

Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100263
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	307344
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Christopher Gray

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin
Principal	Sian Davies (Executive) and Yvonne Barnett (Acting Head of School)
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2005
School address	Beechwood Road London E8 3DY
Telephone number	020 7254 1010
Fax number	020 7254 8589

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, as part of a coordinated inspection.

Description of the school

The school is similar in size to most schools of its type. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is well above average. Nearly all the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and about three-quarters are Black African or Black Caribbean. About 20% of pupils are at the early stage of learning English, a high proportion. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than average, though the proportion with statements of special educational need is average. The school is federated with another school and shares the same principal, senior leaders and governing body. This was inspected at the same time, and is reported on separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well both academically and personally. Children enter the Nursery with well below average skills, especially in communication and readiness to learn. By the time they leave at the age of 11, they attain similar standards to those of most other pupils in the country. Their attitudes to learning are very good and they behave well. One girl said that one of the most important lessons she had learnt is, 'Co-operation - working as a team.'

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and why it is a good idea. Younger pupils express this in terms of 'living longer', though older pupils realise that quality of life is important too. They reflect on what is of value in their own lives. One Year 6 pupil said, 'It is important to learn about different religions - it helps you get along with people.'

The school has continued the journey of improvement that it began a few years ago. The new approach to teaching English has proved very successful and many pupils make extremely good progress in their reading and writing. This is because leaders and managers have a very clear vision for the school's development and plan its growth in an effective and manageable way. The outstanding leadership of the executive principal has been key to this, in making the most of the valuable opportunity afforded by the federation with another local school. This enables expertise in many areas to be shared effectively between both institutions, as demonstrated by the rigour with which pupils' progress is tracked in both schools.

Pupils learn well as a result of the interesting curriculum and good teaching. They love the way subjects are linked together, especially how science is fitted into so many topics. Pupils have access to a good range of computers and use them regularly to research or publish their work. Mathematics is the school's current focus and pupils make good progress in this subject. However, their progress is not as fast as it is in English because teachers do not always match the work that they give pupils to what they are capable of.

The pastoral care given to pupils is a strength of the school and enables them to feel secure and happy. Pupils work hard to achieve good behaviour and are proud of their success. On 'Parents' Week', a group of pupils explained to parents how the school rules work and why they are important. Teachers use assessment well in most subjects to keep track of how pupils are doing. This is especially thorough in reading, writing and mathematics and enables extra support to be directed to where it is most needed. New systems have been set up to give a similar picture in science. Pupils develop a good scientific knowledge, but their progress in investigations is currently harder to track.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress overall across the Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Year 1, most are reaching the expected levels in many areas of the curriculum, but not in aspects of communication, language and literacy. The organisation of the Nursery is good and enables children to experience a rich range of interesting experiences. Systems for assessment and planning support good progress across the Foundation Stage, but their use is less consistent in Reception. Provision in this class is enhanced by effective extra support. However, outdoor accommodation is restricted and children do not always have enough time to choose for themselves. The Foundation Stage is very well led and improvements to the accommodation and teaching in Reception have been appropriately planned.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make greater use of teachers' knowledge of pupils' prior learning in mathematics when planning for what they need to learn next.
- Achieve greater consistency in the provision for the Foundation Stage between Nursery and Reception.
- Complete the new systems of assessment for science investigation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach average standards by Year 6 from a well below average starting point. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards are a little below average by the end of Year 2. Pupils continue their good progress in Years 3 to 6, especially in reading and writing. In the current Year 6, standards are on track to be average or a little above by the end of the year. Results in the 2007 national tests were lower than this because of the attitudes and abilities of the individual pupils.

No groups underachieve. Pupils of Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds do well and make much better progress than their national and borough counterparts. Pupils learning English as an additional language also perform well in national tests. Good support enables slower learners and those who fall behind to progress at least as well as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are articulate and thoughtful about the important aspects of school life. Working hard is a priority and they are critical of any who interfere with their learning. Pupils are very clear about how to keep healthy, both from the quality of food they eat and the necessity for regular exercise. After-school sports clubs are popular. Pupils feel safe and know who will help them with any personal difficulties. Bullying is rare and is well dealt with by staff. Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to each other and adults, irrespective of pupils' backgrounds. They co-operate well and are loyal to the school community, to which they make a good contribution through the school council. Attendance is improving but is affected by a small number of parents who persist in taking extended holidays in term time. Older pupils recognise they need to be good at English, mathematics and ICT ready for the next school. They enjoy the majority of their lessons but say that, occasionally, some are less interesting than others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils' enjoyment of lessons is obvious from their attitudes in most lessons. They pay close attention and work hard because their teachers give them good encouragement and hold their interest. This is also clear from the care with which they present their written work, showing that teachers are effective in helping pupils to do their best. English lessons (known as SFA – Success For All) are successful because they involve many adults to produce small groups, where activities are closely matched to pupils' ability. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils were reading a book about what aliens might think about human babies. The humour

took some understanding but good use of group discussion enabled pupils to see the jokes. Teachers also vary the work they give to pupils in mathematics according to pupils' ability, but they do not always do this closely enough to give pupils the most appropriate challenge.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school adopted the International Primary Curriculum because of the creative way in which it links subjects together and enables teachers to track pupils' attainment. It works well and is a major contributor to pupils' enjoyment of school. So too is the SFA English curriculum. Resources for ICT are good and new equipment gives pupils ready access to the internet in every room. The curriculum is given added excitement by trips and visitors, such as parents who helped make masks in Black History Month. There is a range of extra-curricular activities, though take up of some of them is limited by the cost to parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall and pastoral care is outstanding. Pupils' welfare is paramount. Procedures for safeguarding, health and safety are fully established. The most vulnerable pupils are quickly identified and supported. Parents and carers are given the right kind of help because very good links exist with external agencies. Healthy life styles are very well promoted and pupils benefit from high quality, freshly prepared food each day for breakfast and lunch. Regular attendance and punctuality are vigorously encouraged. Staff know pupils well. Great attention to individual needs ensures that most pupils succeed in their learning. Assessment procedures are well established and effective in most subjects, though they are still being developed for scientific investigations.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and enable pupils to achieve well by the time they leave school. The vision and determination of the executive principal, to ensure good quality education and care for all pupils, are translated with flair and imagination into an interesting and rich curriculum. This is because of the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. The principal is well-supported by the acting and assistant heads of school. Leaders of core subjects are firmly focused on improving pupils' performance. The science coordinator has been appointed recently and has already started to improve systems of assessment. Challenging targets are set and reviewed regularly so that expectations are demanding. The inclusive attitudes of all staff contribute well to harmonious relationships. These attitudes, effective leadership across the school and a commitment to tackle under-achievement mean there is good capacity to improve further. Governance is good and school leaders are held to account well by the very committed and well informed chair.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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 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
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

30 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, London, E8 3DY

It was a great pleasure to visit your school recently and to meet so many of you. Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us and for being so ready to talk to us.

You are very proud of your school because most of you do your best to make sure it is a happy and safe place to be. The adults work hard too to make sure that you succeed in your work. As a result, your school is a good one. One parent wrote to tell us, 'My child's teacher is helpful, caring and does a great job.'

Your behaviour is good and you concentrate hard in lessons. I saw this in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, when everyone shared in a discussion to compare the size of a group of mixed fractions. Your teachers explain things well. One of you told me, 'I like the way teachers show us lots of different ways of doing things, to make it easy to understand.' You enjoy most of your lessons, especially science investigations, and we have asked staff to make sure that you make the best progress you can in these experiments by keeping a more careful track of how you are doing.

The progress you make in your work is good in most subjects. It is best in reading and writing because of the SFA lessons that you clearly enjoy. We have asked the teachers to help you make similar quick progress in mathematics, by giving you work that is at the right level of difficulty for each of you.

Holy Trinity is linked ('federated') to another Hackney school, so that both schools share the same principal, senior staff and governors. They do a good job in making sure that both schools benefit from what each is best at. One of the things they are improving in your school is the provision for the children in Reception. We have recommended them to continue with this work.

I hope you continue to enjoy your education at Holy Trinity.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray

Lead Inspector