

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Dartford

Chatsworth Road, Dartford, DA1 5AF

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not yet of the consistently high standard needed to secure good progress for all pupils. As a result, pupils' achievement requires improvement.
- Pupils are not always given the right level of challenge in lessons. Teachers' use of questioning does not consistently stretch pupils or deepen their understanding.
- Progress is uneven across the school. Pupils do not make consistently rapid progress in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve well enough. Although many are now starting to do better, some are still not achieving as well as their peers.
- In mathematics lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop different problem-solving skills.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently help pupils know how to improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, strongly supported by senior and middle leaders, provides a clear focus on improvement and, as a result, achievement is rising. Their impact is already evident in the outstanding provision in the early years. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors have a thorough knowledge of the work of the school and give strong support and challenge. They have taken rigorous actions to support the headteacher in moving the school forward.
- Pupils behave consistently well. They are kept safe and feel safe at school.
- Children in the early years provision have an excellent start to school. They make outstanding progress so that they are well equipped to enter Key Stage 1.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned well throughout the curriculum. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the world and make a strong contribution to the life of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons and parts of lessons, three of them jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ books and the school’s assessments in order to gather evidence of pupils’ progress and the quality of teachers’ feedback. They heard pupils in Years 2 and 5 read.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in all classes, held a formal meeting with a group of pupils and met informally with other pupils around school. They held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and other staff. They met with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account 43 staff questionnaires and one letter from a parent. The 20 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at a variety of documents. These included the school’s own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, the school development plan, behaviour records, attendance data and policies aimed at keeping pupils safe. Checks on pupils’ attainment and progress and details of the monitoring of teachers’ performance were also considered.

Inspection team

Jan Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity is an above-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of girls is below the national average.
- Children in Reception attend full time.
- Holy Trinity provides access to a Forest School curriculum. This is designed to develop confidence and creativity by teaching practical, outdoor skills.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is in line with the national figure. Pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is well above national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- There has been a significant number of staff changes since the previous inspection. Many leaders, including senior and subject leaders, are new to their positions.
- In 2014 the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in mathematics, reading and writing at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently at least good by ensuring that:
 - the work set by teachers provides the right level of challenge for all groups of pupils, building systematically upon what they already know, understand and can do
 - teachers' use of questioning consistently deepens pupils' understanding
 - teachers' marking of pupils' work consistently gives pupils helpful guidance on how to improve their work.
- Improve pupils' achievement, including those disadvantaged pupils supported by additional funding, so that it is good by:
 - increasing opportunities to develop a range of problem-solving skills in mathematics
 - providing more opportunities for all pupils to practise, apply and develop their reading and writing skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led the school effectively through a period of change. Her ambition and drive for school improvement have resulted in a developing culture of high expectations and aspirations. She is ably supported by a team of senior leaders. They share her passion for improving teaching skills across the school so that pupil achievement continues to improve.
- Senior leaders' rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and accurate checks of the school's work give all teachers and the governing body a clear understanding of the school's performance, including in early years. However, the improvements are not yet fully reflected in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching because actions are not yet fully embedded across the school.
- Leaders show a determination to ensure equal opportunities are available for all pupils. They have made significant changes to ensure all pupils are supported to achieve their potential. However, they have not yet been in post long enough to eradicate all the variations in the progress of pupils.
- Improvement planning is sharply focused on tackling identified weaknesses. This is evident in the restructuring of staff and the successful appointment of middle leaders to strengthen further the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics in particular.
- The leadership of teaching is good. The school places a high priority on improving teaching through good-quality training and robust, detailed monitoring. The school's systems for checking the impact of teaching through the analysis of pupils' performance are extremely sharp. Leaders know exactly the areas where the school performs well and the areas that need attention.
- Plans to tackle underperformance are robust and measurable. Teachers' performance is checked closely by school leaders, with staff having clear targets linked to their classroom practice.
- Leaders acknowledge that more needs to be done for teaching to be consistently good. Their effective monitoring and the headteacher's high expectations of staff have led to the eradication of all inadequate teaching, and significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning overall.
- The school is planning and refining the method of assessment linked to the new curriculum. Careful moderation, in partnership with other schools, is ensuring that teachers' assessments of how well pupils are progressing are accurate.
- Recently appointed middle leaders, including subject leaders, are enthusiastic about their areas of responsibility. They are making sure that changes to the curriculum and the school's assessment process are effectively implemented. They make good use of assessment information to identify priorities for improvement. They are beginning to drive through improvements that are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement.
- Funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to help support pupils to make progress alongside their peers. However, the school has yet to measure accurately the impact on attainment of various activities put in place and to ensure that support is effective. A range of support groups and activities ensures that pupils are included in the life of the school.
- The curriculum is broad and pupils are excited by the range of topics they study, particularly in the Forest School. There is a strong focus on using English and mathematical skills throughout the range of subjects. Pupils' studies are enriched by a variety of visits and visitors, music and theatre opportunities, events promoting reading and writing, and residential visits.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted. Pupils talk very sensibly about and understand the British values of tolerance and respect. They talk with respect about the range of cultures and faiths represented in the school and how they learn from each other. Pupils have a voice in developments in the school through the school council and are developing a good understanding of how democracy works. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for their future life in modern Britain.
- The primary sport funding is used well to improve the quality of teaching in physical education across the school and to increase the variety of sports offered. Led by the expertise of the school sports coach, the school teams have added to their success in a variety of different inter-school tournaments. School clubs promoting physical activity are numerous and very well attended.
- Safeguarding procedures are rigorous, so that pupils say they feel very safe in school and adults are fully aware of their responsibilities.
- Parents speak highly of the school. Parents who responded to Parent View were happy with the school and would recommend it to other families.
- Staff responses to the inspection questionnaire are overwhelmingly supportive of the new leadership team and fully endorse the changes made recently.
- The local authority has supported the school through recent turbulent times and continues to provide

strong support and challenge to the headteacher, leaders, staff and governors.

■ The governance of the school:

- The members of the newly restructured governing body have a range of skills that equip them to give excellent support to the school. They have been instrumental in driving school improvement forward and are passionate about the school.
- Governors have a clear grasp of the school's strengths and what still needs to improve to ensure national standards in attainment are met and exceeded. They have a good understanding of the data about pupils' achievement and are kept well informed by the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Governors are rigorous in ensuring that all policies, including safeguarding, are reviewed and fit for purpose. They know how the pupil premium funds are spent and challenge staff to ensure that the impact is seen in improved outcomes for eligible pupils.
- Governors understand that teachers are set targets to improve their practice. They know about the quality of teaching and understand how good performance is linked to pay progression and any weaknesses are tackled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are well mannered and very polite. They are proud of the school and contribute well to an orderly and safe environment.
- Pupils work with enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons. Most have very positive attitudes towards school and their own learning. They support each other well, for example when working with a partner or in a small group.
- Behaviour around school is good, and often exemplary. This is because adults are consistent in their expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves in school, and they model good behaviour. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Pupils say they feel well cared for and particularly appreciate the way adults welcome them to school with a smile and a 'high five' every morning when they arrive.
- Behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes is good because pupils get on well together. Older pupils support younger pupils well, for example helping with the Reception class sports day. Staff, parents and pupils agree that standards of behaviour are good.
- The school works well with families to improve attendance and punctuality. As a result, attendance is improving.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, but say that it is very rare in this school. They are confident in their teachers' ability to deal with any such incidents.
- Most parents and staff who completed the questionnaires consider that the children behave well at school and that any bullying is dealt with effectively.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Policies and procedures are rigorously implemented.
- Pupils feel very safe and are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are confident that they can talk to an adult they know if they have any concerns. They have a clear understanding of the risks that might be encountered when using the internet and know how to report any problems.
- There is a strong understanding among the staff of how they can help keep pupils safe.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching has not been consistently good enough over time to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Teaching, although improving, is not consistently good across the school as a whole.
- In some lessons pupils learn particularly well because teachers plan activities that capture their imagination and engage them in learning. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils were eager to plan and write a review of their own production for a newspaper.
- Marking is a strength in many classes, however, it is not consistently good. Some teachers mark pupils' written work and work in mathematics to a consistently high standard. They provide detailed comments

and guidance that help pupils to improve their work and extend their skills. Pupils say this advice is very useful and they respond to it in detail. The leadership team has identified this as an area which needs to become consistent across school, in line with school policy.

- In some classes teachers do not question pupils carefully enough to explore and deepen their understanding. As a result, many pupils are not challenged enough to produce work of a high standard.
- Teaching is not always well matched to pupils' needs. For example, in a Key Stage 2 class, the class were all using the same text which was too challenging for some pupils in the class. As a result, these pupils needed adult support to be able to access the learning and make progress.
- Teaching assistants and support adults in most classes are skilled at asking questions that allow pupils to think about their work and so extend their learning. They are well placed to support pupils throughout school.
- In some classes teachers do not give pupils the opportunity to build on the skills and knowledge they developed in previous years. As a result, some pupils are restricted in their learning and do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- The quality of the teaching of mathematics is too variable. Too often, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to apply their skills to solving different kinds of mathematical problems.
- As a result of pupils' poor attainment in reading in 2014, leaders rightly identified the need to improve the way it is taught. Reading has a higher profile in school than previously and pupils are responding well to the enthusiasm for reading shown by the staff. However, activities to promote reading in lessons and to develop further reading skills are not always challenging enough.
- Leaders have also been working to improve the teaching of writing. A wealth of opportunities to write independently in the early years mean pupils make an excellent start in developing good writing skills. However, although progress in writing across Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved greatly, it is still not consistently good.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. Pupils' progress is not strong enough to enable them to reach standards that they should achieve by the time they leave the school in Year 6. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 were below average.
- Standards in mathematics in 2014 were below average. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows there are pockets of good progress, but it is inconsistent across the school.
- Standards in writing have risen and are currently judged to be broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are now being given more opportunities to develop their writing skills and to plan and develop extended pieces of writing. However, pupils' progress in writing is not consistent across the school. Some classes make more progress than others.
- Standards in reading in 2014 were below average and pupils' progress across the school was inconsistent. Leaders' actions to improve pupils' progress in reading are beginning to make a difference. This includes developing pupils' comprehension skills.
- A drive to encourage pupils to read more and to use the library is starting to have an impact on pupils' enthusiasm to read. In some classes progress is good. Older pupils read a range of books and authors with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Nevertheless, pupils' progress in reading is not yet consistently good across the school.
- Phonics (linking letters and sounds) are taught very well, so that younger pupils are confident to try new words and are learning to read with fluency and expression. In 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in the Year 1 phonic check improved from previous years, although it was below the national average. Current assessments show that Year 1 pupils are on target to meet the national average in this summer's check.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and join school at different times of the year are helped to settle quickly so that they can make good progress. Staff use a range of strategies to help them acquire the necessary language and communication skills to help them learn well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to others in school. Support is now closely assessed to ensure pupils are given every opportunity to progress and that the impact of support on their learning is positive.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils requires improvement. Their attainment in 2014 Key Stage 2 statutory assessments indicated that they were one year behind other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics combined. Compared to their classmates, they were three terms behind in reading and two terms behind in writing. In mathematics they were four terms behind their classmates. Their progress

in reading, writing and mathematics was below that of other pupils nationally. School assessment information and progress seen in pupils' books show disadvantaged pupils generally now make expected progress in line with their peers overall. However, disadvantaged pupils make better progress in some classes than they do in others.

- The achievement of the most able pupils requires improvement. It is not consistently strong across year groups. More encouragingly, work seen in books and the school's current assessments show much improved attainment. This indicates that the proportion of most-able pupils in Years 2 and 6 is on target to reach the higher levels. This is now in line with that seen nationally in previous years.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children enter the early years provision with skills that are below those typical for their age, especially in communication and language. All groups of children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs, make high rates of progress. The most able children are encouraged to develop their skills so that they make excellent progress. An increasing proportion of children leave the early years provision very well prepared for Year 1, especially with communication skills that are more than is typical for their age.
- Children are highly motivated and eager to join in the rich and varied experiences available, both inside and outside. They show real curiosity, a fascination in the world around them and a great enjoyment of learning.
- The varied experiences include many opportunities to use writing skills outdoors and creative activities such as woodwork with the Forest School teacher. Children were skilfully using tools, such as drills, to create number plates for their houses.
- Children exhibit high levels of concentration and perseverance as they follow their interests and choose their own activities. The rich range of available resources enables them to use their imagination to develop those interests.
- Children behave exceptionally well. They play very well with their classmates and understand how to help each other if there are any difficulties. They listen carefully to adults and to each other, and so there is no distraction. Children in Reception classes work very well with each other, for example a group constructing a cage together, for a lizard, shared both ideas and resources.
- Teaching is outstanding. All staff have a deep understanding of how young children learn. They plan activities that respond to children's interests. They carefully monitor how well children are making progress and ensure that there are activities that will help them make rapid progress in all areas of learning.
- There is a detailed and interesting record of children's progress. Parents contribute evidence of the progress children make at home.
- The thorough process of induction means that children and their families start school with confidence and settle quickly. Early years staff are extremely skilled at helping any children who have difficulties to settle and enjoy their time in school.
- Safety is a priority and children learn to understand the risks involved, such as using equipment safely and how to keep belongings tidy. Risk assessments are thorough and, as a result, children play extremely safely both inside and outside.
- There is very strong leadership of the early years provision. Careful analysis of records of children's progress, shared with all staff, ensures that there is a constant drive to improve the provision further.

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	118859
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	456210

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	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Martin Henwood
Headteacher	Vikki Wall
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 June 2012
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