

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Longlands Close, Crossbrook Street, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire, EN8 8LU

Inspection dates 14–15 February 2013

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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Standards in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 are not high enough.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have declined slightly over the last two years.
- Pupils make adequate gains in learning in lessons and over time. Teaching does not ensure that pupils make good progress in all year groups.
- Pupils' work is not consistently marked well enough, especially in mathematics.
- Middle leaders and members of the governing body have yet to fully develop their skills in checking the work of the school and in helping it to move forward at a rapid pace.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are beginning to make quicker progress because the proportion of good teaching is increasing steadily.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved significantly.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils known to be entitled to free school meals make slightly better progress than average.
- Pupils' behave well and they have a good understanding of personal safety.
- Senior leaders have accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and are successfully bringing about improvements, particularly in teaching and the quality of learning for the youngest children. Attainment is rising in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers and members of the governing body are improving their skills by regularly seeking and acting on external advice.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other shorter visits to lessons. They heard some pupils read in Years 2 and 6.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils’ attainment and progress; procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) in making their judgements and seven questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Bailey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is broadly similar in size to the average primary school.
- The large majority of the pupils are White British. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language, and no pupil is currently at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are slightly higher than average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or social difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or whose families are in the armed forces) is average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision off-site.
- The school runs a breakfast club during term time.
- Religious education is inspected by the diocese.
- The on-site privately run pre-school group is inspected separately because it is not managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - making better use of assessment information to plan work that is properly matched to pupils' capabilities
 - ensuring that pupils of different abilities know exactly what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson.
- Raise standards and quicken pupils' progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to write at length and in a range of subjects
 - ensuring pupils in Key Stage 2 develop the skills of working independently, undertaking mathematical investigations and solve mathematical problems
 - making certain that pupils know their literacy and numeracy targets and that marking consistently offers pupils clear advice on how to improve their work, particularly in mathematics.
- Improve the leadership of the school by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders to check effectively the quality of teaching and how well pupils' learn
 - consolidating the recent improvements in governance to drive improvement quickly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children join the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding similar to those expected for their age. They settle quickly into a well organised routine. Following significant changes to the way they are taught and the more effective use of the outdoor area, their progress is starting to accelerate. By the end of the Reception most children are meeting the expected level of development in all areas of learning.
- Standards in mathematics, at the end of Year 6, have declined slightly since the last inspection. In 2012 they were below average. Too few pupils gained the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in the national tests. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are now beginning to make better progress and standards in mathematics are rising. However, too few opportunities for pupils to work independently, to undertake mathematical investigations and to solve problems are provided.
- Year 6 standards in reading and writing are average. Pupils tend to make better progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 because of the school's focus on improving pupils' literacy skills and the support many pupils get from home in practising their reading skills.
- In Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. However, standards in writing lag behind those in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects and write at length. Their presentation, although improving, is often untidy.
- Throughout the school, most pupils read at the levels expected for their age. Younger pupils have a reasonable understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) when tackling new words. The large majority of older pupils read with fluency and understanding. They are able to use a number of strategies including phonics, context clues and the use of a dictionary when they encounter unfamiliar words. Several talk confidently about their favourite authors and relate what they are saying to the displays in the entrance hall which celebrate different authors and books.
- The progress of the few pupils supported by the pupil premium is more rapid. They are making slightly better gains in learning than their classmates. This is because effective checks are made to see how well they are doing and additional support is provided to move learning on when necessary. Year 6 results in 2012, show that the progress made by pupils in this group was above the national average for pupils eligible for free school meals and, the standards they reached were above those of similar pupils. The outcomes for free school meals pupils were similar to the national average for all pupils.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is also slightly faster than the national average. They are well supported by teaching assistants who make sure that they are fully included in activities, understand the tasks and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress broadly similar to their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress over time.

- Teachers do not consistently make best use of assessment information to plan lessons and to pitch the work at the right levels for all pupils. Although teachers routinely tell the pupils what they are going to be doing in lesson, they do not make it clear what they are expected to learn. Pupils of different abilities are not always given different goals to achieve by the end of the lesson. Some teachers do not make sure that pupils know their literacy and numeracy targets.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved but weaknesses remain. In some classes individuals are offered good guidance to improve their written work. However, there are very few examples of pupils being consistently told what they need to do to improve their work in mathematics. There are very few examples of teachers' revisiting earlier marking to make sure that pupils have responded to the advice given.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection but remains variable. Teachers have responded to senior leaders efforts and have worked closely with the local authority and others to improve their teaching skills. There is greater proportion of good teaching. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated.
- Where teaching is good, the lessons are well planned and proceed at a quick pace. The work is pitched at the right level across the full range of ability represented in the class. Pupils' interest is captured and sustained. They respond enthusiastically to the challenges that they are set.
- In effective lessons, the teachers build on earlier learning. Initial and follow-on questions are used well to probe the pupils' thinking to consolidate and extend learning. Effective use is made of small group work where pupils are encouraged to share their ideas with each other and with the adults. Part-way through and, at the end of lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their work and to think about how it could be improved.
- Teachers are helping pupils to develop their reading skills through the systematic teaching of phonics and encouraging them to read in school and at home. They act as good role models and use a number of ways to encourage good behaviour. The teachers' interaction with the pupils and the good relationships promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They feel safe and secure in school and are confident that any concerns that they might have will be tackled quickly and fairly. Pupils are aware of the need for caution when using the internet. The posters designed by Year 6 pupils clearly demonstrate that they have a wide understanding of a range of potential electrical hazards.
- Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the school. They know about different types of bullying, including physical abuse, name-calling and cyber-bullying. There have been no reported incidents of racism, bullying or inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils are courteous and polite to visitors and show respect for each other. Pupils respond quickly to instructions from their teachers and understand the school's behaviour policy, which is applied consistently.
- Pupils are eager to offer their help whenever possible. They are eager to learn and willingly take on responsibilities around the school, for example, as members of the school council. Several are looking forward to the spring when they can take responsibility for growing produce in the

school garden.

- Pupils' attendance is consistently above average.
- The breakfast club offers pupils a calm start to the school day where they play different games and have a healthy snack. The club helps successfully develop pupils' social skills and fosters a positive attitude to school. Provision helps improve attendance.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Middle leaders are developing their roles but have not yet made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and ensuring that pupils consistently make good progress in English and mathematics in all years.
- The senior leadership team has made some improvements since the last inspection. For example, activities for the youngest children are better and their progress has accelerated as a result. Teaching has improved to good in some years, but not all. There is a clear plan for school development based on a secure evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Staff are now called to account for the progress made by pupils in their class and action is taken if individuals' progress slows.
- The headteacher regularly observes lessons and offers helpful suggestions as to how teachers can improve their performance. Action is being taken to further improve teaching through whole-school training and links with the local authority. The ongoing visits to lessons and the pupil progress data provides the headteacher with the evidence to advise the governing body if individual teachers should be paid more.
- The curriculum is suitably structured to ensure all National Curriculum subjects are taught. Staff work together to plan topics or themes that combine subjects and to avoid repetition. However, opportunities to promote pupils' mathematical skills are sometimes missed. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Equality of opportunity is suitably promoted and attainment gaps are narrowing, particularly for those eligible for free school meals. Discriminatory practices are not tolerated.
- The local authority has provided adequate support to the school over the last few years. Advice has been offered on improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, addressing weaknesses in teaching and supporting the development of the governing body.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governance of the school has improved significantly, although some governors have yet to consolidate their skills in checking the work of the school and in regularly asking the leadership team searching questions to ensure leaders are fully held to account for school outcomes. Following recent training, members of the governing body have a much better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They know what to look for when they visit the school and the type of questions to ask senior and middle leaders. They are able to compare the school's outcomes with national and local data and are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Following the recent review of the school's appraisal policy, governors have an adequate overview of the quality of teaching and understand how targets are set for teachers and that good teaching is rewarded. The school's finances are monitored well. The governing body makes sure that pupil premium funding is being spent appropriately, for example, on additional support staff for one-to-one teaching, additional equipment and buying in external support and that it is leading to improved outcomes for these pupils.

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	117428
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	405705

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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mother Jane Dicker
Headteacher	Sarah Chaloner
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2011
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