

The Trinity Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134722
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	381720
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Tim Vaughan HMI

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	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alf Westwell
Headteacher	Patricia Deus
Date of previous school inspection	03 February 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. They observed 17 lessons and observed all of the teachers at least once. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's monitoring, self-evaluation information and action plans. They looked at the questionnaires completed by 45 staff, 137 pupils and 186 parents and carers.

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

- The effectiveness of strategies used to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly across Key Stage 2 and the current progress of all pupils from their starting points, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How well teaching takes into account the needs of different groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children of Irish Traveller heritage.
- The extent to which basic skills including literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) have been integrated into the curriculum to accelerate progress from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6.
- The effectiveness with which leaders and managers at all levels are securing improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a nursery with provision for 52 places. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high at 30.1%. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of children are from other minority ethnic heritages, including the largest percentage of Traveller children of any school in the City of Liverpool. The school has achieved the Healthy School status. The school has designation as a children's centre. In addition, a privately-run nursery and out of school club operate from the site. These are inspected separately.

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 Catholic Primary is a good school. Several of its features are outstanding. Staff and the governing body, together with a wide range of partners, have created a beautiful, welcoming and inclusive environment in which learning, well-being and family are given high priority. Pupils are regarded as individuals and their family and individual heritage is valued and celebrated. For example, one pupil commented 'at my former school they poked fun at me. That doesn't happen here...they respect me'.

The headteacher, well supported by the governing body, has shown very effective leadership in integrating three primary schools together. Together they have tackled the many challenges that the amalgamation has presented. They have done so with persistence, passion and an absolute commitment to serving local pupils and their families in every way that they believe will make a difference to their lives. Typical comments made by parents and carers include, 'the headteacher will go out of her way to help children and families in every way that she can...they are always there to listen and help'. This is reflected in the outstanding contribution that pupils play to improving the school and local area. The voice of pupils is valued and as a result, pupils are proud of their school. As a consequence of the careful attention to how people can live and work together, pupils also show outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through events, such as Black awareness week, dreams and celebrations day and anti-bullying week.

Community cohesion is outstanding because the school's vision of the future is based upon an exceptional understanding of the community it serves. Work to strengthen relationships across the school and local community is planned, regularly evaluated and refined.

All pupils are able to make the best of opportunities provided by the school because of the outstanding care, guidance and support given to each individual. This in part has been achieved through the excellent contribution played by nursery nurses and teaching assistants across the school. It is further enhanced by outstanding partnerships to promote learning and well-being, such as the work with the Traveller education team from the local authority. Safeguarding arrangements at the school are excellent and this is consistently acknowledged by parents and carers. As a result, pupils feel extremely safe and secure and are clear what to do if issues such as bullying arise.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities come on in leaps and bounds from the moment they enter the school. By the time they leave in Year 6, they reach broadly average attainment. This represents good achievement considering their low starting points. Much of this success is down to consistently good teaching and a broad and balanced curriculum with some strengths in enrichment and extra-curricular provision.

Attendance, is improving slowly because the school has worked very effectively to reduce persistent absence. It remains average. However, senior leaders are correct in recognising that improving attendance further by working with parents and carers and the local authority remains a key priority for the school.

Good quality leadership ensures that staff work closely together as a team to keep improving the school. Senior leaders keep a close eye on performance and know the school well. They are very clear about the direction the school must take in order to improve further. For example, they recognise that the next challenge is to raise attainment further by ensuring that more pupils reach the higher levels in their work and to increase the proportion of good and better lessons by sharing the best practice more widely throughout the school.

Given the school's rigorous self-evaluation and track record of improvement and along with its other strengths, its capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching across the school
 - sharing the expertise of the strongest teachers with others about what constitutes outstanding teaching
 - ensuring that activities enable more pupils to attain the higher levels in their work..

- Improve attendance further by:
 - continuing to work closely with all families, particularly those who are hard to reach
 - developing further links with the local authority to reduce persistent absences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' current work as well as the provisional test results for 2011, along with the school's own data, shows that while their attainment is broadly average, the progress pupils make from their starting points is good overall. Pupils enter Year 1, below the levels expected for their age but having made good progress from their low starting points. In 2011, the unvalidated national curriculum tests show that attainment at age 11 is broadly in line with national averages. However, although improving, not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in their work, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Learning and progress are good and sometimes outstanding. For example, some Traveller children make outstanding progress by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress from their starting points. Small group work and the effective deployment of skilled support staff means that pupils' needs are identified and addressed as early as possible. Pupils are very eager to learn and apply themselves well in class. They are polite and well behaved. The school buzzes with activities and pupils are proud to show off their work. They are brimming with ideas and enthusiastic about taking on new challenges. Typically, lessons show busy pupils responding with enthusiasm and enjoyment to a range of practical and stimulating activities. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils had fun exploring a range of real three-dimensional shapes and matching these to written labels and descriptions.

Pupils, parents and carers overwhelmingly say that the school is a safe place to be. As one pupil commented 'the teachers care about us' and many others commented about being listened to and feeling confident that issues that they raise are dealt with promptly and effectively. The extensive school grounds are secure and well-maintained and pupils respond to this, showing consistently good behaviour from nursery through to Year 6. The school's religious character contributes positively to values and behaviour as indicated by one pupil who said 'I try to follow in the footsteps of Jesus by shaking hands and forgetting and forgiving'.

Attendance is average. However, the school has worked very well with specific families and groups to successfully raise attendance. The school confidently challenges deeply held perceptions in some families about attendance and punctuality and constantly strives to find solutions to individual circumstances, including working out in the community. For a small minority of pupils, their attendance remains too low. Pupils make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are courteous and pleasant with one another and adults. Their good attitudes reflect a consistent and clearly expressed set of school values about respecting others. Pupils benefit immensely from good opportunities to develop their enterprise skills, for example, through 'dragon den' type activities. As a result, they are well-equipped with personal qualities and wider skills which prepare them for future success.

Pupils from minority ethnic heritages feel that they belong within the school because they are respected and included. Pupils highly value their school community and environment and feel that their voice is heard in lessons, through the school council and through the wide range of extended school activities.

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

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

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is broad and balanced and has a strong focus on basic skills. Speaking and listening is well promoted in most lessons. Opportunities for enrichment through trips and visits are well established and there are specific tutored programmes for pupils at risk of falling behind. The provision made to support those from the Traveller community is outstanding. The school is continuing to develop the curriculum to ensure that cross-curricular links are more explicit and that all activities are relevant to pupils' needs. One of the best examples of a well-developed curriculum theme was some recent work on 'the Blitz' of the Second World War.

Teaching is mainly good and some is outstanding. A minority of lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory. A number of common strengths were seen. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge and plan well. They use a wide range of teaching styles to stimulate pupils' involvement in lessons. Assessment information is used well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Very good relationships exist between adults and pupils which mean that pupils behave well in lessons. Teaching assistants provide an effective layer of support, particularly for those that find learning difficult.

Where the planning and teaching are at their very best, teachers have the confidence to allow pupils to use carefully crafted activities that encourage pupils to direct their own learning and work independently. For example, in an outstanding Key Stage 2 English lesson, the skilful and engaging support of the teacher enthused pupils to imagine, discuss and write what it might be like to walk alone through an eerie, dark wood. This outstanding practice was also seen in a numeracy lesson in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the active, multi-sensory activity in the outdoor area led to children being excited about number. School leaders have already recognised that the best practice in teaching needs to be disseminated more widely to benefit colleagues across the school. Where teaching is less successful teachers over-direct pupils, planned tasks are not sufficiently stimulating and not sufficiently varied to meet the needs of all pupils.

No stone is left unturned to ensure that all pupils, including the most potentially vulnerable are exceptionally well cared for and supported. There are excellent procedures for supporting and intervening with pupils who require extra support with their work. There are first-rate systems for introducing pupils to school and for ensuring their smooth transition to secondary school.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is driven forward by the impressive determination of the headteacher to improve the lives of pupils and their families. She recognises and develops the strengths of pupils, parents, carers and staff. The values of inclusion, family and community that she exemplifies are reflected throughout the staff team, from site managers to school leaders. As a consequence, the school's commitment to equality of opportunity is strong and the school is effective in improving pupils' life chances and in removing barriers to learning.

The headteacher has striven to develop a new school over the past few years, to unify parishes and to build a powerful, shared endeavour to tackle discrimination, poverty and under-achievement. As one member of staff commented 'the school is led by caring, understanding, approachable managers. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be part of the team'. The governing body is well briefed about the school's performance. Members fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and are committed to see the school improve further. They effectively question proposals and hold senior leaders to account. Improvement plans set a clear direction for the school and are informed by accurate self-evaluation and use of attainment data. There is a shared understanding of priorities, particularly to improve overall attainment and attendance. However, senior leaders are aware that the school's procedures to judge the impact of this work and measure success require further attention.

As a result of the school's deep understanding of, and commitment to, the local area, community cohesion is outstanding. Actions make a significant contribution to community development and these are undertaken through a reflective and determined approach. Pupils' learning and well-being benefit from the school's outstanding partnerships with other providers, organisations and services. For example, the links with the on-site children's centre enhance transition for children and result in more personalised support for pupils and families in times of need or crisis.

Safeguarding procedures are thorough and robust. All health and safety checks are carried out extremely well. Site managers and administrative staff play a key role in keeping the large site very safe. The school works exceptionally well with other agencies around child protection and in keeping pupils safe.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They demonstrate this through the effective learning environment that they have created to stimulate children’s play and investigation both indoors and outdoors. Crucially they also show this through the way in which they observe and then support and extend children’s thinking. The most effective support involves open-ended questions and reciprocal dialogue with children. For example, the role play baby clinic in the nursery engaged boys and girls in role play with adults, deeply involved in talking and playing with children.

There is a strong team ethic across the Early Years Foundation Stage and a shared drive to promote meaningful opportunities for children to become confident learners and communicators. As a consequence, talk is highly valued as a means for learning and stories, rhymes and the sounds that letters make are a key part of the curriculum.

Children enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical of three- and four-year-olds. Assessment of what children can do is very effectively used to inform curriculum planning. Staff also take full account of children’s own interests. Tracking of children’s progress is well established and allows for systematic review of children’s attainment and progress. As a result of these strengths and the well-developed curriculum, children make good progress from their starting points by the time that they leave the Reception Year. Data shows that more children are ready to start on the National Curriculum in Year 1 than previously and that the gaps between groups are closing. That said, the Early Years Foundation Stage team are not complacent and are looking to further improve mathematics through block play and increase meaningful contexts for writing.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Views of parents and carers

Sixty per cent of parents and carers returned a questionnaire, which is well above average for a primary school. In the questionnaires and through discussion with parents and carers when collecting children from school, it was very clear that the school and its staff are highly respected. They made comments such as 'Trinity is a safe, family-focused school'. All of those returning a questionnaire felt that the school is well-led and managed. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say that their children enjoy school and most feel that their children are making enough progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Trinity Catholic Primary 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 186 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 310 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	110	59	59	32	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	121	65	47	25	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	111	60	68	37	4	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	102	55	71	38	7	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	117	63	63	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	120	65	61	33	2	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	109	59	73	39	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)	102	55	71	38	2	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	101	54	77	41	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	108	58	66	35	3	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	98	53	76	41	6	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	113	61	67	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	127	68	54	29	2	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



30 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Trinity Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L5 8UT

Thank you for your help when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, in your outdoor areas and in the interview with the school council. You expressed your views very clearly and they were very helpful to us. As I told some of you I would, I am writing to say what we found out about your school.

We are pleased to tell you that The Trinity is a good school. We were very impressed by your beautiful building, gardens and outdoor play areas. You are taught well, make good progress in your work and are very well looked after.

Some of what your school does is fabulous, particularly the way that all the adults keep you safe and protected, the way that you do many things for the benefit of your school and community as well as the positive way that you are relating to other people.

You told us that your lessons are increasingly interesting and often fun. We were really pleased to see that you often have good support to think about what you are discovering and learning. We could see this when we watched a lesson about circuits, conductors and switches. We were pleased that children in the Nursery and Reception classes are helped to talk and listen and to love stories, rhymes and sounds. We were also impressed with the exciting work that some of you did in writing about being alone in a dark eerie wood.

Your teachers work hard to make the school as good as it can be. To help them, we have asked them to work with you and your parents and carers to improve your attendance still further and to see that more of you reach the higher levels in your work. We have also asked them to make sure that more of your lessons are like the very best ones we saw when you were very enthusiastic about your learning. You can help by telling your teachers what makes your lessons exciting and what helps you to learn.

Keep trying hard. We can see why your teachers are exceptionally keen to work with you every day.

Yours sincerely

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector

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