

Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Trinity Road South, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 6NF

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The determination, drive and tenacity of senior leaders have brought about significant improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, to pupils' behaviour and to academic outcomes.
- As a result of these improvements, pupils' progress has sped up considerably. In most year groups, pupils make strong progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers identify accurately what pupils can and cannot do. They use this information effectively to plan lessons that are appropriate to pupils' ages and abilities.
- Pupils' welfare is at the forefront in this calm, purposeful, caring school. As a result, pupils feel safe and valued. They behave well, show respect for one another and are courteous to adults.
- All teachers follow agreed practices for teaching and learning, mostly to good effect. However, some teachers are less skilled at using the policies. This leads to steady, rather than rapid, progress for some pupils.
- Questioning by teachers and teaching assistants has improved notably since the previous inspection. Questions often help pupils to think deeply. Occasionally, some are not as challenging for pupils as they might be. Consequently, some learning could be better.
- The curriculum has been overhauled. It provides clear guidance for teachers on how to plan work at the right level for pupils' ages. As a result, standards are now similar to those in other schools.
- Children in the early years are happy and confident learners. They make particularly good gains in their learning when working in small groups with the teacher. At other times, their progress is not as swift as it could be. This is because adults sometimes do not make the most of the potential for learning at times when children are playing independently.
- The Nursery and Reception classrooms provide high-quality environments that enable children to learn well. The outdoor learning space is less effective.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, continuously look for ways to check whether the school's work is as effective as it could be. If something is found to require improvement, immediate action is taken. This is why the rate of improvement has been so rapid.
- The governing body responded decisively to the previous inspection. As a result, the leadership and management of the school have improved considerably. This, in turn, has led to improved quality of education for pupils.

Full report

When Holy Trinity CofE Primary School was inspected in April 2016, it was judged to require special measures. This was the first inspection since that date.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the rigorous focus on continuously improving the quality of teaching, so that pupils make substantial and sustained progress throughout each year group, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers implement the agreed policies for teaching and learning to consistently high standards
 - the exceptional quality of questioning used by some teachers and teaching assistants is applied universally.
- Ensure that all elements of the early years provision lead to equally good learning by making sure that:
 - the outdoor environment is as rich and stimulating as that in the classrooms
 - staff are equally skilled in maximising opportunities to help children think more deeply while playing, exploring and investigating independently.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The acting headteacher has led the school with a quiet, steely determination to improve outcomes for pupils. She and her senior team have forensically unpicked the reasons for the school's previous poor performance. Once diagnosed, these reasons have been systematically eradicated by well-considered and effective actions. This is why the quality of education has improved so much in a relatively short time.
- Senior leaders have translated their vision – for pupils' outcomes to be as good as possible – into a set of clear expectations for staff. Staff are able to meet these requirements because senior leaders have created straightforward procedures for them to follow. As a result, all staff routinely follow agreed policies, often to great effect. Leaders know that a few staff find it more difficult to implement some policies as well as is required, and are taking effective steps to improve any weaker practice.
- Senior leaders are fully informed of how well these policies are leading to improved outcomes because they use all available sources of information to continuously check on the quality of education. If something is not working as well as hoped, senior leaders waste no time in changing it so as to achieve better results. As a result, improvement is swift and strong.
- Middle leaders provide good support to the senior team in improving the quality of education. These leaders, responsible for different year groups and subjects, frequently check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Areas that need work are accurately identified and communicated unequivocally to senior leaders and to the teacher concerned. Middle leaders provide effective advice and support, where needed, to ensure that teaching improves and pupils do not fall behind.
- Staff appreciate leaders' investment in them. They value the intensive training and coaching programme they have received. Staff told inspectors this approach has been supportive and empowering, in that it has helped them find their own solutions to improving the quality of their work. As a result, staff are committed to making improvements and the quality of teaching has improved substantially.
- Accountability is integral to the success of this process. Senior leaders challenge teachers to demonstrate that all pupils are making acceptable rates of progress. If any pupil appears to be falling behind, teachers are required to take swift, remedial action. Governors, in turn, challenge senior leaders about the progress of pupils in each class. This is why differences in amounts of progress made by groups of pupils have reduced or disappeared.

- In response to the previous inspection, senior leaders systematically rewrote the school's curriculum and its assessment system. These two elements are now aligned. This means that teachers' planning takes full account of their assessments of what pupils can do and need to learn next. As a result, pupils' skills in a wide range of subjects are being sequentially built. Curriculum plans include wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to learn beyond the confines of the classroom. These support pupils' appreciation of history and the arts. Trips and activities in school time are supplemented by the chance to attend a variety of clubs after school. For example, the school has its own Beaver and Cub Scout packs.
- Leaders use additional funding, received from the government for specific purposes, well. The allocation of pupil premium funding has led to differences in disadvantaged pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and other pupils' nationally diminishing.
- Similarly, the inclusion leader ensures that funding received to support the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively. As a result, provision for these pupils has improved substantially.
- The primary school sport funding was not well used in the past. Current leaders have carefully considered use of this year's allocation. They have identified clear measures by which they will judge its impact at the end of the year. In the short term, the funding has increased pupils' participation in physical activity and the school's success at local football tournaments.
- Governors and senior leaders speak highly of the quality and quantity of support provided by the local authority. This support has been well focused and effective in building teachers' knowledge and skills, in increasing the capacity of leaders to drive and sustain rapid improvement, and in enabling governors to hold the school closely to account for the quality of education provided.

Governance of the school

- Governance has become more effective as a result of governors' determined response to the previous inspection report. Governors:
 - have taken decisive and, sometimes, brave action to secure significant improvement in the quality of leadership and management of the school
 - have ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved and pupils' progress has accelerated
 - now challenge leaders effectively and verify information for themselves, rather than accepting leaders' assertions at face value
 - ensure that weak performance by teachers is tackled robustly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- The whole school community holds pupils' welfare and well-being at its heart. Nothing is seen as more important and immediate as child protection. Any concern, no matter how small or uncertain, is logged swiftly, followed up immediately and pursued relentlessly.
- The designated lead member of staff is proactive and tenacious in seeking and, where necessary, demanding support from other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. No stone is left unturned in the pursuit of support for pupils' welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The effective programme of support for teachers has increased their confidence in planning appropriate work according to pupils' ages and aptitudes. As a result, standards have risen and continue to improve.
- Teachers use accurate assessment of pupils' attainment to identify those who are falling behind. Swift, well-focused intervention closes these gaps in knowledge and helps pupils acquire skills needed for new learning.
- The teaching of mathematics develops pupils' fluency with numbers and encourages them to apply calculation skills with increasing sophistication. As a result, pupils learn to reason mathematically. They can talk confidently about their mathematical understanding.
- Teachers are now skilled in the teaching of writing. As a result, pupils now write with precision and technical understanding, in a wide range of styles and with increasingly sophisticated punctuation.
- Teachers ensure that pupils apply their writing skills well to support learning in subjects other than English. For example, inspectors were impressed by the compelling application for the job of Viking warrior, written by a Year 6 pupil. This piece showed command of a persuasive style and depth of knowledge about Vikings gained through history lessons.
- The teaching of phonics to younger pupils is consistently effective. Teachers and teaching assistants have secure understanding of the knowledge pupils need and are skilled in delivering lively, interesting lessons. As a result, pupils quickly learn how to use letter sounds to help with their attempts at reading and spelling new words.
- Questioning by teachers and teaching assistants in lessons often probes pupils' understanding and challenges them to reason, think analytically and justify their answers. When this happens, it has a significant impact on pupils' independent thinking. Not all questioning is this effective. Some questions require little intellectual effort. In these instances, learning is diminished.
- Agreed policies for teaching and learning give teachers clear guidance on how to feed back to pupils about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Nevertheless, the impact of these policies is mixed because some teachers do not apply them as rigorously as others.

- Parents say they receive useful information about their children's progress and helpful guidance on how they can support learning at home. Those spoken to feel their children are taught well. However, a few who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, noted some negative impact from frequent changes to their child's teacher during the year.
- Teachers use the 'Trinity Ten' list of learning behaviours to help pupils build resilience, perseverance and other dispositions necessary for successful learning. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning and ability to concentrate in lessons have improved notably. This has contributed much to improvements in pupils' progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff actively and consistently model and promote the strong Christian values that underpin the work of the school. Consequently, support for pupils' emotional and mental health is at the heart of the school's ethos.
- By the time they leave Holy Trinity, pupils are well prepared for the move to secondary school. They take responsibility for their own actions, and are respectful and tolerant of the rights and needs of others.
- Pupils say that staff 'really care' about them. They feel they can talk to any member of staff if there are concerns. They are confident that issues, such as bullying, would be sorted quickly, although no incidents have happened to their knowledge.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors agree. All were full of praise for the welcome, the care and the support given to their children and to themselves. None were concerned about bullying.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They can explain steps taken by the school to help them stay safe in society, such as when using the internet.
- The school effectively promotes pupils' spiritual development by providing lots of opportunities for pupils to be reflective. This helps pupils develop understanding about themselves and the world around them. They demonstrate a sophisticated awareness of their identity as a diverse population within this Christian school. Pupils' understanding of different beliefs goes beyond merely learning key facts about other religions. As one pupil put it: 'We are all different, so we need to understand each other. Then we can all be the same.'
- Pupils develop strong moral awareness. They learn to clearly distinguish right from wrong and understand the consequences of their behaviour. For example, pupils value the chance to attend the regularly held 'behaviour party' as a reward for following the school's rules. They accept and understand that serious misbehaviour will prevent them from doing so.

- Pupils show well-developed social skills as a result of the way they are taught to collaborate and consider other points of view. For example, older pupils say they genuinely listen to each other during class discussions. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to learn about and practise democracy in the many chances they get to vote on aspects of school life.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around school in an orderly and controlled way. They respond to adults' clear instructions when lining up to go into collective worship or to lunch.
- Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved greatly since the previous inspection. They explained that pupils now take responsibility for their own behaviour and know the consequences of making bad choices. They say that interruptions of teaching and learning due to pupils' behaviour are rare.
- The school's records corroborate this view. The number of incidents of poor behaviour has dropped notably since leaders introduced the current behaviour policy.
- Inspectors observed no incidents of behaviour disrupting learning. Pupils were attentive in lessons. All responded to teachers' instructions immediately and without fuss, allowing lessons to proceed swiftly and smoothly.
- Pupils' attendance has continued to improve as a result of leaders' ongoing efforts to work with parents. Absence rates are similar to the national figures for all other primary schools. Families who struggle to get their children to school regularly are well supported by the family support worker to find solutions to their difficulties.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the past, pupils' progress was not good enough to overcome their low starting points. This is no longer the case. By the time they leave the Reception Year, most children have reached a good level of development and are ready to start Year 1.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 now make strong progress in a range of subjects. As a result, standards are now broadly in line with the average for all schools. This shows a significant improvement in outcomes since the previous inspection.
- Leaders' thorough and detailed analysis of achievement information shows that historical differences in attainment between groups of pupils are diminishing. In the case of disadvantaged pupils, differences have been largely eliminated. In many classes, disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils nationally. This is the result of effective use of the pupil premium funding.
- The most able pupils are increasingly being challenged to reach the higher standards of which they are capable. As a result, in most classes, the proportion of pupils whose work shows a greater than expected depth of understanding has risen.

- The inclusion lead ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities now make strong progress. Outcomes for these pupils show notable improvement since the school introduced its 'nurture provision'. This support helps build pupils' confidence and improve their study skills.

Early years provision

Good

- When children first join the early years, in the Nursery or Reception classes, many lack the confidence or skills to be able to communicate effectively. This means they find it hard to express their thoughts and feelings. Very quickly, children settle into the routines of school life and grow in confidence. This is because of the exceptional quality of care they receive.
- Relationships between adults and children are very strong. Adults show genuine pleasure at children's company. The calm approach taken by staff puts children at ease and enables them to flourish in a safe, secure atmosphere. As a result, children love coming to school and become happy, confident learners who are keen to talk to any adult about what they are doing.
- Staff in the early years work very hard to create effective partnerships with parents. For example, sessions run by staff to help parents improve their English skills have been extremely well received. Sessions such as these help parents to support their children's learning at home. This, in turn, helps overcome some of the barriers children face to learning.
- As a result of good teaching, children make swift progress and acquire the skills they need ready to start Year 1. The early years leader makes sure that all activities led by adults are well planned, interesting and challenging. As a result, children become inquisitive learners who can sustain concentration, listen to one another and take turns.
- Nevertheless, children's progress could be swifter at times. When children are playing and exploring on their own, without the direction of a teacher, support staff sometimes miss the chance to take children's learning to a deeper level or in a new direction. Consequently, the opportunity to build new or better skills is sometimes overlooked.
- The Nursery and Reception classrooms are very well organised and contain a wealth of interesting resources. This enables children to acquire a wide range of skills. The outdoor learning areas are less well established. These spaces do not provide the same quality of learning opportunities as is available in the classrooms. Consequently, children make better progress when learning indoors than they do when outside.

School details

Unique reference number	103986
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10034365

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Brown
Headteacher	Joanne Corbett
Telephone number	0121 553 1573
Website	www.schools.sandwell.net/holytrinitypri
Email address	headteacher@holytrinity.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 April 2016

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Holy Trinity CofE Primary School is currently federated with Grove Vale Primary under a single governing body. Until recently, the two schools shared an executive headteacher. This is no longer the case.
- Most children join the school in the Nursery class when they are three years old. A small proportion join at the start of the Reception Year, when they are four.
- It is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, supported by the pupil premium funding, is above the national average.

- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has received support from Sandwell Local Authority to strengthen the quality of leadership and management and to improve the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes.
- Inspectors met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read, observed pupils at breaktimes and attended a session of collective worship.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy head of school, teachers with leadership responsibilities, a representative of the local authority and members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects were examined.
- A number of documents were considered, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors spoke to parents before and after school and during a coffee morning. Eleven responses to Parent View were taken into account.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Amarjit Cheema	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Potter	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Blackburn	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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