makes particularly good use of the environment to engage children and make learning interesting. In an outstanding lesson observed, children were engrossed by the hunt for 'mini-beasts' in the outdoor area, and all areas of learning were covered very well in this stimulating, very well organised and exciting activity.

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

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

An above average number of parents and carers returned questionnaires on the school. A large minority contained additional comments split almost equally between positive and negative. Typical of the positive comments was, 'The teaching is imaginative and engaging. The children's learning is at the heart of every activity.'

A minority of parents and carers expressed concern about a number of matters. Most significant of these were concerns about the progress made by pupils; the way suggestions and complaints have been dealt with and some aspects of leadership and management of the school, with particular reference to the number of temporary teachers in Reception this year.

During this inspection, inspectors found that:

- pupils make good progress and this is improving. A temporary dip from the normally good achievement at the end of Year 2 has been reversed
- good leadership and management and excellent governance has ensured that the school has followed the correct procedures and dealt well with a number of unavoidable staff absences. school has followed the correct procedures and dealt well with a number of unavoidable staff absences.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trinity CofE VA First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 139 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	58	30	39	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	49	64	27	35	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	26	41	53	12	16	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	32	34	44	17	22	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	34	38	49	11	14	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	32	39	51	11	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	47	38	49	3	4	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)	27	35	38	49	6	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	32	41	53	9	12	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	23	44	57	9	12	6	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	23	41	53	16	21	4	5
The school is led and managed effectively	14	18	43	56	17	22	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	34	37	48	11	14	1	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



7 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trinity C of E VA First School, Verwood BH31 7PG

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school and talking to us about the things that you like in your school. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour.

Yours is a good school. Here are some of the things that we liked.

- You get a good start to your school life in the Reception class.
- Your achievement is good and you attain well because of the good teaching you receive.
- Your school makes learning interesting and fun because of the excellent range of activities provided for you. No wonder you enjoy school so much!
- The school looks after you extremely well, which is why your understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy is outstanding.
- You make a good contribution to the running of the school through the school council and other jobs that you do.
- The school is led and managed well by your headteacher and the people who help her.

To help make your school even better, we have asked the staff and governors to:

- help those of you in the reception class to improve your writing skills
- improve your achievement in writing by the end of year 4 to match that in reading and mathematics
- use the new systems that they have for checking on how well you are doing in an even better way so that they can easily compare your school with other schools nationally.

You can help by asking your teachers how you can make your writing better when you are not sure. Thank you again for being so polite and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake

Lead inspector

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