

Holy Trinity Church of England VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123848
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380748
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Neech HMI

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Julian Laurence
Headteacher	Nigel Bright
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2007
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	1–2 December 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons, covering all 10 classes and all teachers. A number of lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and one observation with the deputy headteacher. The team carried out 'learning walks' which focused on behaviour, the curriculum, community cohesion and spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the school's work. Inspectors held discussions with staff, pupils, governors, and parents and carers. They looked at documentation provided by the school, including records on pupils' progress and school improvement planning. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. The team considered responses to the inspection questionnaires received from 37 staff, 104 pupils and 81 parents and carers.

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

- How well teaching challenges and assesses pupils' learning in writing and mathematics so that pupils achieve as well as they can.
- How well children learn and develop in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How leaders and managers, including governors, have taken steps to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress and achieve as well as they can.

Information about the school

This is an average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately half the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. There are two classes in the Reception Year. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are taught in mixed-age classes. The majority of pupils are White British. There is a slight increase in the number of pupils whose first language is not English. The school holds Healthy School status and the Financial Management Status in School award. There is a local authority-run centre for pupils with hearing impairment on the school site. These pupils attend full time in the main 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. A strong aspect of the school's work is how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn and develop. A number of parents and carers reported how quickly their children settle into the Reception Year as a result of the enthusiastic, caring and approachable staff. Since the previous inspection, changes in staffing and improvements to the learning environment mean that this area of the school's work is good. A significant number of children start school with skills and knowledge below levels typically seen. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, their performance in English and mathematics is broadly in line with national expectations. This represents good progress.

The school has a good capacity to accelerate improvement across all aspects of its work because of:

- the strong pastoral care
- the drive and ambition of the headteacher and governors to improve performance
- the strong partnership with parents, carers and the community
- the good teaching
- the effective curriculum and wide range of enrichment opportunities
- the self-evaluation procedures which have ensured the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

A key strength is the way in which the school responds to the individual needs of its pupils so that care, guidance and support are good. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well. The strong partnership with staff at the Clearly Centre means that pupils with hearing impairment are fully included in lessons and progress well.

Teaching is good and pupils enjoy their learning because teachers present activities in an exciting and engaging way. Use of assessment data is only satisfactory because occasionally it is not well enough used to match work closely to pupils' different abilities when planning lessons in the mixed-age classes. As a result, the pace of learning slows. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory. There are examples of effective marking which gives pupils advice on how to improve their work. However, the school acknowledges that the quality of marking is inconsistent, and that this is

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an area for development.

Pupils' attendance is above average and they enjoy the range of enrichment activities the school offers. Parents and carers appreciate the variety of clubs, for example for music and sport. One parent echoed the views of others saying how much children enjoy the Samba drumming club. The effective relationships that exist within the school community underpin pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Parents and carers are complimentary about how well their children are prepared for the next step in education. Pupils are polite and behaviour is generally good. Inspectors were impressed with how well the older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils at playtimes. However, in a few lessons some pupils display less positive attitudes to learning when their interest wanes because tasks set are not sharply matched to their abilities and appropriate National Curriculum levels.

Since the previous inspection the changes made to the Early Years Foundation Stage have been effective so that the leadership of this key stage is good. The involvement of governors in evaluating strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance is now more rigorous. Consequently, governors challenge and support the school well in its drive to raise standards. This, together with involving all staff and governors in working in curriculum teams, the strong drive and ambition of the headteacher and accurate self-evaluation, mean that the school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, ensure all teachers use assessment to plan learning tasks in English that focus on writing, and in mathematics lessons that take account of pupils' prior knowledge, which are clearly matched to pupils' National Curriculum levels and different abilities in the mixed-age classes.
- By July 2012, ensure there is a consistent age-appropriate approach throughout the school in responding to and marking pupils' work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When children start in Reception, what they can do varies between individuals. Skills and knowledge in communication, language and literacy are lower than levels typical for their age. Children make good progress and by the end of their first year in school they are well prepared for Key Stage 1. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they generally continue to make good progress in English and mathematics. For example, some higher achieving pupils are working at National Curriculum levels above those expected for their age. In a mixed Year 5 and Year 6 English lesson, more-able pupils produced extended pieces of writing of a high quality. In a mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class, pupils enthusiastically wrote their own versions of *The Owl*

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and the Pussycat, displaying good knowledge of sentence structure and punctuation. However, in some lessons, the work produced by pupils is limited because tasks set are not closely matched to their abilities or set at the expected level for their age.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities produce work of a good standard. Results in National Curriculum tests show that they perform better than national expectations, particularly in mathematics. Pupils with hearing impairment are well supported in lessons by skilled staff from the Cleary Centre. As a result, pupils talk about how preparation for their learning, with staff at the centre, helps them to join in with the lessons, for example talking about their writing. The school is developing an approach to writing which focuses on discussing ideas before writing. As a result, all pupils are becoming more confident in trying out new ideas and improving their work. A particular success is how well pupils mark one another’s written work, and feed back to each other. For example, by suggesting improvements to making balanced arguments, pupils could see what was needed in their work to move to the next level. School tracking and data information show that new initiatives, such as a greater focus on discussing ideas for writing, are beginning to have an impact. Assessment for the current Year 6 shows that standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving.

Pupils feel safe at school. They are knowledgeable about a wide range of safety issues, including internet safety. Pupils are confident in the support they receive from staff and know who to talk to if they have a worry or concern. Pupils have a good knowledge of what contributes to a healthy lifestyle. This is well supported by school activities, such as the school’s participation in local sports competitions and reflected in the school’s award for healthy lifestyles. Pupils are able to put forward their views, such as ideas for the new healthy heart trail. In this way they are developing their decision-making skills. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about business and enterprise through their involvement in local and national charity events. Through strong links with the local church pupils make an effective contribution to the local community. Pupils’ understanding of worldwide communities is good. The school council and others talk enthusiastically about the school’s link with Asia and the lives of the people living there.

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

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

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The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

There are some strong aspects in the quality of the school's provision, for example the good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage observed during the inspection. This confirms the school's view of the improvements to provision in the Reception Year and explains children's good progress. Teaching in English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 is generally good. Teachers use questioning effectively so that pupils refer to their targets and have an opportunity to improve their work. In a mixed Years 5 and 6 English lesson the teacher skilfully provided pupils with examples of punctuation linked to different National Curriculum levels. Consequently, pupils were able use the resource in order to improve their work. In planning lessons, teachers link subjects together well. In a mixed Years 1 and 2 religious education lesson, which focused on the angels and the Christmas story, the teacher skilfully linked the idea of messages to pupils' speaking and listening skills in order to develop ideas for writing.

Interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are effective. The work of the support staff contributes to pupils' good progress, for example, a literacy intervention programme which focuses on reading and spelling. School data show that clearly targeted support for individuals in writing is helping to reduce the gap between school and national expectations. The good care and guidance given to pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or at risk of falling behind in their work support their regular attendance and their academic progress.

Staff plan work which takes account of what has been covered in previous lessons. For example, in science teachers refer back to pupils' prior knowledge of fair testing and in mathematics pupils' knowledge of number bonds to 10 and beyond. However, teachers do not always use what the pupils already know and ongoing assessment to set tasks for the different abilities and ages in the mixed-age classes. As a result, some pupils make less progress. Teachers' marking gives pupils praise for good work. The best marking analyses pupils' work in detail so they know how successful they have been. Opportunities are given to pupils to correct mistakes, such as

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spellings and to improve work, such as dividing written pieces into paragraphs. In the less effective marking teachers tick the work that is correct, and there is less evidence of giving pupils points for improvement and opportunity for pupils to respond.

The curriculum covers all that is required well. It is enhanced by visits out of school and visitors in. The locality is well used, for example, visits to the theatre which contribute well to pupils’ cultural development. Parents and carers speak with pride about the productions put on by the school and how impressed they are with their children’s confidence in acting in front of an audience.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have promoted a culture of equal opportunity successfully. They have improved the quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by creating an exciting learning environment for children. They have introduced new ways of working to develop pupils’ achievements in writing. There are no significant differences between groups of pupils. They have created curriculum teams, drawing on the skills of all members of staff and with the involvement of governors. In this way, leaders are more accountable for the progress of pupils in their subject areas. Consequently, the school has demonstrated an ambitious drive to ensure all pupils have an equal chance to achieve as well as they can.

The school reviews performance data to set challenging targets, and is confident that pupils will continue to achieve well. Parents and carers report they are well informed about their children’s progress. Decisions about where to place additional support are underpinned by a careful review of the progress pupils are making. Regular meetings to review pupils’ progress mean that staff are accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. The school is a harmonious community where pupils from different families get on well together. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated. The school is quick to support families and their children, whose second language is English, so that they are well integrated into the school community. Key partners, for example the church, enrich this aspect of the school’s work. From experiencing a rich curriculum, including national and international themes, youngsters get on well

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together. Community cohesion is good.

The governing body has an effective understanding of the strengths of the school. Governors are well informed about the progress made in addressing the school’s priorities through the headteacher’s reports. They have made a good contribution to the school’s monitoring of its performance. Consequently, they have a clear vision for the future and make an informed and purposeful contribution to action plans. The school integrates issues related to safety into the curriculum so that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Regular risks assessments of the school site are undertaken by governors and school leaders because pupils’ safety is high priority. Child-protection procedures are transparent and staff and governor training regularly updated. In this way the governing body has ensured that the requirements for safeguarding are well met.

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 in the Early years Foundation Stage have good relationships with adults. They make friends and learn happily inside and outside. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the skilled

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support from adults. One youngster drew a circle in the sand which then became a face and then a person because the teacher challenged the child with good questioning. As a result, the activity also developed the youngster’s counting skills by counting to 10 when checking the number of fingers on the sand drawing.

Staff are sensitive to children as individuals and promote their well-being and learning well. The deployment of staff is carefully thought out to support children’s needs, for example, an increase in staff to cater for the needs of children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The classroom and outdoor area offer a lively and welcoming environment for learning. Children initiate their own learning. Youngsters organise themselves as Santa’s helpers and talk about writing lists of ingredients for a Christmas cake. They have telephone conversations with Father Christmas to talk about what they are doing and in this way are developing their communication skills well. Children choose eagerly from a range of worthwhile activities which promote language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, early numeracy and problem solving. Adults make classroom routines fun and children understand these well. For example, everyone enjoyed singing an action song about putting your coat on and being ‘nice and cosy’. In this way children respond well to music and develop their understanding of keeping themselves warm outside.

The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that staff constantly review children’s learning opportunities and are skilled in using assessment to plan new activities. Consequently, children achieve well and are well prepared for Key Stage 1. Partnerships with other professionals are strong, for example the range of support for families. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear vision for future developments to the outside learning opportunities for children.

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

Approximately one quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Parents and carers have a positive view of the school and believe it serves their children well. Those who wrote to an inspector praised the care, guidance and

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support provided for their children and how much their children enjoyed coming to school. A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns about supervision of their children at the end of the day. The inspection evidence found effective systems established to ensure the safety of all pupils. The inspection confirmed these aspects of the school's work as good.

Parents and carers consider staff to be approachable and communication to be good. A small minority of parents and carers held concerns about the school's approach to behaviour. The inspection evidence found that there were clear systems for maintaining good behaviour. While the vast majority of parents and carers viewed their children's progress as good, a very small minority felt that their child was not making enough progress. The inspection evidence confirmed parents' and carers' views of pupils' progress overall as good. The school is aware of the few inconsistencies in the progress of groups and individuals in some lessons.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Trinity Church of England VA 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 293 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	68	26	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	70	23	28	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	46	57	32	39	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	58	29	36	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	63	28	35	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	39	48	39	48	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	49	38	47	1	1	1	1
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)	42	52	33	41	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	43	53	30	37	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	44	39	48	5	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	42	39	48	2	2	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	48	59	32	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	52	64	28	35	0	0	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 are 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.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England VA Primary School, Taunton
TA1 3AF**

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team on our recent visit. We came to see how well you are all learning. We enjoyed our two days at your school. Thank you for talking to us about your work and what it is like to be a pupil at your school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

You, your parents and carers, and your headteacher told us that Holy Trinity Primary is a good school and you are right, it is. The adults take good care of you. They help you to settle quickly when you start school in the Reception Year and to grow up well. You know how to keep healthy and safe and to care for one another. You enjoy your lessons and come to school very regularly and so your attendance is good. We were impressed by the range of clubs and extra-curricular activities.

You are taught well. Your teachers plan lessons in English and mathematics which help you make good progress. Occasionally, some tasks planned in lessons are not matched closely enough to your abilities and ages. Your teachers mark your work and give you advice on how to improve but this is not always the case for all of you.

Mr Bright, the staff and the school's governors all want to make your school even better. We have suggested they focus on:

- teachers planning tasks in lessons which are closely matched to your different abilities and ages
- ensuring that when teachers mark your work they give you advice on how to improve and the opportunity to do so.

For you, the most important things are to carry on working hard, making your contribution to school life, and to continue growing into caring and responsible young people.

You have all our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech
Her Majesty's Inspector

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