



# The Holy Trinity School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 126098  
**Local Authority** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 293472  
**Inspection date** 7 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Steffi Penny HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Buckswood Drive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Gossops Green
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		Crawley RH11 8JE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 423690
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1037	<b>Fax number</b>	01293 511968
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	267		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Malcolm Liles
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Wickert
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–18	7 November 2006	293472

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than other secondary schools and the sixth form is larger than other sixth forms. The school has specialist science and mathematics college status. The large majority of students are from White British families, but a few minority ethnic groups are also represented. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below that usually found in most schools, as are the percentages of students with a statement of special educational need or with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is oversubscribed and attendance is better than the national average. On entry students are allocated to a tutor group which is attached to one of four houses, resulting in a vertical pastoral system.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

'My school identifies its weaknesses but the staff work out a way to sort them out... I was worried moving to a new country but at this school they are appreciative of different ethnicities and cultures'. This comment made by a pupil typifies the school's approach and concern for others.

This is a good school with several outstanding features that provides good value for money. The school has improved significantly over the last five years and has a good capacity to improve further. This improvement is a testament to the drive of the senior leadership team, the commitment of staff and the willingness of students to learn and do their best in all aspects of the school's work.

During the inspection students of all ages went out of their way to say how highly they valued being able to freely witness their Christian faith and service to God. This view was shared by staff and is evident in all the school's documentation. A good example is that of the school's environmental action group (TEACH) which 'sets out to nurture and protect the school's environment, not just as good citizenship, but also as an active part of its Christian witness'. The shared Christian ethos that underpins all the work of the school also reaches out to other faith groups in its community, for example, prayer facilities were provided to Muslim students during Ramadan, which was greatly appreciated by the students and their parents.

Standards in the school are well above the national average. All students achieve well and make good progress. This is because students work hard, try their best and are well taught. Leadership and management teams have a very clear knowledge of students' standards and achievements through test data and examination records. The recent appointment of the director for learning support has already made a positive impact on addressing the issues raised in the last inspection with regard to the administration of this area. The school has implemented a new procedure for marking work so that it is done the same way in all subjects. This policy is not yet consistently adhered to. The monitoring of students' progress by departments is effective, but again there are inconsistencies in the way records are kept.

There is a rich variety of courses available to students after Year 9. There are extensive, high quality extra-curricular activities that the vast majority of students willingly and frequently enjoy. They and their parents are most proud of their achievements in music and sport, where they express high praise and appreciation for the commitments that staff make 'after hours'.

Specialist status is having a positive impact throughout the school. For example, the school has carefully used funding from its specialist status to improve the provision for all departments by creating a multimedia centre. The dining facilities remain totally inadequate and are now having a negative impact on the behaviour and healthy lifestyles of students, along with the overall effectiveness of the school. The cramped and constrained conditions at lunchtime cause frustrations, with some emotional outbursts. Staff supervision is superb but it takes up their valuable time. Students'

behaviour in general is good and they take good care of each other, although some cramped areas around lockers are a concern to several parents and students.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

All aspects of the sixth form are outstanding. This is due to the high quality of the nurturing of students in the main school which results in young people who can learn independently and who support the school and all its work wholeheartedly. Standards and achievement are outstanding because of the knowledgeable and high quality teaching and support that students receive and fully engage with. Students have access to a wide range of courses through the close collaboration of the school with other schools and colleges.

In the upper sixth the student 'head team' are selected through a rigorous process of applications, presentations and panel interviews. They are ably supported by the elected sixth form council. The success of their impact on the whole school is dependent on them using their own initiative but they also receive gentle support from staff. The result of this is that they are seen as outstanding role models who are widely known and valued throughout the school. A witness to the school's ethos and values being truly lived is that those new to the school in the lower sixth feel fully integrated and are also represented in senior prefect roles. Students said they feel really valued and allowed to develop their own identity.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the consistency of the marking and monitoring of students' work.
- Improve the dining accommodation.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Standards are well above the national average and achievement for all students is good. Through the careful tracking of individual progress the school effectively caters well for different groups of students and ensures that all do equally well. Students work hard and are effectively supported to reach the challenging targets that are set by the school. Taking into account the standards that students have when they start school, they make good progress by the end of Year 11. Teachers' very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for what they teach results in outstanding achievement in the sixth form. The school does not do enough to ensure greater consistency between departments in the marking of students' work to improve standards further, particularly in the main school.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Students' personal development and well-being are good in the main school and outstanding in the sixth form. Their engagement in various curriculum enrichment activities and the school's ethos result in outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is healthy competition between the school houses and pupils say 'being part of my house makes me feel I belong' and 'everyone is valued and listens to you; we have good relationships between year groups because of our houses'.

Students are polite, articulate and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Their good behaviour and well-above-average attendance reflect their tremendous enjoyment of learning, as does their willing and proactive involvement in contributing to all areas of school life with a sense of joy and pride. Students consider the school as a safe haven and benefit from its harmonious atmosphere.

Students have and are able to apply their good level of understanding about how to keep safe and live healthily, for example, in choosing the catering supplier and their choice of snacks at break times. The school is aware that there is need for easier access to drinking water. All students make excellent contributions to the wider community, and older students support their younger peers exceptionally well. Students effectively develop the skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Teaching and learning in the main school are good and outstanding in the sixth form. The school has very good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and uses that information effectively to share good practice and provide support. Teachers use marking to inform students about what they do well and what they can do to do better. The school has recognised that there is a need to ensure greater consistency in the marking and monitoring of students' work across different departments and subjects. This is demonstrated by the new marking policy introduced in September 2006. Students in the sixth form said, 'we learn so well because our teachers are so enthusiastic and knowledgeable; they are always there to help and guide us when we need it'.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The curriculum in the main school is good and outstanding in the sixth form. The highly inclusive curriculum reflects the needs and aptitudes of the students, and whilst mainly academic, there have been recent additions of vocational courses. However, not all students in Years 10 and 11 are provided with two hours of physical education in taught lessons.

The provision for students' personal, social and health education is strong. The school has recently introduced a programme to incorporate citizenship into the curriculum, which has successfully raised the enthusiasm of the students. The school's specialist status has improved learning particularly in science and the development of partnership links with local providers.

Since the last inspection the school has made very good progress in improving some of its accommodation. Facilities for teaching design and technology, theatre studies and physical education are now outstanding. The effects of the inadequate facilities for dining are minimised by good management and systems but not eliminated totally. This has a bearing on timetabling and students' conduct during break and lunch times.

The sixth-form curriculum is very effectively designed to provide worthwhile learning and ensures very good links with other providers of courses. Very good systems are in place to ensure that all students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are fully involved in the curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The pastoral work of the school is outstanding. Academic guidance is good in the main school and outstanding in the sixth form.

Procedures for safeguarding students are robust, as was confirmed by the school council stating 'we feel very safe and secure when we are at school'. The school links extremely well with partner primary schools to make sure that new students joining the school at different times settle quickly and happily. There are good systems to collect data about students' achievements and these are used well by different departments for future planning. The school has introduced excellent systems for identifying and supporting students with learning difficulties and disabilities and these ensure that the progress of these students is similar to that of other groups. The school appreciates the need for greater involvement of all teachers in the evaluation of students' achievement, particularly the targets in students' individual education plans, to help to secure further improvements.

Students in the sixth form receive careful guidance and are supported very well in choosing their courses. They are given the opportunities to develop independence, to

be responsible for their own learning and are thrilled that they are 'treated as adults' by staff.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. They contribute significantly to the above-average standards and consistently good achievement. The school is extremely successful in identifying and tackling any barriers to learning through self-evaluation which involves all staff. The school's systems for self-evaluation are rigorous and robust and give an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and enjoys effective support from the senior leadership team. Governors and staff work well in supporting the school's ethos and pursuing future projects. There is a shared understanding of priorities for improvement. This is achieved through professional development, strategies to share good practice and the way in which key areas for development are prioritised and debated at a range of levels. The views of students, parents and others involved with the school are used well to guide decision making. A good example of this is the introduction of movement-sensitive lighting in the locker areas. Since the last inspection, the astute ways in which the school manages itself have enabled it to improve significantly the quality of its accommodation and it has a very clear direction for future improvements.

Considerable changes have been implemented in terms of staff responsibilities to ensure greater consistencies and better outcomes for students. The recent appointment of a director for learning support has resulted in great strides being made in improving the administration and raising the profile of the work of the special educational needs department.

The leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding because of the lack of complacency of staff and the effective support of the school's senior leadership team, in which the headteacher plays a crucial role. One parent voiced the views of many in saying, 'The teachers are great and the headteacher is the best thing that has happened to Holy Trinity, we were truly blessed when he was appointed'.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	1
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	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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**

I should like to thank you for the warm welcome that you gave me when I inspected your school. I particularly appreciated the discussions that I had with many of your representatives and am grateful to you for helping me with my work. In return, I want to let you know of the inspection findings so that you can see for yourselves what I thought.

This is a good school that meets its aims well. It provides a Christian form of education with equality of opportunity through strong leadership with dedicated, well-qualified staff where all members of the community feel secure. Inspection evidence supports your views and that of many of your parents that the clear vision of the headteacher and senior leadership team helps make this possible.

Many of you told me how proud you were of your school and in particular how you welcomed being able to bear Christian Witness. Students from other faiths felt that they were accepted through acts of fellowship such as prayer facilities being made available during Ramadam. Also those new to the school were very appreciative of the way they are welcomed and embraced into school life. You are given a great number of opportunities to contribute to the school and to the world outside, which you take up with real commitment and energy.

Your behaviour and positive attitudes to school make a real difference to how well you learn in lessons. You are taught well, make good progress and do much better than average in external tests and examinations. Those of you who need extra help with your learning or for other reasons are given good support. A good range of options exists for you at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form that enables you to follow academic or vocational courses. You have excellent opportunities to take part in sports, music and drama activities during the lunch time and after school. All features of your sixth form are outstanding.

There are two things I have asked the school to do to be even better and I am sure that you can think of ways in which you can contribute to these.

- Increase the consistency of the marking and monitoring students' work.
- Improve the dining accommodation.

Wishing you all a happy and successful future,