

Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100032
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	307279
Inspection dates	18–19 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	167
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	21
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marian Beha
Headteacher	Miss Tonnie Simpson (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Trinity Walk Maresfield Gardens London NW3 5SQ
Telephone number	020 7435 9089
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Holy Trinity School serves an area which is very diverse, culturally and economically. Well over three quarters of its pupils, much higher than is typical nationally, are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. A similar proportion has a home language other than English with around a quarter at the very early stages of acquiring the language. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. The percentage with moderate learning difficulties is a little higher than that found nationally. High numbers of pupils join or leave the school at other than customary times, mainly because of recent immigration patterns in the locality. The school building, within a conservation area, dates from 1890 and has limited play areas. The school is led currently by an acting headteacher.

The school has established links with the Winchester playgroup, which provides off-site after-school provision for pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holy Trinity is a good school. This judgement reflects accurately the school's evaluation of its work as well as that of the overwhelming majority of parents. 'It is a lovely welcoming place that goes to great lengths to include children and parents from all backgrounds', noted a parent, echoing the views of others. Pupils, too, are enthusiastic about the school. Many are keen to tell inspectors that they 'love Holy Trinity'.

A strength of the school is the way pupils and staff pull together to reach their common goals. Pupils smile happily as they greet adults and each other, remembering the 'good manners' theme of recent weeks. Because of well focussed care, guidance and support for each individual, pupils' enjoyment in school is very evident. Their excellent personal development supports their learning successfully. Pupils of all ages and across all groups make good progress and reach broadly average standards. In 2008, the provisional test results for Year 2 and Year 6 were the best ever. In mathematics, Year 6 reached well above average standards, average standards in English and just above average standards in science. Year 2 pupils were similarly successful in mathematics, reading and writing. Despite rising standards, pupils throughout the school achieve less well in writing than in other basic skills as too few pupils gain the highest available levels. The school has rightly identified this as a priority.

Most pupils attend well because they like coming to school. The very few whose families spend lengthy periods overseas have an unduly negative impact on attendance figures. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and all ages relish the fruit at break times. Although play areas are very limited, organised games at lunchtime and off-site sports enable pupils to participate well in physical activities. Many make a difference to others within the school community, not least because of the thriving school council. Through arts events and fund raising for local and overseas charities, they contribute generously to the wider community. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education through their appreciation of how to live in a diverse community.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is outstanding. They use circle time very effectively, abiding by their agreed code of conduct, 'not to put anyone down'. The very wide range of cultures and traditions within this small school allows pupils to get to know and understand others within a secure environment. They feel very safe both in lessons and around the well-kept site. The good curriculum with its themed events such as the Junior Citizen Day helps them to understand how society works.

Since the last inspection, good leadership and management have very successfully developed classroom practice so that teaching and learning are predominantly good. Well considered training is helping staff develop expertise in improving pupils' writing. Effective routines, excellent teamwork and the determination to be ever better have allowed the very able acting headteacher to drive the school forward. Staff are working together to further develop existing good systems to check pupils' progress. There is a clear recognition that management training for middle leaders, some new in post, is an immediate next step in developing shared responsibility for school improvement, particularly in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning in subject areas. Links with the local community are strong and the school is actively seeking ways to involve hard-to-reach parents.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the well-managed Reception Year, which has very good links with the Year 1 class. They join the school with skills that are sometimes well below those expected for their age. Many have little English. They develop positive attitudes to learning and improved social skills because of very effective methods to induct them. After only a few days in school, children are able to take turns and understand their simple 'golden rules'. Teaching and support staff collaborate successfully to provide a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. The small outside area is thoughtfully organised to include an inviting book corner and other surprises. Children are encouraged to make choices and develop independence, for example, in their search for letters in their names, in finding simple number patterns, and in their dressing-up and household activities.

Children achieve well in all areas of development because of good teaching and regular progress checks. Nevertheless, there are sometimes missed opportunities to capture the individual's unexpected leap in understanding, partly because digital technology is underused. Records show that by the end of the year children are working securely within the expected early learning goals in their social and physical development, in using numbers as labels and in shape and space. Because of their starting points, and despite good progress, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development is lower than average when they join Year 1. This is mainly because many are still consolidating their English language skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend rapidly the capacity of middle leaders to manage their areas of responsibility effectively.
- Intensify the school's efforts to develop pupils' writing skills so that able pupils can reach the highest available levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are rising and pupils achieve well. Fluctuations in standards arise because of the school's rapidly changing population. For many, starting points in the Reception class and Year 1 are well below average. Pupils' communication skills are a particular weakness. The 2008 provisional test results for Year 6 and Year 2 were a marked improvement on those of previous years. Both cohorts exceeded the school's very challenging targets.

Over a number of years, pupils' good progress has been supported by their consistent success in mathematics. Many pupils lack fluency in English when they join the school, particularly new arrivals to the country, and this has depressed past test performances in English, particularly in writing. Pupils at the early stages of learning English make fast gains in fluency because of the sharp focus on listening and speaking skills, and on drama. This emphasis also supports successfully those pupils with moderate learning difficulties as well as the few with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All achieve well. The school strives effectively to ensure that pupils from the wide range of minority ethnic groups, including new arrivals, make equally steady progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils are exceptionally friendly and confident. They thoroughly enjoy school. Their behaviour is exemplary and this boosts their learning significantly. Pupils respond very well to the excellent example set by the adults in school, treating others with courtesy and consideration. Whatever their backgrounds, they feel they belong and are able to value the many differing traditions.

Pupils report that they feel safe and that adults are always there to help them. They have a clear understanding of how to stay fit and healthy and act in a mature and responsible way when sharing their views on school and other matters. Because of their good progress in basic skills and their high motivation to succeed, pupils are well prepared for their future lives. There are many opportunities for responsibilities within the school, not least in upholding the smooth running of the complex classroom entry and exit points. They are more than happy to help at the 'friendship benches' in the playground and to contribute to the good of the wider community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are well motivated to learn because of the warmth and concern teachers and support staff show for each of them. Classrooms are lively and inviting and staff plan especially well to include many opportunities for speaking and listening activities. This caters very effectively for those still developing their English language skills. Questioning is skilful and provokes pupils to think deeply. In the most successful lessons, there is a strong emphasis on helping pupils to evaluate their own work and this contributes to their good progress in learning. Despite these good features, however, teachers do not always challenge the most able successfully enough, especially in writing. In younger classes, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow, partly because pupils spend too long on one activity.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The rich range of out-of-hours activities contributes strongly to the pupils' enjoyment of their education. Alongside good provision for basic skills, pupils experience interesting projects that cross subject boundaries. For example, a writing project on an African girl's experiences of a new baby brother, developed into an illustrated addition to the library books. Pupils look forward greatly to what they call 'the special days' when they visit a famous museum or perform a play at the Hampstead Theatre. The school rightly acknowledges that there is more to do to integrate the use of technology into the work of subject areas.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are nurtured exceptionally well in the secure environment. Excellent care, both in lessons and around the school, keeps children safe and happy. They feel valued and part of a large family. All staff are particularly diligent in managing the small play areas safely without unduly restricting the pupils. Very effective links with external agencies and with parents ensure

vulnerable children receive the best possible care. Those at the early stages of learning English and those new to the school are supported well because teachers accurately assess their needs. Effective links with secondary schools smooth the transition to the next stage of education. Pupils are involved closely in all decisions affecting them, including targets for their work. Besides excellent personal guidance, they also receive good academic advice so that no child is allowed to fall behind with work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since the last inspection, senior leaders have been tireless in seeking to provide all pupils with effective opportunities to flourish, both personally and academically. They have a very accurate grasp of the school's strengths and know well where development is required. The drive to improve writing skills remains a priority as is the development of the skills of middle leaders who until recently have had few opportunities to share whole school responsibilities with the senior team.

The impact of the good senior leadership and management is evident in Holy Trinity's smooth running, in its harmonious community, in the improvements in Reception, and in the rising trend in standards. Both pupils and staff regularly welcome new arrivals from many ethnic groups and provide sensitive support so that they quickly settle. Teachers and support staff are ambitious for their pupils and ensure they make the fastest possible progress in gaining fluency in English. The school is rightly proud of its efforts to maintain an inclusive ethos, reflected in the good progress of all groups of pupils. It has clearly demonstrated its good capacity to improve.

Governance is good. Governors visit regularly, challenge and support the school well. There is a strong partnership with external support agencies, with the local parish and with parents. These links enable the school to help successfully not only its pupils but also their families, promoting their sense of belonging within the local community.

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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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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?	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

02 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, London, NW3 5SQ

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed your company. We were also very pleased to hear how much you enjoyed school and to see how well many of you worked in lessons.

We think you go to a good school. It not only helps you to learn successfully, but also looks after you very well. It gives you a really good start, particularly in English, mathematics and science. We were impressed by how well you work and play together. It is especially pleasing to see the polite manner in which you speak to your teachers and to each other and how you put you're 'good manners' training into practice. You are also very sensible on the many stairs and cramped play space. Well done!

There are many things that are special about your school. We would like to single out your teachers and support assistants who encourage and support you both in lessons, at breaks, and in the interesting lunchtime games. You say grown-ups listen to your ideas and they are always willing to help if you have a problem. It is really good that you are so involved in the school council. You enjoy the opportunities in the themed weeks such as the Junior Citizen event. All of you have fruit at breaks, showing us that you try hard to put into practice what you know about healthy eating. Again, very well done!

Before we left, we talked to your teachers about how Holy Trinity could do even better. They told us they will try even harder to ensure that your success in writing matches that in other subjects. We also asked that the school help subject coordinators develop even better skills so that they can share more responsibility for running the school.

We would like to wish you and your school every success for the future and hope that as now you will continue to cooperate fully with your teachers.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Nolan

Lead Inspector