

The Trinity Catholic Primary School

Titchfield Street, Vauxhall, Liverpool, Merseyside, L5 8UT

Inspection dates 19–20 March 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.

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has a firm and resolute determination to continually strive to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Actions are rigorous. As a result, there have been improvements in attendance and the quality of teaching, including the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make).
- Achievement is good. From starting points which are below, and often significantly below, those that are typical, pupils make good progress and reach standards which are broadly average.
- Staff provide a happy and welcoming environment where pupils feel safe and well cared for. Pupils are polite and courteous. They are well behaved and show good attitudes to learning in lessons.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain through the well-planned activities which raise pupils' awareness of democracy and tolerance.
- Provision for children in the early years is effective. They make good progress from their different starting points because careful attention is given to meeting their learning and social and emotional needs.
- Teaching is good. The effective management of teaching and learning has resulted in weaker teaching being addressed. As a result, teaching and achievement are improving.
- Staff morale is high; staff share the headteacher's vision and work well together for the benefit of the pupils and the wider community.
- Governors provide strong challenge and effective support; they have a good understanding of the school.
- Senior and middle leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve it further. They have managed the disruption to teaching staff well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not always ensure pupils are given work which is challenging enough, especially for the most able, so they reach the higher levels.
- Marking does not always promote effective learning.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to solve problems in mathematics and to practise their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons and also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from three different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body, the school improvement consultant and a representative of the archdiocese.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and took account of the 28 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered the 63 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mark Williams	Additional Inspector
Lorna Rushton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Trinity Catholic Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion that speak English as an additional language are smaller than national averages. A small proportion of pupils are from Traveller backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been significant changes to senior leadership in the last two years, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher and special needs coordinator in 2014.
- There have also been significant changes to teaching staff over the past two years. The school currently has six temporary teachers, two of whom are newly qualified teachers. They are covering for staff absence, some of which is planned absence.
- The early years comprises a Nursery which provides both full- and part-time sessions and full-time Reception classes.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for its pupils, which formed part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to further raise achievement by:
 - developing a more consistent approach to marking so that it always promotes effective learning
 - making sure that all lessons have an appropriate level of challenge, especially for the most able, so that more pupils reach the higher levels
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems and to write at length in subjects other than English.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a strong ambition for the school and is resolute and determined in her drive to further raise standards. She, along with the deputy headteacher, has successfully maintained good quality of teaching since the previous inspection despite a significant amount of staff disruption over the past two years. Achievement is rising and the school is well placed to move forward.
- The focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement has resulted in improvements in many aspects: for example, increases in the proportion reaching the expected level in the Year 1 phonics (letters and their sounds) check and in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the time they start Year 1.
- Pupils' progress is tracked and checked carefully. Any pupils in danger of underachieving are quickly identified and provision is put in place to support them. The pupil premium funding is very carefully allocated to pupils across the school to ensure that any gaps in attainment are closing between disadvantaged and other pupils. The funding is used effectively to provide additional staff to support small groups and individuals' academic and social, emotional and cultural development. School data show that this is effective and exemplify the school's ongoing commitment to providing equality of opportunity.
- School leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and where it needs to develop further. The school's action plans aptly identify the key priorities. Actions are prompt and realistic and lead to success in several areas, such as the improvement in the attendance of pupils.
- Senior and middle leaders jointly check the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. They share and discuss the information gathered and ensure that any specific needs, including training needs for staff, are identified and acted upon quickly. As a result, teaching is improving although a few issues remain to be addressed, especially ensuring staff follow guidance for marking.
- Senior leaders have provided support and challenge to improve the quality of teaching and have ensured that any previous weaknesses in teaching have been addressed. Teachers have targets linked to their performance and the achievement of pupils. Salary increases are awarded only when targets are achieved.
- Subject and middle leaders are effective. They have reviewed their current practice and the requirements of the new primary curriculum to ensure the curriculum is good. The introduction of themed weeks to support the development of skills in all subjects is developing the use of the new system of assessing pupils' performance across a range of subjects. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical and writing skills across other subjects.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They learn about the beliefs and customs of different cultures and faiths and the importance of respect for others. The school uses a wide range of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' understanding of this and to widen pupils' experiences in music and the arts, for example. This contributes to the strong development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.
- Pupils in Year 5 have formed their own political parties and spoke enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their developing manifestoes and slogans. The planned elections across the school will be the culmination of their work. This is developing well their understanding of democracy and the rule of law.
- Pupils spoke knowledgeably about the recent community week and the visitors who taught them about disability, other cultures and how it feels to be a victim of violence, for example. Leaders maintain a firm focus on fostering good relations and tackling discrimination within school, their local community and national context.
- The primary school sport funding is used effectively to provide specialist coaches who deliver lessons and also provide lunchtime activities. The impact is clearly seen in the increased pupil participation in physical activity. There has also been an increase in pupils' involvement in sporting competitions. Older pupils have been trained as play leaders, which is helping to further improve behaviour at lunchtime. Staff also benefit from training to support their development in teaching skills.
- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View and those who spoke to an inspector were positive about all aspects of the school, particularly the behaviour of pupils and how pupils are kept safe.
- The diocese has confidence in the school leadership, as does the local authority which provides light-touch support to this good school. Leaders, including governors, benefit from advice and training.
- Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effective. The recent safeguarding audit by the local authority was highly positive about the school's work in this area.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate and well-informed view of the school's performance. Individual governors take on specific responsibilities for different aspects of school life and check on the school's

effectiveness in these areas. As a result, they challenge effectively the headteacher and other leaders about how well the school is doing and check the success of the outcomes of actions taken.

Governors have undertaken further training to support their understanding of data analysis and have a clear view of the school's performance in comparison to that of schools nationally. They are very aware of the difference in achievement between groups in school and nationally, particularly those who are disadvantaged. Governors thoroughly analyse how additional funding is used to support these pupils and the impact it is having on their progress. Financial management is effective, including the management of the primary school sport funding.

Reports from school leaders and consultants, governors' own checks on pupils' work, learning walks and discussions with staff ensure governors are well aware of the quality of teaching. Governors show a good understanding of the procedures to check on the performance of teachers and how this links to pay progression, reviewing any recommendations for rewarding effective teaching and providing support in managing teaching that is not as effective as it should be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school; they are polite and courteous to each other and visitors. They conduct themselves well around the school, frequently holding doors open and showing good manners, including in the dining hall.
- Staff work tirelessly with pupils, parents and outside agencies to promote and improve attendance. As a result, attendance has improved and is now close to average. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent has also declined.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the day. Pupils access a range of activities (limbo dancing being a particular favourite) and can choose a healthy breakfast. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to mix and socialise with one another and the adults who look after them in the breakfast and after-school club.
- Pupils have very good relationships with staff which are built on mutual respect. Pupils behave well in lessons and enjoy their learning. Occasionally, when the tasks they are set do not meet their learning needs well enough, pupils' attention drifts and they lose concentration; this can slow their learning.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying; the school works at raising their awareness of disability and of different patterns of family life. Pupils say that bullying in school is not an issue and are confident that any issues would be dealt with swiftly and fairly by staff.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves free from danger and feel safe in school. They know how to keep safe on the internet and spoke positively about the recent session led by the local police on the potential dangers of cyber bullying.
- Pupils are made aware of the possible dangers outside of the school environment and how they can help keep themselves safe, for example through sessions on road safety. One group of pupils spoke enthusiastically about how they had used speed guns to measure the speed of local traffic with the police, which slowed down the passing traffic.
- Pupils take their different opportunities to take on responsibility seriously, including as members of the school council, play leaders and peer mediators. They are involved in looking at how they can play a role in further improving their school, including playtime provision.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils at The Trinity benefit from good teaching. Consequently, their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good and improving. The headteacher and senior leaders have managed the changes and disruption in staffing successfully to ensure teaching is good and previous weaker teaching has been addressed.
- Positive and warm relationships are a strong feature across the school, where adults know the pupils well as individuals and encourage them to develop their skills to become independent and confident learners.
- Teachers regularly check on how well pupils are doing in lessons, adjust tasks and provide pupils with effective feedback and support to enable them to make good progress. Questioning is used effectively to encourage pupils to explain their understanding to both the teacher and each other. Pupils work well

collaboratively and support one another in their learning, including those pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils who need extra help, such as those who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs, are given support to help them make good progress.
- Teachers plan lessons which interest pupils and are linked to different areas of their learning. Year 2 pupils were enrapt when their teacher became a journalist, reporting on their recent trip to Chester Zoo. Pupils became newspaper reporters themselves when undertaking their own writing.
- Teachers' focus on developing pupils' writing skills has increased with the introduction of punctuation, spelling and grammar sessions. Regular opportunities to write extended pieces in literacy lessons are improving pupils' writing outcomes. However, opportunities to practise and apply these skills in subjects other than English are not consistently well developed.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils enjoy mathematics. A variety of approaches encouraged the older pupils to apply their skills and knowledge to a shared problem, which they were delighted to solve in identifying the 'thief'. However, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities across all year groups for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and practise their skills.
- Reading is taught successfully. The consistent approach to teaching phonics in the early years and Key Stage 1 has led to improvements in the proportion of pupils passing the Year 1 check. In Key Stage 2, older pupils have regular sessions to develop their comprehension skills and some receive additional support that successfully improves their reading skills.
- Teaching is usually planned thoroughly. Teachers within the same year group plan together for the pupils, taking into account their different needs. However, there are occasions when the work set is not at the right level of challenge and is sometimes too easy. Consequently, the progress of some pupils, particularly the most able, is not as good as it could be.
- There are some good examples of marking in English and mathematics which ensure that effective learning is promoted. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes and subjects, which can slow some pupils' achievement.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge which are below, and for a large proportion, significantly below, those typical for their age. They make good progress; by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The successful introduction of a systematic programme for teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has resulted in a marked improvement in the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check. In 2014, this was just above the national average.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 have improved since the last inspection in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in 2014, the standards in writing were lower than the previous year. This was due to the high proportion of pupils in this cohort who had special educational needs (35%). Although they made good progress in writing from their low starting points, the standards they reached at the end of Year 2 were below average. The current data and inspection evidence show that the proportion of pupils expected to reach average and higher levels is improving.
- Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 were lower than the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics, though this was not unexpected. There were several reasons for this, including a third of the cohort who had additional learning needs. In addition, although pupils made good progress across Year 6, this was not rapid enough to make up for the result of some weaker teaching in the past. Consequently, although the majority of pupils made the progress expected of them over Key Stage 2, not enough pupils made better-than-expected progress, especially in mathematics.
- Current data and inspection evidence show that with more stability in teaching, the vast majority of pupils across the school make good progress over time. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are set to improve on the previous years.
- The results in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test at the end of Key Stage 2 improved because of the introduction of regular sessions to focus on these key skills. Pupils are beginning to use these skills in their writing, including in the focused weekly extended writing session.
- Mathematics standards are improving as a result of a whole-school focus on the teaching of specific skills, although some pupils struggle to apply their skills to solve problems. The teaching of skills in small mixed-age groups is ensuring that gaps in pupils' learning are being addressed. Regular checks on how well pupils are doing show improvements in pupils' achievement.

- Pupils read regularly and enjoy reading a range of different authors as they move through the school. Younger pupils use their phonics skills increasingly well to read and work out unfamiliar words. In the older year groups, pupils read with increased fluency and expression. They read for pleasure and interest, including using new technologies at school and home to enhance their enjoyment.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because the support they receive is planned carefully to meet their learning needs and enhances their social and emotional development. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support individuals and small groups.
- The small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those from Traveller backgrounds and the small proportion who speak English as an additional language, make good progress similar to their peers'. This is because of the support they receive in school and as a result of the effective work undertaken with outside agencies.
- Progress made by the most able pupils overall is good. However, work is not always set at a level which challenges them enough to make the best possible progress and reach the higher levels. Links with the local high school are providing these pupils with additional opportunities to further extend their skills and understanding.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 did less well than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. In writing, they were about three terms behind in reading and writing and four and a half terms behind in mathematics. When compared with other pupils in the school, disadvantaged pupils were approximately three terms behind in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A large proportion of pupils are disadvantaged and the pupil premium is used effectively to support their achievement. Inspection evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils make good progress across the school from their low (and often significantly low) starting points. This is closing the gaps between pupils who are disadvantaged and their classmates. Consequently, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving.

The early years provision

is good

- The majority of children start Nursery with levels of knowledge and skills which are below those typical for their age. For a high proportion, about 60% of the current intake, these are significantly below those typical for their age across most of the areas of learning. Children settle quickly because staff work closely together to assess children's needs and provide appropriate support. The provision of a dedicated speech and language therapist ensures that children receive appropriate and timely intervention to support their language development. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points. Over the last two years, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the time they start Year 1 has improved; in 2014, this was just below national. An increasing number of children are prepared for Key Stage 1 and staff ensure the needs of others are met as they move to Year 1.
- Teaching across both Nursery and Reception classes is consistently good. Communication between them is effective and ensures that there is a smooth transition between Nursery and Reception. Staff work well collaboratively and make effective use of the space both indoors and outdoors. The recently introduced 'mud kitchen' and 'ice chalet' provide children with opportunities to explore and experiment, but also to extend their vocabulary and language.
- Children are encouraged to develop their language skills and understanding of the wider world through well-planned topics which interest them. As a result of effective questioning, children in Reception develop their literacy skills of reading and writing well through recounting stories, using their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to write recognisable words, such as writing recipes.
- While shaping the dough to make gingerbread men, children in Nursery were encouraged to describe its texture and how they had made it. Other children were using equipment safely to make a dog bed using different materials, explaining why some were better than others for the task.
- Children work and play well together and their behaviour is good across both settings. They are taught how to keep safe. Visitors to school, such as the local police and road safety officers, support their developing understanding.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The leaders work together to identify the different needs of the children and ensure that parents are involved in supporting their children's learning through 'Ready for School' courses and 'Come and See' sessions.

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	134722
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	456182

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alf Westwell
Headteacher	Patricia Deus
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2011
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