

Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Trinity Road South, West Bromwich, B70 6NF

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- While achievement and the quality of teaching have improved, teaching is not good enough to make up for the inadequate progress made by pupils in earlier years.
- In some lessons the pace of learning is too slow. This is because pupils do not get down to their work quickly enough and have to listen too long to their teacher.
- Work is not always challenging enough for the more-able pupils.
- Pupils' spelling skills are inconsistent across the school, and they do not always learn to use the most effective mental and calculation skills in mathematics lessons.
- Not all teachers follow the school's policy for marking consistently well.
- Subject and phase leaders are at an early stage of developing their role in checking how good teaching and learning are in their subject or area of responsibility.

The school has the following strengths

- The school has improved since the last inspection 13 months ago. The actions taken to improve the teaching of the sounds that letters make, writing and mathematics are working. Standards have risen this year.
- The executive headteacher and head of school have made a big difference in a short space of time. They have sorted things out and made sure that teaching has improved.
- Pupils behave well in class and in the playground. They play well together and concentrate in lessons. They know how to keep themselves safe.
- Parents think that the school has improved a great deal since the last inspection and see how much their children have come on.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 20 lessons and observed 14 teachers, a higher-level teaching assistant and some teaching assistants who were teaching at the time of the inspection. Eleven of the observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior management team.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked closely at their workbooks.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, senior members of staff, four members of the governing body including the Chair and Vice-Chair, and representatives from the local authority. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Insufficient responses were made by parents to register on the online questionnaire (Parent View) so inspectors considered the school's recent questionnaire responses from parents and staff, along with the one written comment received from a parent.
- Inspectors looked carefully at the arrangements and records kept to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plan and self-evaluation documents, as well as assessment data that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Paul Weston, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kerrise James

Additional Inspector

Kathryn Brunt

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding given to the school to support the progress of pupils eligible for free school meals, those pupils who are looked after and those pupils from service families, is above the national average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion supported by school action is below average. The main areas of additional need include speech, language or communication or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are of Indian or Pakistani heritage. Over two-thirds of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. A high proportion of pupils join partway through the school year.
- In May the school received a monitoring visit for schools that had been given a notice to improve. It was judged to be making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.
- Since the last inspection, the school has federated with a successful local school and an executive headteacher has been appointed. There have also been a number of staffing changes and around half of the teaching staff, including the deputy headteacher, started in September 2012.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to consistently good or better by ensuring that all teachers and teaching assistants:
 - make effective use of assessment to match teaching to pupils' individual needs
 - do not talk for too long before getting pupils to start their work
 - use questioning during lessons to assess learning and then adapt work so it is demanding throughout each lesson and enables all pupils, especially the most capable ones, to learn quickly
 - give feedback to pupils in lessons and written comments in their books that help them understand how well they are doing and how they can improve their work.
- Raise pupils' achievement and attainment in spelling and mathematics by:
 - providing them with more opportunities in all mathematics lessons to use and apply a wider range of effective methods of calculation when solving problems
 - providing them with more opportunities to develop their mental strategies in lessons
 - building on the work carried out to develop their understanding of letters and sounds to improve their spelling skills.

- Develop the role of subject and phase leaders so that they:
 - have regular opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subject
 - hold regular meetings with other teachers to check on pupils' progress
 - make sure teachers whose skills require improvement have opportunities to learn from the best teachers in the school and highly effective teachers in other schools.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children start school in the Nursery with skills and understanding well below the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. They learn quickly and develop their independence well as a result of good assessment and teaching. By the time they reach Reception they are working at below-average levels.
- From Reception onwards, pupils' achievement is uneven because teaching is variable. The most effective teaching is improving achievement and making a significant contribution to raising pupils' attainment and speeding up the progress of pupils who had previously fallen behind. However, some groups such as the more able do not reach the higher levels they are capable of in English and mathematics.
- Although pupils' achievement is getting better, the rate of improvement is not fast enough. Inadequate teaching in the past has left many pupils with gaps in their reading, writing and mathematics skills and knowledge. Assessments and national test results show that more pupils are achieving the expected rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, a significant proportion of pupils fall short of their expected attainment levels.
- The school has improved the way in which it checks on how well pupils are progressing. Records show that many pupils make good progress during the year where good teaching has been successful in making up for previous slower progress.
- Pupils are improving more rapidly in reading and mathematics than in writing, although in some mathematics lessons pupils do not use the most efficient methods of mental or written calculation when solving problems. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in writing but further work is needed. Punctuation and handwriting skills are getting better and pupils are taking a greater pride in their work but weak spelling impedes their progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who are eligible for pupil premium money, progress as well as other pupils throughout the school in all subjects. This has been achieved by funding additional support for individual pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The move from mixed-age classes to single-age classes, smaller class sizes and setting pupils in some subjects is also making a big difference for these groups. Pupils of Indian, Pakistani and other ethnic heritages make the same progress as their classmates.
- Teachers and support staff provide good support for pupils who join the school during the year and are in the early stages of learning English. The use of learning partners and targeted one-to-one support to engage these pupils in conversation in lessons. This enables them to settle into school and mix in with other pupils quickly and achieve well.
- Pupils develop appropriate reading skills. This is getting better because pupils are being taught letters and sounds (phonics) consistently well in Key Stage 1. Nevertheless, achievement is not yet good because there remains too much variation in the pace of learning across classes and between year groups, reflecting inconsistencies in the teaching.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Improving the quality of teaching is a high priority in the school. Teaching has improved a lot since the last inspection. Almost half the teachers have been appointed since April 2012.
 - Individual teachers are supported by experts from the local authority, by the senior staff in the school, or by sharing their own good practice with other teachers. Poor-quality teaching is not tolerated and as a result teaching is getting better all the time. Despite this, there is not enough good teaching to make sure pupils consistently make good progress.
 - In some classes teachers use questions well. They get pupils to explain their answers fully. This helps pupils to develop a good understanding of their work. However, in other classes too many questions are simple and can be answered by one word. Pupils do not have to explain why or how they have worked out their answers, and as a result this does not help them with their understanding.
 - Lessons are not always planned well enough to meet the needs of the different pupils in the class, particularly those who are more able. Sometimes, pupils spend too long completing tasks they can do easily and are not provided with more demanding work to extend their learning. For example, once pupils have learnt a strategy to carry out a calculation in mathematics, they are not challenged to apply this strategy to solve real-life problems.
 - Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are not always high enough. Pupils sometimes spend too long sitting and listening to the teacher before being allowed to start their work. Teachers do not consistently check learning during lessons. Consequently, some pupils complete only small amounts of work because they get stuck. More-able pupils sometimes complete tasks quickly, but are not given more difficult work to extend their learning.
 - All teachers set learning targets for pupils to aim for. These are pitched at different levels of ability but are not applied consistently by teachers or set high enough to stretch some pupils. Most teachers make sure pupils know what they should achieve during each lesson for their learning to be successful.
 - Teachers mark pupils' books regularly. Most work hard to make sure that marking tells each pupil how they are getting on and whether they have understood the work. More teachers are now writing comments in pupils' books to get them to respond and make improvements in their next piece of work, but this is inconsistent.
 - Pupils are increasing their ability to read on their own, and use good strategies when attempting unfamiliar or complex words and phrases. The teaching of reading and phonics, as well as the support provided for pupils who find reading difficult, is better. Pupils are now catching up to where they should be. Pupils spell words by the sound of the letters, but have not learned enough ways to spell more difficult words, for example those that have a silent letter. When faced with words they do not know or understand, pupils are not confident or clear about how they might find out the meaning, such as by using dictionaries.
 - Most pupils say that they enjoy school because lessons are usually fun and interesting. They enjoy the way in which they work on their topics, especially when they are able to go on educational visits. Year 5 pupils enjoyed visiting the job fair at the National Exhibition Centre to find out more about the world of work. They feel that teachers really care for them. In all classes the relationships between staff and pupils are good.
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The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons has improved a lot over the last year. Pupils say that because lessons are more interesting, school is more fun. Good behaviour is rewarded and pupils move up a colour-zone board when they behave well. They are eager to participate in the prize draw when they reach the gold zone. Pupils want to learn, so they concentrate hard and behave well.
- Outside in the playground, pupils play well with each other and enjoy using the play equipment at lunchtime. There is little bullying in the school. Pupils say that they cannot remember the last time anyone got upset because they were being bullied. This is because adults quickly sort out any issues and get parents involved straight away. The only bullying that pupils could think of is occasional name calling when friends fall out.
- Pupils of all backgrounds get on well together. There have been no racial issues in the school. This is a view supported by parents and carers. Parents are also pleased about the way the school is helping them to support their child, such as by running reading workshops. These are helping them feel more confident about helping their child at home, especially when listening to them read.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe during assemblies and in personal, social and health education lessons. They have a good awareness of the risks associated with the use of the internet, and alcohol and drug abuse.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club are cared for well. They get off to a good start to the day. The introduction of a nurture group is a success story for the school and is a really effective way of spending the government funding. Some pupils have made huge progress with their behaviour and social skills. The teachers quickly spot which pupils need extra help to improve their behaviour. They work hard with individual pupils and their parents until their behaviour improves. Their improved behaviour helps them to make friends and make better progress with their school work.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and it is now close to national averages. The school has worked hard with parents and carers to tell them how important it is to get their children to school every day. It is still hampered by some parents who take holidays in term time. Also, a number of pupils arrive late and miss the start of their lessons. Pupils want to come to school more, because they know they are learning more now.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The executive headteacher is respected by parents and pupils and has done a good job to improve the school in such a short space of time. He is supported well by the head of school and other senior staff, who form a strong, committed and united team who all have specific jobs and are quickly making the changes necessary to move the school forward. Many are new to the school. They are still developing their role in checking on teaching and learning, and making sure that all teachers ensure pupils make good progress. Some need further training and support to help them in this part of their work.
- The federation with Grove Vale Primary is bringing many benefits. Staff are increasingly working closely together and sharing ideas and expertise across both schools. They are learning from each other.

- There have been many staff changes over the last year, but the executive headteacher and head of school have high expectations of all the teachers and have made sure that they get better. Precise and challenging targets have been set for all teachers. All new staff have settled quickly into the school. All the leaders help to make sure that the teaching and support staff are happy and well trained, and get help when they need it. All staff say they enjoy working at Holy Trinity.
 - Regular checks are helping the school to improve. The most important check, every half term, is that all pupils are making good progress with their work. If they are not, then individual pupils get extra help straight away. For example, small groups have been set up to help pupils catch up with their reading and mathematics work. The school's data show that these pupils are starting to catch up. This is good use of the extra government funding.
 - The school makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy learning about things from different cultures such as the Hindu festival of Diwali. Social development is strong during group work, where pupils help each other. Good spiritual activities are provided in assemblies. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and play well together. They go on residential trips where they can get to know themselves and each other better, and have visits from other people to help them with their work.
 - Because the pupils were so behind with their work, the number one priority for the school was to focus on improving English and mathematics. Teachers are increasingly linking this work into the topics and themes that pupils are studying. For example, Year 5 pupils were using their literacy skills to create an advertisement for a Victorian invention. One group had great fun thinking how they might persuade someone to buy a 'penny farthing' bicycle.
 - Pupils study an appropriate range of subjects. Teachers are planning more interesting activities for pupils to enjoy. Year 3 pupils have found their work on the Egyptians exciting, especially when describing in gruesome detail how a body was mummified! Pupils have suitable opportunities to learn about the lives of people in other parts of the United Kingdom and around the world.
 - Parents and carers are really pleased about the improvements in the school. 'It is much better now,' said one parent. Parents feel much better informed about what is happening in school and say that their children are safe and happy. The parents who spoke to an inspector felt their child was making good progress. They also commented that children are now getting regular homework and said how helpful this is.
 - The local authority has provided good support for the school and has checked each term that it is making progress. As time has gone on and as the school has improved, the amount of supported provided by the local authority has reduced. The executive headteacher and senior staff have shown that they can improve the school with less outside support.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is committed to supporting the executive headteacher and head of school to continue to improve the Holy Trinity. Governors ask senior leaders challenging questions and have made sure that the extra pupil premium money is spent well on supporting pupils who need extra help. They know where teaching is strong and where it requires improvement. They make sure that the right teachers are rewarded for their hard work, based on the impact they have on helping pupils learn. They also make sure that the school is a safe place for the pupils and that it meets government requirements to safeguard them. They keep a close check on the school's finances and have spent some spare money wisely on resources such as more staff, computers and better storage. Because the governing body is newly formed and
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many governors are not yet familiar with the school, they are finding out more about how well pupils perform compared to those in other schools and about school life in a variety of ways. Further training is planned for those new to their role.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103986
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	399641

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Brown
Headteacher	Andy Leivers (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2011
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