

The Holy Trinity Church of England Secondary School

Buckswood Drive, Gossops Green, Crawley, RH11 8JE

Inspection dates 29–30 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Standards of achievement at the end of Key Stage 4 are too variable.
- In some lessons, particularly in Key Stage 3, students do not make enough progress.
- Teachers do not always give students clear feedback about how well they are doing in lessons and what their next steps are for improving their subject skills.
- Lesson activities do not always enable students to move up to a higher level of learning when they are ready.
- The pace of some lessons is too slow.
- In a few lessons, girls are not encouraged to participate as much as the boys.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has galvanised leadership across the school. Leadership teams and governors are very focused on improving teaching and achievement, which are strengthening rapidly.
- Staff morale is buoyant. Everyone knows what is expected of them. There are good opportunities for training, coaching and courses to develop teaching and management skills.
- It is a happy, caring place where students behave well, feel safe and enjoy making a positive difference to their community.
- The sixth form is good and students' achievement is rising.
- Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a real strength.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 42 lessons. Some observations were joint visits with a member of the leadership team. Inspectors attended an assembly and observed and talked with students at break and lunch times.
- The inspection team held meetings with staff, students, six members of the school's governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 127 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and discussed parents' involvement in school life with senior leaders. They also analysed 41 staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team scrutinised examination results for 2012 and previous years, assessment records, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body and the school's improvement plans and evaluations.

Inspection team

Jacqueline White, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Grace Marriott	Additional inspector
Jason Wye	Additional inspector
Veronica Young	Additional inspector
Roger Garrett	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity is a larger-than-average secondary school with a sixth form. There are considerably more boys than girls in the school.
- The school holds specialisms in science and mathematics.
- The majority of students are White British but the number from minority ethnic backgrounds has grown and is above the national average.
- English is an additional language for a higher-than-average number of students.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents serving in the armed forces and for students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below that found nationally. The number of those supported through school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school is above the current floor standards, the minimum standards set by the government for students' attainment and progress.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 are educated off site at Mid Sussex College.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2012 following the retirement of the former headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, especially in Key Stage 3, to at least good with more outstanding by ensuring:
 - all teachers provide feedback to students in lessons and in their marking about how much progress they have made and what the next steps are for improving their subject skills
 - work is closely matched to the different ability levels of students and includes a range of learning activities that enable every student to move to a higher level of learning as they are ready
 - all lessons are delivered at an appropriate pace
 - girls are encouraged to participate as much as the boys
 - that teaching assistants are consistently utilised to best effect to have the best possible impact on student achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school with average standards compared to those found nationally. They make uneven progress across and within subjects because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In some subjects, notably English, mathematics and science, progress is more consistent and usually good.
- Progress is weakest in Key Stage 3. This means that too many students are behind when they start Key Stage 4. Overall, the standards reached at the end of Year 11 are average.
- Standards are rising in the sixth form. Most students make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of students achieving higher grades at A level has increased considerably and compares favourably with the national average. Sixth formers are very positive about the academic guidance that they receive.
- Students' progress is monitored carefully, including that of students who attend courses at the local college. The school ensures these students receive good support and do well. Students from ethnic minority groups and those for whom English is an additional language also achieve well. Students who are supported by the pupil premium benefit from the extra funding and make good progress. Their attainment and average points scores are rising and becoming increasingly closer to those of their classmates.
- There has been some evidence that girls' achievement has been below the average for girls nationally. Reliable, more recent, data show that the gap has been closed.
- The school knows where there is underachievement. Programmes to help students catch up are now better targeted and precisely focused. However, there has not been time to fully show the impact of these improvements in examination results. The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.
- Students have good opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. Their reading and speaking are developed well not only through subjects but through extra-curricular activities.
- Sensitive, tailored support for students with special educational needs ensures their full involvement in school life, their good progress and their enjoyment of learning.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are examples of good and outstanding teaching in many subjects but there is much variation in practice. In particular, too much teaching and learning at Key Stage 3 requires improvement.
- In the least effective lessons, teachers often expect all students to complete the same work in the same amount of time. This frustrates the most able and the less able students. Students do not receive feedback about how well they are doing and do not move to a higher level of learning when they are ready.
- There are a few lessons where boys are over-dominant and girls are allowed by teachers to be passive.
- Where teaching is good or better, a range of well-designed resources support learning that is well paced. The tasks set are imaginative, varied and appropriately demanding. There are high levels of participation, with all groups of students contributing equally. Students have good opportunities to work together and are able to check their own and others' progress against clear measures of success. Teachers question expertly to probe and accelerate understanding and help students think deeply and express complex ideas.
- Most teachers mark work regularly but their comments do not always clarify what students need to do next to improve their subject skills. The school's marking policy has been reviewed and sets out sound principles, but these are not being consistently followed by all staff.

- Some teaching assistants are highly skilled in working with individuals and groups of students who have particular needs in lessons. They are well informed about students' strengths and weaknesses and use effective strategies to develop skills and understanding. This successful practice is not uniform across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Parents, staff and students agree with this. Students are typically courteous, friendly and good humoured. Scrutiny of the school's records shows that behaviour over time is good too. For example, there are very few exclusions.
- Students' well-being is central to the school's ethos and most thrive in its very caring and supportive environment. Students' strong sense of belonging is reflected in their high attendance.
- Students arrive on time to school. Occasionally, they are late to lessons because they move to different classrooms which are sometimes quite a distance apart.
- The school has a clear policy for managing behaviour, which includes rewards. Ironically, because students are so cooperative and the atmosphere is very relaxed, inconsistencies sometimes creep into the way staff implement the policy.
- Students say they feel very safe in school and this is echoed by parents. The school makes sure that students know how to keep themselves safe inside and outside of school.
- Relationships throughout the school are positive. Students from all backgrounds get on well together. They know about different forms of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying. They know what to do if they witness it and have great confidence in staff to deal with any discrimination or unfairness in school.
- Students enjoy the school's varied extra-curricular programme. There is a very wide range of sports and impressive musical and drama productions.
- Students are keen to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. They welcome responsibility and undertake duties around the school diligently. They participate in, and often lead, the many fund-raising events with enthusiasm. Sixth formers are wonderful ambassadors for the school and excellent role models for younger students.
- There are many opportunities for students to reflect on their place within the global community and how as individuals they can help to make the world a better place. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, appreciate that people are different and know the value of tolerance and compassion.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear and uncompromising ambition for all students to achieve their best academically and personally. In a relatively short period of time he has united students, staff and parents in the common objective of improving the school as quickly as possible. The local authority is providing effective support as required.
- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Key management systems have been reviewed and refocused successfully on raising achievement. For example, the progress of different groups of students is now monitored closely and students receive additional help when they need it.
- Reliable information about students' achievement underpins senior leaders' accurate evaluation of how well the school is meeting its challenging targets for improvement.
- The headteacher has been instrumental in strengthening leadership at all levels. Senior leaders are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities and they work well as a team. Heads of subjects are demonstrating increased capacity to lead learning. The new head of the sixth form has strengthened monitoring, which has reduced variation in students' performance.
- Regular observation of teaching and straightforward advice to teachers about how to improve

their work alongside effective coaching and training are improving teaching rapidly. Consequently, the unevenness in students' progress across and within subjects is being reduced systematically.

- Teachers' performance is monitored closely and the headteacher and governors use information from lesson observations, as well as data about students' progress, to decide whether teachers should be paid more. Staff have responded positively to clear direction from their line managers and heightened accountability.
- The curriculum meets the needs of students and promotes their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development very well. Students achieve well in the specialist subjects of mathematics and science. Students who attended courses off site make good progress because of good provision and support.
- All safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are well trained and fully aware of child-protection and risk-assessment issues.
- Parents express confidence in the leadership of the school and almost all those who responded to the online questionnaire, 'Parent View', would recommend the school to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are hardworking, highly supportive of the school and attend appropriate training to extend their skills and knowledge. The headteacher works closely with them and ensures they are well informed about staffing issues, performance management and the quality of teaching. Governors have a good awareness of the school's performance and how this compares with schools nationally. They are equally knowledgeable about the performance of different groups of students. Governors manage the school's finances astutely and evaluate how the use of resources impacts on students' achievement. For example, they make sure pupil premium funding supports the eligible students and secures their good progress. Governors are ambitious and impatient for the school's improvement. They reflect on their own performance and, with the appointment of a new headteacher, they have taken the opportunity to restructure their committees so they are in a better position to hold senior leaders to account and accelerate the school's improvement.

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	126098
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	402381

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1303
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Hillman
Headteacher	Paul Kennedy
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 September 2009
Telephone number	01293 423690
Fax number	01293 423698
Email address	office@holytrinity.w-sussex.sch.uk

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