

Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Capstan Street, Blackley, Manchester, Lancashire, M9 4DU

Inspection dates 10–11 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Holy Trinity is a school where pupils are nurtured, guided and supported well. It offers a rounded education rooted firmly in the individual needs of each child.
- The skilled and determined leadership from the headteacher has helped develop a culture where staff and governors are constantly striving to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Achievement of pupils is improving. From starting points that are often low, pupils make good progress to achieve broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have taken the necessary action to improve the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) and, as a result, standards are rising in this area.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Their learning is checked well to ensure that they are making good progress in all areas.
- Most teaching is centred carefully on the needs of each pupil and supports those children who are experiencing difficulties with their learning especially well.
- Attendance at school is good and is above the average nationally. It typifies the strong emphasis placed by school leaders on working with parents.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils show respect and courtesy to staff and each other and, as a result, the school is a harmonious community.
- The headteacher is well supported by governors who are skilled and very involved in the life of the school. Together, they show very good capacity to improve the school as it seeks to expand.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding because at times it fails to meet the needs of those pupils who are the most able.
- Some teaching does not address the handwriting and presentation of pupils with enough rigour.
- The role of middle leaders is not fully developed. Middle leaders do not always check that their work has a beneficial impact on standards of attainment or on the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to gain a view of the quality of teaching over time. This included observations of lessons, and part-lessons and of other activities throughout the school. Four lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and another jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- Two discussions were held with groups of pupils, and inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Pupils' work was looked at in lessons and other more detailed scrutiny of pupils' work was completed.
- Several meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Two separate meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, and a meeting and telephone call took place between the lead inspector and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a variety of parents at the school site, and also noted the results of a small number of responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.
- A total of 34 staff questionnaires were taken into account.
- A variety of documents was analysed, including the school's own self-evaluation, school improvement plan, performance management documentation, data about the achievement of pupils, reports written by advisers and consultants, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.

Inspection team

Jeremy Barnes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Shutt

Additional Inspector

Kevin Boyle

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity is an average-sized primary school with one class per year group except in Reception where there are two classes.
- Fifty seven per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups which is approximately double the national average, and 32% speak English as an additional language, which is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who receive the pupil premium funding, is half of all pupils which is well above the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or those who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is a little below average.
- In 2014, the school met the government's current floor targets, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils begin school full time in Nursery and the vast majority move into the Reception classes when full-time education begins.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a change of leadership. A new headteacher took up post in September 2012.
- The school is due to expand considerably during 2015, opening a further eight classes and moving to two classes per year group throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils achieve higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring the most able pupils are always challenged sufficiently by teachers providing them with work that is hard enough to match their needs
 - staff insisting on and modelling higher standards of handwriting and presentation.
- Ensure middle leaders at the school become more involved in improving teaching and checking on standards, especially for those pupils who are the most able.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear idea of how successful Holy Trinity can be and, since his appointment in 2012, has challenged all aspects of the school to improve. Staff, governors and parents are wholly satisfied with the direction and culture in the school which is one of aspiration and ambition.
- In partnership with governors, staff, local authority advisers and other members of the school community, the headteacher has conducted honest and rigorous evaluations of school performance and taken the necessary steps to arrest a dip in standards in 2013. For example, the teaching of phonics was identified as an area for improvement, and a combination of good training for staff and improved organisation of resources has meant that current progress in this area is improving rapidly.
- The headteacher models the school's mission, 'Together we make a difference' very well, by maintaining a high level of communication with the school community, seeking to involve a range of staff, pupils, parents and governors in improvement work. As the school begins its move to doubling in size, even the children are involved in the planning of the new buildings such as helping to design the pupil toilets. Partnerships are actively pursued in an effort to give pupils a balanced education with added depth.
- There is an overwhelming drive to improve teaching, with regular checks on teaching being matched by good support and guidance over time. There is an increasing rigour to the appraisal of teacher performance which is matched to the Teachers' Standards. Pay awards are linked directly to this performance.
- Because leaders know the pupils very well, they are quick to ensure support and guidance are given should pupils fall behind or encounter any other difficulties in their learning. This focus on the individual members of the school community is a strong feature and indeed both governors and pupils talk of the school as 'one close family'.
- Leaders have worked with the local school-centred initial teacher training provider to train students who have subsequently been appointed as teachers at the school. This has had a positive impact on pupil progress and the quality of teaching. Leaders therefore demonstrate a good capacity to develop staff as the school seeks to expand and recruit further teachers.
- Leaders have ensured that the pupil premium fund has been used to bring about recognisable improvements for the pupils entitled to it. For example, the improvement in attendance for this group of pupils since 2013 has been such that it is now above the national average for all children.
- Similarly, sports funding has been spent to assist the development of staff as well as provide extra coaching for the pupils. This has had a direct impact on the quality of lessons which are skilfully and confidently delivered.
- The school is characterised by regular discussions between staff over the quality of teaching and where it can improve. Any whole-school initiatives are adopted well and consistently by all staff across the school. For example, a marking policy introduced in 2013 is very clearly understood by pupils and used by all staff throughout the school.
- Staff are satisfied with the level of support they receive. The school has used several consultants to support the improvement process, but increasingly middle leaders are taking on this role and spreading good practice. This is, however, in its early days of development and these leaders do not have the extra skills necessary to lead teaching and learning to full capacity.
- The curriculum is well planned and couples a focus on basic skills such as spelling and punctuation, with an enquiry-based approach which pervades many subjects. The vision of the headteacher is to 'release creativity' and a new school television channel is one such way that the school is promoting the artistic achievements of pupils.
- There is a range of activities both at the beginning and at the end of the school day which seeks to give pupils extra support and enrichment. A feature of the school's commitment is the involvement of parents, volunteers and governors in these activities, many of which are targeted at individual pupils for specific learning support. For example, a group of solicitors visit each week to read with pupils, an initiative which is typical of the desire of leaders to open the school up to its community, for the benefit of pupils.
- Leaders have been actively pursuing an option to expand the school and oversee the construction of a large extension. This shows the ambition and aspiration of the school. Representatives of the local authority are fully supportive of this, and have assisted governors and staff to good effect.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding its pupils meet statutory requirements and pupils are looked after well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A year ago, governors took the decision themselves to call for an external review into their governance

of the school as a way of evaluating their impact. While the review was positive, they have nevertheless shown a desire to improve by ensuring that the skills on the governing body are more varied and that membership reflects the diverse nature of the school community.

- They challenge the headteacher and hold leaders to account. Staff are accustomed to attending meetings and reporting on a range of school matters. Governors embrace the challenge and shared desire to improve, because as more than one reported, 'we all have the children's best interests at heart.'
- Governors have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They recognised the gap between disadvantaged children and other children in the school, and have overseen detailed plans to focus money in order to narrow this gap.
- A key feature of the school's governance is the willingness of governors to spend time regularly with pupils and staff, often through weekly attendance at clubs, assemblies and activities. Staff and governors have a strong commitment to equal opportunities, taking care to ensure each individual is supported and included. Leaders do not tolerate any form of discrimination and foster excellent relationships with the local community and beyond. As a result, the school is successful in preparing its pupils to contribute to life in modern Britain.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Parents agree and are very satisfied with the school's care and support.
- The headteacher and staff robustly analyse behaviour over time and respond promptly to any developing situations.
- There is a courtesy and respect shown by pupils which stems from the very good modelling by staff.
- The diverse nature of the school community is celebrated regularly. Special cultural days and the integration of different nationalities into the 'learning challenges' all assist to develop positive attitudes. Governors and staff are rightly proud of the individual nature of support and pastoral care.
- In lessons, behaviour is generally good as pupils respectfully listen to staff and collaborate well. On occasions, pupils lose focus and lack the resilience to stay on-task. Time can be lost as a result.
- The presence of pupil groups such as the 'urban crew' assists pupils to have a good understanding of their responsibility to their community. As a result, pupils treat the school and the environment with respect.
- The recent appointment of a family support worker has increased the opportunities for staff to visit families at home. This, for example, ensures that children are ready to start school and quickly make progress. For example, Nursery children were observed staying to eat their lunch in the school hall and here they demonstrated a good level of independence for their age.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- There is a culture throughout the school of shared accountability and as a result, staff and governors take responsibility for checking regularly on the welfare of pupils. Weekly meetings involving the named safeguarding governor are typical of the high priority placed on the children's safety. The headteacher is active within the local community, developing strong partnerships with agencies so that knowledge can be shared and the correct support can be organised for pupils, should it be needed.
- Pupils report feeling safe at school and parents agree. Any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with sensitively and promptly by staff. Pupils can discuss the importance of following safety procedures when using the internet, and have confidence in adults to support them if they were to have any problem or worry.
- Attendance is a significant strength of the school, and is consistently above the national average, exemplifying the focus on working with parents and families and the enjoyment pupils have of school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is now constantly improving. Led confidently by the headteacher and with good support from key staff, there is an open culture of evaluation and a desire to improve. This has resulted in improvements to teaching over time, increased consistency in the methods used in the classroom, and very good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is characterised by effective use of visual equipment and high expectations

of what pupils can do. In Year 1, pupils were being challenged to use repeated addition to learn how to multiply and they responded with enthusiasm.

- There has been some useful professional development of teaching assistants, for example in teaching phonics, where they teach groups of pupils confidently and with good subject knowledge. They work well as a team to ensure that pupils from a range of abilities are adequately supported.
- Previous failings in the teaching of phonics have been rectified and so the quality of teaching of reading has improved and is now good. There are now regular opportunities for younger pupils to read to a variety of adults and all pupils are given regular chances to discuss meaning or characterisation in what they are reading. Classrooms are full of reading prompts and there is a range of good books for pupils to choose from.
- The school has developed manageable systems of assessment which help teachers and pupils make the next steps in their learning. Pupils have a good knowledge of the marking policy and this is applied consistently throughout the school.
- Current work in books shows how pupils are improving their writing skills quickly because of good support and guidance. For example, pupils could explain how they had developed a 'cold' piece of writing, which was underdeveloped and contained several errors, into a 'hot' piece of writing.
- The teaching of communication skills is a strength. Year 6 pupils were observed reading their compositions out loud to a hushed audience, showing good diction and expression in their reading. Many of these pupils, whose first language is not English, have developed their English language skills from a low base and are now reaching at least average standards.
- The teaching of phonics is now good, with pupils carefully grouped by ability to ensure quick progress through sounds and vocabulary. In a Year 2 phonics group outside, pupils were using their recently practised phonic knowledge to write in chalk, correctly spelling sentences such as, 'I love the stars in the night'. Others were excitedly engaged in phonic games.
- The school has been successful in teaching accurate punctuation and grammar, but standards of handwriting and presentation are not as well taught or well modelled by staff. As a result, there are inconsistencies in letter formation and accuracy across the school.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The current progress for pupils in the school is good and it is improving quickly.
- Standards of attainment in Key Stage 1 fell at the school during the period following the last inspection but recovered throughout 2014 to be broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Writing improved at the quickest rate. Proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels were less than national averages in all subjects.
- The proportion of pupils passing the Year 1 phonics check has historically been low when compared to national rates. However, in 2014 the picture improved significantly and this improvement is being maintained in both Year 1 and Year 2 so that current standards are very close to the national average.
- In Year 2, there have been significant changes to the nature of the class over recent months with a quarter of pupils new to the class since the beginning of the academic year, many who speak English as an additional language. Though their attainment in reading and writing is below average, the current progress of these pupils is good from their very low starting points.
- Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress from below average starting points, and leave Year 6 with knowledge and skills which are broadly similar to the national average. Pupils do particularly well in grammar, punctuation and spelling but until recently they have done less well in reading.
- Although most pupils make the progress expected of them in all subjects, some of the most able pupils do not make sufficient progress to reach the higher standards of which they are capable. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining these higher standards is below the national average in all subjects.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. They are supported especially well by skilled teaching assistants who provide a level of nurture and care which assists these pupils to grow in confidence and skills.
- In 2013 at the end of Key Stage 2, there was a large gap between the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils of their age in the school in all subjects. This gap was narrowed in 2014 but still remained significant at approximately four terms behind other pupils in their class and three terms behind all pupils nationally. However, current assessment information in the school and careful observations of the progress of this group of pupils confirms that this gap is narrowing at a faster rate this year in all subjects. This is because of an improvement in the way teachers and teaching assistants are supporting the pupils.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including a sizeable group from West African ethnicity, as well as other ethnic groups, progress well given their low starting points. Their progress is in line with other groups in the school and similar groups nationally. The individual support given to assist them when they arrive at the school is a strength of the school.
- Across the curriculum, pupils achieve well because activities are exciting and well planned. Whether engaged in scientific investigations or using their coding skills to make simple video games, pupils report being motivated and engrossed in their learning in other subjects. This is especially true in physical activities where good use of the sports funding provides pupils with regular activities which have increased participation and competition. In some subjects, the practise of basic skills is sometimes let down by poor presentation.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make a positive start to their education in an environment that is lively and busy. Children's learning is promoted well around the classroom through pupils' own display areas. Children are safe and cared for well. A stimulating outdoor area ensures that children are motivated and develop a sense of wonder at the world around them.
- A significant number of children start at school with little or no language and these communication difficulties are dealt with especially well by staff who model pronunciation precisely. As a result, children make good progress in language, reading and writing and leave Reception well prepared for Year 1.
- Staff have high expectations of children and communicate these well through lively and enjoyable activities. During the inspection, children responded well to a session on ordering numbers where careful questioning was a strength of teaching.
- The teaching in early years is good overall and notable for the excellent contribution that teaching assistants make to the progress children make. For example, wearing pirate hats and bandanas, they sustained the motivation of children by acting out adventure stories as the children hunted for missing numbers to complete a mathematical activity.
- A range of staff monitor the transition of children to school very carefully with a range of home visits, meetings in school, and sensitive support. Consequently, children settle and behave well and they gain good personal and social skills quickly after starting Nursery.
- The leadership in the early years is good. The school has overcome the temporary absence of the leader well because all staff take responsibility to share planning and assessment information, checking on children's development on a daily basis. They are vigilant in keeping children safe, and all key policies and procedures are practised and up to date.

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	105488
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	456147

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	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father P Stamp
Headteacher	Lee Hardy
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2012
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