

Holy Trinity Catholic School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123184
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	380617
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2012
Lead inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Branch
Acting Headteacher	Sally Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 April 2008
School address	24 London Road Chipping Norton Oxfordshire OX7 5AX
Telephone number	01608 643487
Fax number	01608 642934
Email address	office.3420@holy-trinity.oxon.sch.uk

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Introduction

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge

Additional inspector

John Taylor

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 15 lessons taught by seven teachers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at questionnaires from 101 parents and carers, 20 members of staff and 97 pupils. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, parents, carers and pupils. The inspectors heard pupils read, scrutinised pupils' books, information on their progress, safeguarding information and other documents presented by the school.

Information about the school

This is a slightly smaller than average primary school. Most pupils are White British, with a few coming from other heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs including those who are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one Reception class. The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

There have been several changes in teaching staff and senior leaders since the previous inspection. The acting headteacher has been in post since January 2011.

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

- This is a good school that is improving rapidly following a decline in teaching quality and pupils' progress shortly after the previous inspection. It is not yet outstanding because teachers do not consistently expect pupils to use their above average writing and mathematics skills to support their learning across the curriculum and pupils do not always take enough responsibility for improving their work.
- Achievement for all groups of pupils, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn quickly and the rate of progress has increased in the last two years in Key Stage 1, so that progress is now good across the school. Attainment is above average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and is on an upward trend.
- Teaching is good in the Reception Year and between Years 1 and 6. The enthusiastic teachers and teaching assistants provide a wide range of interesting activities and use resources well, to support learning. However, pupils are not always expected to practise and extend their writing and mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes towards learning. They are thoughtful and attentive. They say that they feel safe at school. They work well with each other and persevere with their tasks. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well across the curriculum and is evident in their delightful singing during collective worship.
- The leadership of teaching through the management of performance is good. Leaders, including the governing body, understand what the school needs to do next to become outstanding. They demonstrate the capacity to improve in the way that they have successfully maintained good achievement overall, accelerated it in Key Stage 1 and improved subject leadership and teachers' marking, although pupils do not consistently heed this advice immediately.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase teachers' expectations about the quality of writing and the application of mathematics skills when pupils are working across the curriculum, by January 2013.
- Ensure pupils take greater responsibility for their learning by April 2013, by:
 - checking and correcting errors in their work, including spelling
 - acting on teachers' advice more swiftly.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most children start Reception working within the levels expected for their age. They make good progress and attainment is above the expected level on entry to Year 1. In lessons, they learn well, enjoying the exciting activities such as hunting for mini-beasts, making creatures with varying numbers of legs and practising writing in their individual scrapbooks.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. They are very articulate and enthusiastic to learn. Attainment is above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, including in reading. Most pupils are making good progress in learning phonics (letter combinations and the sounds they represent) and this is having a positive impact on further developing their literacy skills. For example, in Year 1, pupils enjoyed playing sound games on the interactive computer whiteboard. A few lower-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 know that 'sounding the letters out' will help them with their reading, but are not consistently remembering to make use of what they have been taught. The school is making suitable arrangements to provide further support for these pupils.

Parents and carers are right to believe that their children achieve well. Senior leaders are aware that not all disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have made enough progress in the past, especially in mathematics. Interventions and support in lessons are having a positive impact in narrowing the gap in achievement for a few pupils who learn more slowly than others. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 4, effective questioning about perimeter and area was helping pupils to understand how to make the right calculations.

Pupils develop above average skills in literacy and numeracy but do not always demonstrate these to best effect in other subjects. For example, there are occasions when pupils produce only simple tables and graphs to display their scientific findings or do not provide written accounts that match their capabilities.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers, and their children, think that teaching is good, and inspection findings agree. Teaching, including of reading, ensures that pupils learn

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quickly and develop above average basic skills. Exciting activities and effective questioning involve pupils well in their learning and ensure that differing needs are met well. For example, in Year 2, pupils increased their interest in a writing topic about space by dressing up and singing a space song; Year 6 pupils increased their knowledge of electrical circuits through a well-considered mix of information and hands-on practical experience. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use praise well to encourage pupils and to support their good behaviour. Teachers set targets and points for development but do not always ensure that these are followed up by pupils straight away.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given good encouragement and support. They are taught well; consequently, they are learning quickly.

The planned curriculum supports pupils' academic and personal development well and provides variety and interest. Teaching has a good impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are good relationships between members of staff and the pupils which support the development of positive social skills. Adults' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and behaviour management is consistent. For example, in the Reception class, children learn how to describe feelings during 'circle time' and kindness is rewarded by being mentioned on the 'kindness trees'.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have responded well to the revised behaviour policy. They demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning, feel safe and most think that behaviour is good. Their enthusiasm for learning is evident in their above average rates of attendance and keenness to move up the class 'zone boards' for good effort. In lessons, pupils work well with their talk partners and are actively engaged in their learning. For example, in Year 5, pupils worked well with each other discussing how to construct open-ended questions and, in Year 3, pupils were very keen to work together to help place shapes onto a Venn diagram. Pupils make positive comments such as 'Teachers know what we are doing and help us.' Most parents and carers are pleased with behaviour at the school, think it is good and agree that their children are kept safe. Behaviour is typically good over time and pupils say that 'all pupils join in' at playtimes and that there is only some 'bumping into each other'. The few pupils that say that behaviour is not always good are confident that the occasional unacceptable behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively by all members of staff. Pupils feel free from all kinds of bullying including cyber-bullying. They feel that they can trust teachers to sort out any worries.

Pupils show respect for others and are interested in learning about other cultures. For example, in one lesson, pupils in Year 4 were clearly fascinated when learning about aboriginal art and music. They are starting to assess their own and each other's work constructively. For example, in Year 3, pupils made sensible suggestions

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about how other groups could develop their puppet plays, such as 'you were a bit quiet'. Pupils do not always check and correct avoidable errors in their work, including spelling mistakes, or ensure that advice given through teachers' marking is followed up straight away so that they can take an even more active part in learning.

Leadership and management

Leaders, including the governing body, demonstrate that they have the capacity to improve the school through the successful actions they have taken to improve provision following a slight dip in pupils' achievement. Minor gaps in progress between groups of pupils are closing quickly. Areas identified for development at the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. The role of subject leaders has been strengthened and members of staff work together closely to identify next steps and to bring about whole-school improvement. Leaders are starting to evaluate the impact of interventions and progress in aspects of subjects more closely so that development planning can be even more sensitive to changing needs.

Performance management is moving teaching forward quickly and provision is now at least good. Guidance and training has enabled teachers to meet pupils' differing needs well and teachers know how they can develop further. Equal opportunities are promoted and discrimination tackled well. Pupils from different backgrounds are supported and encouraged equally well. They are included well socially and the school is working appropriately to eliminate any remaining slight unevenness in learning and progress by providing further staff coaching and training as required.

There are good relationships between most parents and carers and members of staff. Parents and carers make positive comments such as, 'We are delighted with the progress of our children and feel that they have had the opportunity to grow and develop as individuals.' Leaders are aware that a few parents and carers would appreciate a greater chance to share their views and suggestions and have plans to extend opportunities through parental forums.

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and most pupils and their parents and carers have confidence in them. Parents and carers know that the school takes well-considered action when concerns are raised. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is especially successful in promoting sport and music. It ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. There have been recent developments in opportunities for celebrating cultural diversity; for example, the school is twinned with a school in Gambia and pupils learn about values such as respect and determination during collective worship and in lessons. The school works closely with others in the area to share good practice and to extend pupils' learning. For example, pupils are especially enthusiastic about the opportunities to attend 'Forest School'.

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.



16 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Catholic School, Chipping Norton OX7 5AX

We enjoyed coming to inspect your friendly school, talking with you about your work and hearing some of you read. Thank you for being so helpful during our visit. We found that your school provides you with a good education.

These are the best things about your school.

- You learn quickly, especially in English and mathematics.
- You enjoy school, and we agree with you that your teachers are kind and caring and are successful in making lessons interesting and worthwhile.
- Members of staff are good at teaching you all about the importance of working hard and being sensible, and, as a result, you behave well.
- The headteacher, other leaders and the governing body know what needs to be done to make the school even better.

To help it improve, we have asked your school to make sure that teachers and governors always expect you to make best use of what you have learnt in writing and mathematics lessons to help you when you are working in other subjects.

Thank you once again for telling us about your school and letting us see your work. All of you can help your teachers by remembering to check your work for errors, including spelling mistakes, and always acting on the advice you are given by your teachers so that you can improve your work even more quickly.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge
Lead Inspector

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