

# Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Dartford

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118859
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	298570
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathryn Taylor

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matthew Davis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Haynes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2006
<b>School address</b>	Chatsworth Road Dartford DA1 5AF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 224474
<b>Fax number</b>	01322 290667

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

In this average sized school the proportion of pupils from homes where English is not the first language is above average. A third of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, and two thirds are White British. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is above that found nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is well below average. The school has gained the Healthy Schools award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate. The school was given a Notice to Improve following its last inspection because of significant weaknesses in standards, achievement and the school's leadership and management. Since then senior leaders, staff and governors have received much external support, advice and training to help them make improvements. There has been some success, for example in developing subject leadership and assessments, in improving standards at the end of Year 2 and in English throughout the school. There has not been sufficient progress in other areas. Standards in science remain exceptionally low at the end of Year 6. Leadership and management remain inadequate. The headteacher and other senior leaders do not provide the school with the strategic direction it needs to ensure that improvements are maintained and built upon. There is still a tendency for senior leaders and governors to explain what may prevent some pupils from performing to the expected standard, rather than taking decisive and relentless action to ensure that their academic progress is accelerated.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the school's leadership and management.

Behaviour, attendance and pupils' response to school, although satisfactory, have declined since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy practical activities, take a pride in their finished work, and participate well in the good number and range of after school clubs, visits, and community and church events. Their response is variable in the parts of lessons where the class is taught altogether. In several classes a significant minority of pupils do not concentrate or contribute. The school's intake has also been changing so that more pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds now attend the school, but the curriculum and teaching methods have not been adapted to reflect pupils' backgrounds and interests. Furthermore, staff are also not sufficiently proactive in encouraging boys and girls and pupils from different backgrounds to work and play together.

Staff are kind towards pupils, especially those who need extra personal support. Several parents noted this in their questionnaires and their discussions with inspectors. The school works well with parents and other agencies. Most parents are happy with the school, recognise that some improvements have been made, and find staff caring and approachable. A few parents express concerns about unruly behaviour, and say they would like more information about their children's progress and for children to have the option of a hot meal at school.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The Foundation Stage is well staffed and provision and progress are satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in developing children's independence in their learning and creativity. Induction arrangements are good and children settle quickly. Currently, Reception children are being taught in two mixed age classes with Year 1 pupils. Staff are still developing new ways of working with these arrangements, and are benefiting from external advice. Basic skills are taught satisfactorily. Although set times during the day for children to work outdoors and in the activity areas outside classrooms are made, children decide on too few activities for

themselves and there is a lack of practical equipment to support independent learning within classrooms. In general, the children's learning is too heavily directed by adults.

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

- Raise standards in science.
- Strengthen teaching and learning; in particular encourage all pupils to participate and engage in discussion, improve the impact that teaching assistants have on pupils' learning, and address the weaknesses in behaviour management.
- Take steps to encourage boys and girls and pupils from different backgrounds to work and play together.
- Improve the leadership and strategic direction of the school to ensure it has the capacity to sustain improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children enter the school with the attainment levels expected for their age and make satisfactory progress through Reception and Year 1 due mainly to the satisfactory teaching of basic skills. Standards at the end of Year 2 improved well in 2006 and 2007. In 2007 they were slightly above average and there was a significant improvement in the number of children reaching the higher attainment levels. Achievement at Key Stage 2 has also improved. In 2006 standards at the end of Year 6 were above average in English, broadly average in mathematics, but well below average in science. Provisional results for 2007 show standards in Year 6 were not as high as in 2006, but progress measures show that achievement was satisfactory. Although current rates of progress are satisfactory for all groups, including pupils learning English and those who have learning difficulties, older pupils still have some catching up to do.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have declined since the last inspection. Pupils are friendly and polite. They develop confidence and are generally keen to gain rewards for good work and behaviour. Pupils in all classes take pride in their written work, which is invariably neat and carefully presented. Many pupils behave well and sustain concentration throughout lessons, especially pupils in Years 5 and 6. However, a minority does not and, on occasions, this detracts from teaching and learning. Playground behaviour can be overly boisterous and sometimes results in too many accidents, mainly because pupils have too little to do. Pupils still have too few opportunities to develop the skills of independent learning and to learn about and celebrate cultural diversity. They take an active role within the church and local community and regularly contribute to charities. For the most part, pupils understand how to stay safe, fit and healthy. They are keen to take part in sports, but many do not choose to eat healthy snacks.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and there is some good teaching, especially in the upper part of the school where teaching is brisk, challenging and engaging. General strengths in

teaching throughout the school include teachers' subject knowledge, clear objectives and explanations, and good questioning. Teachers have benefited from additional support and training, as well as opportunities to observe good practice in their own and other schools. This has been particularly beneficial in developing the teaching of English and drama and improving teacher assessments. Teaching assistants often make a positive contribution to pupils' learning during group work and activities, but during whole class teaching sessions there are missed opportunities for them to engage with individuals and a group of pupils, for example those still in the early stages of learning English.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The main strengths in the taught curriculum include the provision for English, sport, drama, personal, social and health education and extra-curricular provision. These all help to ensure that pupils learn to stay safe and promote fitness, health and enjoyment. Pupils participate well in extra-curricular activities, which include the teaching of French and a wide range of clubs, visits, visitors and special themed days. Science provision, which is currently being developed, is not as good as it should be. Too few opportunities exist for promoting an understanding of cultural diversity and for all pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, to develop independence in learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

There are strengths in both care and guidance. Pupils' personal development is monitored carefully and staff are quick to provide additional support for those who need it. Pupils with particular emotional needs, learning difficulties and disabilities are identified and their personal needs are met well. The school has developed strong links with parents and other agencies in this regard. Risk assessments and checks on staff are rigorous. Although child protection procedures are in place, staff training requires updating. Academic guidance has improved well since the last inspection because pupils now know their targets for improvement and are increasingly involved in self-assessments and setting themselves additional targets. Older pupils in particular are well informed about what they need to do get to the next level.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The school has received much support to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The school's own capacity to sustain improvement without the additional external support currently being provided is, however, unsatisfactory. This is because the headteacher and senior leadership team fail to provide strategic direction for the school and governors do not sufficiently challenge them. Senior leaders and staff still do not have a sharp enough focus on raising standards, and the accountability of leaders for improving achievement and pupils' progress is not exercised adequately. Leadership tends to be reactive and short term, rather than proactive in planning for the long-term development of the school. For example, the recent decision not to appoint a deputy headteacher has compromised long-term strategic direction in favour of short-term expediency, with little consideration of how this might impact on standards, pupils' learning and progress.

The school now sets appropriately challenging targets for all pupils and has modified those set for pupils currently in Year 6, which were too low. School self-evaluation processes have improved, and the school now formally seeks parents' and pupils' views. However, school self-evaluation tends towards optimism rather than realism. The school has also been slow in taking decisive action to address the weaknesses that are clearly identified through pupil surveys, such as the level of disaffection experienced by some pupils. Although governance has improved since the last inspection, it remains unsatisfactory. Governors are very supportive of staff and senior leaders, but their role as a critical friends is not fully effective.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
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?	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

September 28 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Primary School, Dartford DA1 5AF

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. We have decided that although your school provides a satisfactory standard of education, it still requires a Notice to Improve. This is because we cannot be certain that it is able to carry on improving without some extra support. This means that other inspectors will be visiting the school to check on its progress.

This is what we found is working best.

- Standards in English and mathematics are improving and you are making better progress now than you were when inspectors last inspected your school.
- You are friendly and polite. The work in your books is neat, tidy and carefully presented.
- We noticed that many of you are helpful to your teachers and staff, and older pupils help to make sure the school runs smoothly.
- The staff work hard, take care of you, prepare their lessons well and ensure you know how to improve your work.
- The school provides lots of visits and after school activities for you to enjoy.

This is what we have asked the school to do next.

- Make further improvements to science standards.
- Improve some aspects of lessons. For example, we would like staff to help some of you to improve your behaviour and concentration and to get all of you to discuss your work and ideas more often.
- Encourage boys and girls and pupils from different backgrounds to work and play together more often.
- Find ways of making sure the school can get better without needing too much extra help. You can help by ensuring that you come to school every day, work hard and do your best.

With very best wishes

Kathryn Taylor Lead Inspector

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Kathryn Taylor  
Lead Inspector