

Holy Trinity Catholic School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122818
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	395394
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	Nigel Grimshaw

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	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Beall
Headteacher	Barry Doran
Date of previous school inspection	14 February 2007
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	26–27 April 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Nigel Grimshaw

Additional inspector

Enid Korn

Additional inspector

Ian Hart

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons or parts of lessons taught by ten different teachers. They looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they did. Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, school improvement and self-evaluation. They scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings, governors' visit reports, reports from the local authority and the school's own assessment data. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils as well as those from 169 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds but there is an increasing Polish community also represented in the school population. Many of these pupils learn English as an additional language and the overall percentage of non-native English speaking pupils is above the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with statements of special need or school action support is just above average. The majority of these have moderate learning difficulties and some have speech, language and communication difficulties. The stability of the school population is above average. The school has a privately run breakfast club and a privately run after school club that have been inspected separately.

The school has gained various awards including the Artsmark Gold award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school meets the government's floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Holy Trinity is a good school. Behaviour in lessons is typically outstanding and pupils benefit enormously from high quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. By the end of Year 6, pupils’ attainments are well above the national average. The school is not outstanding because of some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching; and pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply their information and communication technology skills in other subjects.
- Children make better than expected progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills provides a solid platform for similar good progress in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress because it is taught well. An effective and well-structured programme in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 that links sounds to letters (phonics) gives pupils a particularly good start in this respect.
- The quality of teaching is mainly good, and at times outstanding, because senior leaders monitor it rigorously and provide effective training and support. Teachers make good use of individual targets for pupils and the progress of underachieving pupils is accelerated by well chosen support programmes. However there remains some satisfactory teaching. Teachers sometimes provide too few opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology skills to support and enhance learning in other subjects.
- Pupils’ behaviour is very good in lessons and generally around school. They are motivated by their work, respond well to the challenge of their targets and consequently enjoy learning.
- The headteacher is well supported by a motivated senior leadership team. The governing body provides an excellent balance of challenge and support. The school leadership has worked hard to provide an enriched curriculum that is now providing improved links between subjects. Outcomes from the parental questionnaires were very positive indeed.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the proportion of satisfactory teaching by sharing the good and outstanding practice in the school, particularly with regard to the pace of learning, the use of time within lessons and the quality of questioning.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support and enhance learning across all subject areas.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are just below those expected for their age. They settle well into school life and make good progress, especially in basic communication skills and mathematics. The increasing numbers of children who are learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the high quality of support provided by the bilingual staff. Overall standards are above national expectations at the end of the Reception year. Attainments in English and mathematics are consistently above national averages, including in reading, by the end of Year 2 and well above over time by the end of Year 6. The pupils have a real enjoyment of reading and most say that they read for pleasure outside school. Attainment dipped at the end of Year 6 in 2011 and progress for this cohort was below expectations. The school leaders responded swiftly and rigorously to address this apparent decline by implementing improved support programmes for any pupils at risk of underachieving. As a result, attainment is, once again, well above average across the school, with the Year 6 pupils making sustained good progress to be two terms ahead of typical pupils nationally. The achievement of pupils is therefore good.

All groups of pupils, including boys and girls, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress in Years 1 to 6. This progress is consistent in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress because of an effective induction programme and a well-structured programme of support. There is no significant difference in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. The girls generally outperform the boys but the gaps in outcomes have narrowed and both attain higher standards than similar pupils nationally.

Progress in most lessons observed was good or better. Pupils enjoy learning in lessons and teachers plan work that they find motivating. This was particularly true in an outstanding English lesson, where the pace was slick and the pupils were

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challenged to write a play script about sheltering in an Anderson shelter during World War II. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs that focuses on their particular needs. Consequently, these pupils make good progress in line with that of their peers.

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire feel that their children make good progress, have good basic skills and that the school helps them to support their child's learning. One parent wrote typically, 'We are delighted with the progress of our children and have no concerns whatsoever'. Inspection evidence supports these views

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good. The large majority of lessons observed were judged to be good or outstanding. Pupils make good progress in lessons and over time. In almost every lesson observed, pupils were clear about the learning objective and the small steps in learning by which they could measure their own progress. They are also given longer-term targets for improving their work. Each term the pupils individually discuss their progress and the next steps in their learning with their teacher. The pupils value this highly. This development of the pupils' involvement in their own learning is a strength of the school and one reason why the pupils achieve as well as they do. In the better lessons the teachers have excellent subject knowledge, plan the work thoughtfully and consequently the pace of the lesson is slick. In the satisfactory lessons the pace of learning is slower, pupils have less time allocated for their individual learning and the questioning is less effective because pupils are not required to articulate their answers to the same high levels. Work planned by the teachers in the better lessons makes good use of their knowledge of the pupils' attainment to ensure expectations are high and the work is appropriately challenging for all. The marking of pupils' work is consistently good and includes guidance for improvement, often supported by verbal feedback.

The school's topic-based approach to the curriculum has been planned thoughtfully by the teachers. The links established between subjects were very evident in the Year 6 classrooms where there are many examples of work from different subjects arising from a trip to Whitby.

The school's ethos is highly influential in promoting the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. This was evident in most of the lessons; pupils worked exceptionally well cooperatively, valued the opinions of others, and behaved excellently because they were highly motivated.

A very high proportion of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well and are prepared for the next stage of their education. The inspection findings support this view entirely. One parent spoke for many when writing, 'We are really impressed with the high standards of teaching and the friendly caring ethos of the school'. One pupil was even more forthcoming, describing the teaching as 'One million per cent brilliant!'

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good. Pupils are extremely polite, confident and very welcoming. They behave extremely well in lessons and around school. Routines are well established in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They show consideration for others and work and play together harmoniously. Pupils are confident that they feel very safe at school and this is echoed by parents and carers. The inspection again confirms these views. School records indicate that there are very few incidents of bullying. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and they agree that bullying in any form only happens rarely, is seldom serious, and is dealt with promptly and effectively by the adults in school. Racist incidents are even less common, because the pupils show mutual respect for each other at all times. New pupils into school say that they are made to feel welcome very quickly and they all say that they settled happily into school life. Pupils have a good understanding of potentially dangerous situations. For example, the school has ensured that the pupils are well aware of safe and appropriate use of the internet.

Attendance has remained in line with the national average over the last three years.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school are good. The excellent headteacher, ably supported by the developing senior leadership team, has a clear vision and a successful track record of improvement in the school. Although some satisfactory teaching remains, the high teaching standards at the last inspection have largely been maintained through a programme of professional development for all staff and this has ensured that pupils' progress is also significantly above average over time. A very knowledgeable governing body supports the senior leaders effectively. Governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement because of their active involvement in the monitoring and challenging of the school's work.

The curriculum has been reviewed to create opportunities for enjoyable learning that are meeting the needs of the great majority of pupils. The opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum have improved significantly but this now needs extending to ICT. The curriculum and the expectations of staff are also providing a very effective platform for promoting outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

School leaders, governors and staff are successful in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. However, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the sudden increase in numbers and the consequent relocation of the older Reception children has led to inconsistencies in the provision for this year group, including a lack of joint planning and access to good quality outdoor learning.

The school has effective systems for identifying groups and individuals who need

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additional support. Successful strategies are provided to accelerate the pupils' learning and close any gaps in their outcomes compared to their peers. School leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The site is secure and all visitors are checked on arrival at the school before they can gain entry. Parents and carers agree that the school keeps them well informed and responds well to any concerns raised. The inspection team fully supports these views.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and clearly focused on the correct priorities. It stems from an effective programme of monitoring and evaluation and analysis of data. Consequently, the school has been successful in building on strengths and addressing weaknesses highlighted in its previous inspection. Furthermore, the school's leaders have taken prompt and effective action to reverse the dip in pupils' progress in 2011. This success demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to sustain improvement in the future.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



30 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Catholic School, Newark, NG24 4AU.

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our time with you. We enjoyed talking to many of you in lessons, in our meetings with you and at break times. We were pleased with your enthusiasm for your work and the progress you are making, especially in English and mathematics.

We have judged that yours is a good school. You behave very well, get on well together and value each other's cultures and backgrounds exceptionally well. We know from talking to you and from your questionnaires that you like coming to school very much and enjoy your learning. This is because the teachers try to make the work interesting and fun and so you are making good progress. You report that you feel safe at school.

Although yours is a good school, we have asked the headteacher, staff and the governing body to make some changes to help it to improve further. We have asked them to provide more opportunities for you to use your information and communication technology skills when you are doing your topic work and work in other subjects. We have also asked them to try and make all the teaching as good as the best teaching in school.

We are very confident that you will want to help too. You can do this by trying your best at all times and checking that your work in lessons is as good as expected.

We would like to wish you all the very best in the future at Holy Trinity Primary School and also when you move on to your next school.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Grimshaw
Lead inspector

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