

Holy Trinity Primary School

Cecil Street, Bury, Lancashire BL9 0SB

Inspection dates

17–18 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes, particularly in reading, are not high enough. The legacy of underachievement means that pupils in key stage 2 typically do less well than those in key stage 1. Younger pupils' phonics skills are typically less advanced than in other schools.
- The growing examples of effective practice in the school can be further used to increase the school's rate of improvement.
- Teaching is not good enough to ensure that pupils do as well as possible. New approaches to teaching mathematics and reading are at a relatively early stage.
- The increasing expectations and aspirations in the school are still not as high as possible. Too few pupils, including the most able, have the highest possible attainment. This is not challenged clearly enough in the school improvement plan.
- Although leaders across the school are active and committed, more time is needed for their impact to be fully embedded in all areas of school life.
- The review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding, recommended following the previous inspection, has not been completed.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's work is underpinned by a strong Christian ethos and a determination to provide the best possible for pupils. The school is a friendly and welcoming community, which values and celebrates its diversity.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been rapid improvement in teaching and pupils' progress. Results have improved significantly. In writing, disadvantaged pupils do as well as others.
- Leaders, staff and governors work hard and with increasing effectiveness.
- Leaders are honest and realistic. They have successfully addressed many of the school's weaker aspects.
- Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are cared for very well. Pupils feel safe and are safeguarded well.
- Pupils behave well and are proud of their school. They are happy and enjoy learning.
- Children in the early years are given a wide range of interesting experiences and make rapid progress.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders and teachers continue the improvement to teaching by:
 - carefully reviewing the new approaches to teaching reading and mathematics and adjusting these approaches if needed to make sure that they lead to the expected gains in pupils' learning
 - widely sharing the effective work done by different teachers so that all classroom staff and pupils can benefit.
- Ensure that governors, leaders and teachers maintain their focus on raising pupils' achievement so that:
 - pupils' progress and attainment rise further, particularly for the most able and other pupils able to reach higher levels of learning
 - any gaps in older pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are filled
 - the proportion of pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieving the expected standard in the national checks on their phonic skills increases.
- Ensure that senior leaders raise the expectations of staff and pupils even further by:
 - sharpening school improvement planning targets to include greater challenge to more pupils reaching higher levels of attainment
 - supporting staff at all levels to develop their leadership roles to have most impact in their challenge and support of others.
- Ensure that the external review of the school's use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils recommended at the previous inspection is completed as soon as possible.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Despite the recent rapid improvements in the school's performance, there has not been sufficient time for all changes to have full effect. The capacity of senior leaders to ensure that improvement happens has been increased by the appointment of additional senior leaders. However, these leaders are still new to their responsibilities.
- Leaders have produced a thorough evaluation of the strengths and weaker aspects of the school's effectiveness and this has led to a well-thought-out plan to further improve the school. However, current plans lack some ambition because they do not pay sufficient attention to increasing the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in their learning. Leaders have raised their expectations of pupils, but the relatively lower proportions of pupils reaching higher levels of attainment indicate that aspiration can be increased further.
- The previous inspection identified that the school should commission an external review of how the additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used. Although arrangements for this review have been started, the review has not been completed. In the meantime, a new senior leader has started to plan the next stages of this funding's use. The developing plans are sensible but do not reflect the view of an external, specialist reviewer. Currently, disadvantaged pupils do as well as others in the early years, and in writing. More could be done to reduce the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in reading and mathematics.
- The school has a very positive and caring approach. This reflects the Christian principles which lie beneath all aspects of the school. The school is equally welcoming to pupils and families of any faith or none. Leaders and other staff ensure that all pupils are treated equally and that pupils are taught to respect and tolerate others and the differences between people. In fact, these are celebrated, for example, in the colourful artwork to which each pupil contributed, and which decorates one large wall of the school hall. The school's overall approach is summarised in other artwork on the windows of the hall, which reminds pupils and others of 'Trust, Respect, Hope, Peace'.
- Leaders and governors used the previous judgement of the school's effectiveness as inadequate to encourage everyone to re-double their efforts to improve the school. This has been successful, with clear improvement in a number of aspects, including pupils' progress and attainment, and in teaching. Senior leaders have not been afraid to take clear and decisive action where they judge that this will help, such as by carefully allocating teachers to classes where they will have the most impact and by reorganising the way in which teaching assistants are deployed.
- Despite the challenges that the school has recently faced, staff morale remains high, and staff continue to be willing to take on new tasks and responsibilities to provide the best for pupils. There is a learning culture among staff who are willing to discuss their own experiences and to support each other. These conversations add to other opportunities for more formal training that is provided to address the priorities that school leaders have identified in their planning. Both formal and informal training have made helpful contributions to the school's recent improvement.
- The improvement to the school has been driven by the clear and open leadership of

the headteacher who is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other colleagues. New senior leaders are starting to make definite contributions. For example, the coordinator of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has provided training for all staff, which has contributed to the success of the pupils for whom she has responsibility. The high quality of the care and learning for such pupils indicates that the additional funding provided to support their needs is well spent.

- The previous partnership with St Thomas' Primary School has been extended further. This partnership has contributed well to the recent improvement at Holy Trinity.
- The parents who spoke with inspectors and those who completed the school's most recent questionnaire were highly complimentary about the school. Some said that they had been concerned about the previous performance of the school but were given confidence by how well their children are looked after and are learning.
- Leaders have considered what should be included in the school's curriculum. They aim to provide pupils with the literacy and numeracy skills that they need, balanced by a wide range of experiences. Leaders have reorganised the approach to teaching reading to help pupils to learn faster. In addition, they have chosen a new mathematics programme, which also requires teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills. Leaders take a similarly well-organised approach towards other subjects, including the regular science lessons which pupils enjoy. The school extends pupils' experiences further through trips and visits out of school. Year 2 and Year 5 classes visited a regional science museum on the first day of the inspection to learn about science and computing. An inspector was delighted to start the second day of the inspection by listening to the school choir's early morning practice and hearing pupils' enthusiastic and inspiring singing.

Governance of the school

- Governors work hard and make an effective contribution to the school's improvement. They understand their roles and provide challenging strategic leadership, while allowing leaders to get on with their day-to-day work. They are well informed about the school and build on this through their close questioning of leaders and visits to the school.
- As part of their own development, members of the governing body have undertaken training, sometimes specifically about governance but also by sharing in training activities provided for staff.
- Governors are appropriately involved in the systems for determining whether teachers should receive pay rises and for the evaluation of the headteacher's effectiveness. The targets set for teachers as part of this process are suitably demanding and link well to the needs of the school.
- Governors know how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for enhancing sports provision is used. They have the information they need to understand whether the funding is making the difference expected. The school has recently changed the way it uses the primary physical education and sport funding and now provides a programme from a local football club. This contributes well to pupils' physical health and is a good example of the way in which the school successfully uses resources

available in the local community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy is kept up to date and made available on the school's website. Members of staff receive regular updates to their training about safeguarding so that they are confident about what they do should the need arise. This training has included discussion about the possible risks of pupils experiencing extreme views, which could eventually lead to radicalisation.
- The safeguarding policy and training that staff receive set the framework for the culture of safeguarding which pervades the school. When significant issues arise, these are followed up in partnership with the necessary external agencies so that the pupils affected get the protection they need.
- A member of staff has a key role in liaising with and supporting families, particularly any in which there is stress or difficulty. This work adds considerably to the wider safeguarding of pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although teaching has improved since the previous inspection, there has not been time for the gaps in aspects of pupils' learning, and particularly of those pupils in key stage 2, to be sufficiently filled. Part of the school's strategy to do this has been the extension of a new approach to teaching mathematics to all year groups and the introduction of a new approach to supporting the way in which pupils develop and use their reading skills in class. These are both showing positive results, but it is still too early for them to have had their full effect.
- There is growing expertise in teaching, which has been developed through training and discussion. However, there are still some occasions when the most effective practice could be more widely adopted.
- Inspectors saw teaching across all year groups and subjects which has helped pupils to learn and make progress. Teachers demonstrate effective classroom skills, for example, the way in which their questions challenge pupils to think hard. This follows training for teachers to help them to improve this skill. The longer-term improvement that this indicates was also shown in the improvement to pupils' outcomes in 2017. Teaching engages pupils and makes them want to learn more. They said that they enjoy lessons.
- Leaders have reorganised the way in which teaching assistants work with teachers. Most teaching assistants now work with a particular class. This means that it is clearer who is accountable for the quality of pupils' learning. Additional teaching for pupils who are at risk of falling behind their friends or who just need a quick boost in a specific topic is skilfully provided as part of the school's established routines. This is particularly the case for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils learn well. Similarly, the new arrangements for the deployment of teaching assistants mean that it is easier for staff to provide additional challenge for most-able pupils. This is improving the teaching of the most able.

- Leaders and teachers successfully use additional support from external consultants to improve teaching. For example, an inspector saw how specialised staff from the local authority's Curriculum Access Language Service developed pupils' understanding and, at the same time, built teachers' skills in a jointly taught Year 6 class reading lesson. In this lesson, pupils enjoyed dissecting text as they sought out meanings for unfamiliar words.
- Leaders' and teachers' systems for assessing pupils are well established. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work in Year 2 and Year 6 was checked against that in other local schools in 2017. This process confirmed the accuracy of the assessment of teachers at Holy Trinity.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff know and value each pupil. The good relationships between adults and pupils promote pupils' welfare and help to build pupils' good attitudes in class.
- The pupils who talked with inspectors said that there is little, if any, bullying at school. If problems arise, pupils are confident that there is an adult they can go to and that things will be sorted out. Older pupils look after younger ones, for example, through the appointment of Year 6 pupils to add to the supervision and organisation of playtime activities.
- The work of the parent support officer has made a significant difference to the welfare of pupils and families for whom there are particular challenges. The school helps pupils to be ready to learn by providing advice and direct support to families.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are taught about how to be safe. For example, pupils know about ways to protect themselves when using mobile phones or other electronic devices. Pupils said that they feel safe in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils respond well to the systems in place to encourage them to behave well. These were recently revised to make sure that the time between praiseworthy or poor behaviour and any resulting commendation or sanction is short enough to make the links between them clear. Inspectors saw no instances of poor behaviour during the inspection.
- Any significant instances of very good or very poor behaviour are systematically recorded by teachers and are scrutinised by leaders. These records indicate that pupils rarely let themselves down.
- Pupils get along well together and accept each other whatever their backgrounds. They are polite and keen to talk about how proud they are of their school.

- Pupils' attendance is improving and is close to the national average for primary schools. Leaders identified that too many pupils were having long-term absence. They identified that this is sometimes as a result of unauthorised holidays abroad. Staff work hard with parents and their children to make sure that families understand the importance of proper attendance. Leaders have introduced new strategies to encourage good attendance. For example, the school uses text messages to celebrate good class attendance and to challenge individual absence. The increase in attendance indicates that these strategies are successful.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over time, pupils' achievement has been far too low. There has been significant improvement since the previous inspection. However, Year 6 pupils' progress in reading at the end of the last school year remained very low. In 2017, in writing and mathematics, Year 6 pupils' overall progress was broadly average. However, too few pupils reached higher levels of attainment. While the proportion of the most able pupils is lower than in many schools, these pupils did not do well enough. A similar pattern in pupils' achievement is found in other years, although the overall achievement of younger pupils is typically higher than that of older pupils.
- There is little difference between the achievement in writing of disadvantaged pupils and others. These pupils do less well than others in reading and mathematics. While the attainment of both groups is generally lower than the national average, the progress of younger pupils is generally faster than that of older pupils.
- In 2017, a below-average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics check for Year 1 pupils. In part, this reflects the very low starting points of some children when they join Nursery or Reception and the additional challenges faced by pupils who are still at a relatively early stage of learning to speak English. Although the proportion of children leaving the early years ready for key stage 1 has increased over time, this remains lower than that seen in many schools. Teachers secure faster progress for such pupils and so help them to catch up by carefully planning for pupils to learn through play in Year 1 as well as in the early years. The attainment of Year 1 pupils in the annual national phonics check has risen over time.
- Leaders place considerable emphasis on improving pupils' outcomes in reading. The gains in key stage 2 pupils' reading skills show that this is starting to be successful. However, it is still too early for enough longer-term improvement to be confirmed. Pupils said that they enjoy reading and that they have gained in confidence in reading because the school has placed more emphasis on it. Some pupils have a narrower vocabulary than is usually found at their age. The class reading activities that teachers now use successfully build pupils' knowledge of words that they may not have come across before. Additional opportunities for most-able pupils to extend their reading skills are provided in an after-school club. Pupils said that they enjoy this activity and that it helps them to develop their reading.
- The effective support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities means that such pupils make good progress.
- Leaders and teachers are successful in giving pupils a wide range of experiences throughout their school life. Pupils develop their skills and understanding and so make

progress in different school subjects, including, for example, science, music and art. In addition, and in response to the home language of many pupils, lessons in Urdu are provided.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception. Many children begin school with starting points significantly lower than typical for children of their age. Some have had far fewer experiences than other young children or are less developed in their communication and language skills. Once at school, they are helped to learn quickly, including to develop their social skills. They quickly understand school routines, and this helps them to play and learn together happily.
- By the end of Reception, most children reach the good level of development needed to be ready for Year 1. However, the proportion of children reaching this target remains below the national average. In 2017, more children than in previous years reached higher skill levels in the different areas assessed at the end of the early years.
- When children have additional needs, for example, in developing their speech and communication, the school works in partnership with specialist professionals to make sure that these are met. The focus on children's individual needs means that they make rapid progress. There is little difference between the outcomes of different groups of children. For example, disadvantaged children's learning matches that of others.
- Leadership of the early years is effective. Leaders ensure that staff know children's needs well and regularly assess their development. The early years area is safe and secure. Staff are fully aware of their safety and safeguarding responsibilities. Children are looked after very well. They behave well and happily play and learn together.
- Leaders and other staff use their assessment of children to plan what should happen next. This helps them to support individual children but is also used on a larger scale. In the checks on children's learning in 2017, leaders identified that children's fine motor skills were not as well developed as other skills. As a result, leaders have introduced additional adult-led activities, requiring children to practise using their hands. An inspector saw children thoroughly enjoying squashing and bending modelling dough as they did this.
- Staff are skilled in teaching children. However, on some occasions, the most effective approaches of some teachers are not used by others. This means that opportunities to add to children's learning are not seized on as well as possible.
- The early years area provides a wide range of interesting activities. It is bright and colourful.
- Staff ensure that parents know about their children's development. In return, parents are highly supportive of the work of early years staff. Parents have confidence that their children will be helped to learn and also enjoy their time at school.

School details

Unique reference number	105331
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10040380

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Thew
Headteacher	Marcus Elder
Telephone number	01617 642993
Website	www.holytrinitycofe.org.uk
Email address	HolyTrinity@bury.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 November 2016

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity Primary School is of average size.
- Most pupils are of Asian heritage. Other pupils have a wide range of backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is above average.
- The school has a close partnership with St Thomas', another local Church of England primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the

school's use of the pupil premium and the primary school physical education and sport funding on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups of the school, including the early years. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and during breaktimes. They visited an assembly and a choir practice.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other leaders, and a group of teachers and other members of staff. They met formally with a group of pupils and spoke with others during lessons and at other times during the school day. An inspector met a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- An inspector met a representative of the local authority, together with the headteacher of St Thomas' Primary School.
- Inspectors examined pupils' books during lessons and during a scrutiny of samples of written work across a range of pupils and subjects.
- An inspector heard some pupils read and talked to them about reading.
- Inspectors reviewed documents, including school policies, safeguarding information, the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and information about the performance management of teachers.
- No responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were received. Inspectors considered 72 parents' responses to a recent school survey, covering the same questions as Ofsted's questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with parents and other family members at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

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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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