

Holy Trinity Church of England (Aided) School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110471
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	288684
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Malcolm Johnstone

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs P Fawcett
Headteacher	Mr J Myers
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002
School address	Wethered Road Marlow SL7 3AG
Telephone number	01628 482831
Fax number	01628 487115

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most junior schools. The pupils come from a wide area and a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage, although there are very small numbers from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. None of these pupils is at the early stages of learning English. The pupils enter school from two nearby infant schools. Attainment on entry varies from average to above with a full range of ability present in all groups. Only a few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and those who have a statement of special educational need is below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good standard of education within a strong Christian ethos. It has the strong support of the large majority of parents who expressed a view. 'There is a great atmosphere of industry and purpose in the school', was one comment echoed by many parents.

Overall standards have been maintained at above average levels over the past four years with particularly high standards in reading. Pupils' progress is mostly good and by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in most aspects of their learning. While there has been improvement over the past year, standards and achievement in mathematics are not as high as in English and science. Pupils' achievements in their personal development are exemplary and by the end of Year 6, they are confident and mature individuals with very good attitudes to learning. They collaborate enthusiastically with others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The behaviour of most pupils is exemplary and the good attendance rate reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. The good standards and achievement and outstanding personal development prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is supported very well by the deputy and senior leaders. They are good role models in their commitment to further improvement, their high aspirations for the pupils and in their own teaching. There is high quality teamwork and teachers are committed to their own professional development. These strengths have led to good teaching with a high degree of consistency, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Self-evaluation is good. The school uses performance data and the tracking of pupils' progress well to determine what needs to be improved. This ensures that the school is well placed to improve further. There is regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and this gives the senior leaders a general view of its effectiveness. However, it is not focused sharply enough on the key priorities in the school improvement plan.

There is a good curriculum with an outstanding range of extra-curricular opportunities. These help pupils make rapid progress in their social development and add an effective dimension to learning. Care, guidance and support are good with particular strengths in the pastoral guidance and support for pupils. Improved systems to support the academic guidance for pupils with learning difficulties help them make good progress towards their targets. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy. They say that they have confidence in the support available should they have any concerns.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and the achievements of pupils in mathematics to the high levels achieved in English and science.
- Focus the monitoring of teaching and learning more sharply on the key priorities in the school improvement plan.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well because they enjoy lessons, are eager to learn and are taught well. By the end of Year 6, overall standards are higher than average and the school's comprehensive tracking data shows that most pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Standards in reading are well above average and pupils of all abilities

achieve very well. Standards in mathematics were broadly average in the 2006 national tests and while they have improved this year, they are not as high as in English and science. There have been some weaknesses in matching work to the different needs of the pupils. This is being addressed successfully and pupils are making good progress. Pupils are making good progress with writing as a result of effective action that has been taken. Pupils' writing over the year shows quality examples across the curriculum. This has resulted from good use of an exciting range of activities to stimulate pupils, including drama, poetry, individual research and visits from professional authors. The school is on course to reach its increasingly challenging targets for 2007 and these are set to improve standards further. Pupils achieve particularly well in their personal development and in the arts and sport.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The behaviour of most pupils is outstanding. They look after one another well and form very good relationships with their teachers and one another. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. This is exemplified in their above average attendance. They have excellent attitudes to work, are keen to contribute to class discussions and willingly co-operate in paired and group learning. Pupils know how to keep safe and have a good understanding of healthy life styles. They say how much they enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very aware of the wider world and participate enthusiastically in a variety of fund raising and charity events. Older pupils develop their social and personal skills very well through residential visits and as sports and house captains. All pupils have the opportunity to contribute to school council decisions, to stand for election and become peer mediators. They have a very good understanding that people express their beliefs in different ways. Pupils develop good skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. They are consistently good and sometimes outstanding in Year 5 and 6. Across the school, lessons have clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils. This gives them a good understanding of what they are expected to achieve in a lesson. There is good pace to learning, questions are open ended, and good use is made of resources, including interactive whiteboards to support learning. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and this, coupled with very good relationships, enables pupils to respond confidently and make good progress in an orderly learning environment. Pupils say they like and respect their teachers because they make learning enjoyable. Teachers and support staff work well together and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning. English is taught well but in mathematics work is not always matched effectively enough to the different abilities. On these occasions, pupils' progress slows to a satisfactory level.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich and interesting curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well in their academic and social development. There is good emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Good links

are made between subjects and this enables pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills well in support of learning across the curriculum. Significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has resulted in pupils' improved progress since the previous inspection. It is recognised that more needs to be done to extend the use of computers to support learning across subjects. Pupils have excellent opportunities to participate and enjoy an outstanding range of enrichment activities, including the arts, sport and French. Pupils speak excitedly of their enjoyment when participating in these. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties is good. It has improved over the past year. There are more accurate and rigorous systems to identify specific needs and target support more effectively.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal and academic guidance and support are good and monitored thoroughly. Vulnerable pupils are given very good support and arrangements for child protection are strong and effective. Consideration for pupils' safety and well-being is an intrinsic part of the school's ethos. Pupils say that if they are upset or worried they confidently go to adults, knowing they will be supported. Older pupils say they have confidence in their teachers and appreciate how they are helping them understand the importance of health and safety. Pupils have individual, personal and academic targets to aim for and these help them to assess how well they are doing. Marking is good in most classes where it shows pupils how they might improve. In some classes it is not so strong and lacks this developmental aspect.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have helped the school maintain overall standards at above average levels over the past four years. The headteacher is supported very well by a strong senior management team. There is a good ethos in the school with a clear focus on achievement and enjoyment in learning. All senior leaders are good role models in their commitment and teaching and are well respected by all staff and pupils. Subject leaders, some who are new to the post, are developing their role well. There is good self-evaluation that uses a wide range of performance and tracking data to identify any weaknesses in pupils' learning. This has resulted in effective action to raise standards in writing and mathematics, though there is still work to be done in mathematics. Regular monitoring of teaching has helped to improve the overall quality of teaching. The next stage is to focus monitoring more sharply on key priorities identified in the good school improvement plan. The school takes account of the views of parents and pupils when planning improvements. Governors support the school well and meet their statutory duties. They are analysing performance data increasingly well. This is improving their role as critical friend and in holding the school accountable.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England (Aided) School, Marlow, SL7 3AG

I would like to thank you all for the polite and friendly welcome we received during our visit to your school. You clearly enjoy coming to school and we were pleased to see how well you all get on together. We agree with you that the school is good. Some aspects of your school are outstanding.

You have excellent attitudes to learning and work hard in class. Most of you behave very well and are a credit to your school. All the adults who work in school care about you and are eager for you to do your best. You tell us that there is always an adult to help if you have any concerns. We were impressed with how much you know about how to keep healthy and the importance of regular exercise. It was good to see how many of you take part in the wide range of activities outside lessons.

You do very well in English and science and we saw some really good work in art and music. Although you do well in mathematics, we think that you could do even better. We have asked your teachers to help you with this by making sure all the work you are given is neither too easy nor too hard. Most of the teaching is good and we have asked the headteacher to keep a closer check on lessons to ensure that it improves even more.

The leadership and management of your school are good and we agree with the challenging targets the school has set to improve even further. With your help we are confident that the school will meet them.

Good luck for the future.

Malcolm Johnstone Lead inspector