

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117428
Local Authority	HERTFORDSHIRE LA
Inspection number	312610
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	David Benstock

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ted Clark
Headteacher	Miss Sarah Chaloner
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Longlands Close Crossbrook Street Waltham Cross Hertfordshire EN8 8LU
Telephone number	01992623467
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. It is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school and serves the local community in an area with a wide range of social backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is half the national average and very few have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average but the proportion whose first language is not English is relatively small. The school has had considerable change in its leadership recently, with a new headteacher appointed in April 2007 and new deputy headteacher in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and has some good features. Parents and pupils say how pleased they are with improvements that have been made over recent months in many aspects of the school.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They enter the school with broadly average attainment. The school judges rightly that pupils make satisfactory progress at each stage and standards remain average overall when they leave. However, in 2006, standards fell and, although achievement in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory, in mathematics it was a weakness, particularly for the more able pupils. In 2007, results improved in all three core subjects and in the current year pupils' achievement continues to be satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties are achieving as well as other pupils.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The commitment of staff to pastoral care contributes effectively to pupils' secure personal development and well-being. Behaviour is generally satisfactory, although pupils sometimes lack the self-discipline in lessons needed to remain focused on learning. Pupils feel safe because the school has rigorous systems of safeguarding in place. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils enjoy being at school.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants plan work that is interesting and well matched to the needs of the majority of pupils, but the level of challenge is not always sufficient to maximise the achievement of more able pupils, especially in mathematics. Good relationships are established between pupils and teachers and this encourages enjoyment of learning. Systems to track pupils' achievement are at an early stage of development and, although assessment is carried out regularly, it is only just beginning to be used to help promote learning. The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets the needs of most pupils and supports the Christian ethos of the school through, for example, the commitment to raising pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new leadership team has already had notable impact. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future and has implemented initiatives that are proving effective. The new roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders are emerging, but their involvement in the monitoring of teaching is not well enough established. Self-evaluation is accurate, underpinning the clear improvement plan, and the school sets itself challenging targets to raise standards. However, there is a lack of rigour in the system for analysis and use of performance data. Governors are supportive and committed to the success of the school. However, they have not kept pupils' performance in tests high enough on the agenda in holding the school to account. Partnerships with other schools, nurseries, local authority support agencies and the community are well established. The school demonstrates satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

At the time of the inspection there were only 11 of the full complement of children in the Reception class because the school has a further intake of pupils each term. The Foundation Stage provides a sound start to children's education at Holy Trinity. Parents are pleased with all that the Reception class provides and how quickly and happily their children have settled into school. The satisfactory curriculum meets the children's needs and the outdoor area is

used effectively as an extension of classroom learning. Children make satisfactory progress. Children who start school in September benefit from the longer time spent in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is satisfactory. By the time they start in Year 1, almost all children are securely at the expected levels for their age. Pastoral support is good. Adults are very supportive and encouraging, which develops children's confidence and independence. There are good relationships between children and between children and adults. The leadership for the Foundation Stage is new but the school has already identified the need to develop more links with Year 1 to provide a smooth transition.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics by improving the consistency with which teaching and the curriculum ensure pupils of all abilities, especially those working at higher levels, achieve as well as they can.
- Implement a more rigorous system of analysing assessment data to track pupils' achievement and use assessment to promote learning.
- Raise expectations of how well pupils should take responsibility for their sustained attention and focus on tasks in lessons.
- Implement a comprehensive programme of monitoring of teaching quality and the work of the school, involving leaders at all levels and governors.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In both Key Stages, results fell in 2006. However, following changes in school leadership, results in 2007 improved. In Key Stage 1, the 2006 results were better in reading, and to a lesser extent writing, than in mathematics. In particular, the proportion of pupils gaining higher levels in mathematics was below average. Attainment in each area had been falling over the previous two years. In 2006 at Key Stage 2, science was a strength, but there was underachievement in English and particularly mathematics.

The improvement in the 2007 results has been sustained in the current school year. Pupils' progress is satisfactory. In 2006, there was slower progress made by boys than girls at Key Stage 2 and the school is reviewing its curriculum to identify how the provision can be adapted to stimulate boys' interest more. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with different cultural backgrounds are achieving as well as their peers because of the careful planning by teachers and support provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. They enjoy school a great deal and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy, talking sensibly about the importance of eating a healthy diet and taking regular exercise. Many participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular sports. The school council is developing its role within the school and helps pupils to make

positive contributions to their community. Their suggestions are being taken seriously. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Their sound basic skills give them a satisfactory foundation for their future working lives. Pupils' behaviour is acceptable in lessons and around the school. However a significant proportion of pupils are not yet at the stage of taking responsibility for maintaining their concentration in lessons and even older pupils can become quite restless.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers plan well to provide interesting activities, using a range of teaching methods that allow pupils to be creative. Good arrangements are made to match the needs of lower and average ability pupils, but the work is not always challenging enough for more able pupils in mathematics, and they have not achieved as well as they might in national tests. Teaching assistants take an active part in lessons, providing good support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Friendly and caring relationships between teachers and pupils encourage pupils to be confident and enjoy lessons. Classes are managed satisfactorily, but there is not a consistent established expectation of pupils to remain focused on tasks. Teachers assess pupils regularly and are beginning this year to make better use of the information they gather to promote learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The broad curriculum meets the needs of the majority of pupils, but planning does not provide sufficiently for more able pupils in mathematics. Personal, social and health education, and information and communication technology are both timetabled as specific lessons and developed well in other subjects, hence contributing to pupils' essential life skills.

A recent review of the curriculum has been carried out in detail and cross-curricular links are being established to help raise achievement in basic skills of literacy and numeracy. However, this initiative is at an early stage of development.

The wide programme of enrichment and extra-curricular clubs enhances the curriculum well. Pupils are very appreciative of the opportunities organised. Activities such as 'themed weeks', residential experience, exciting visits and visitors, and the wide range of after-school sports clubs contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment and personal development. The commitment to sport is a strength reflected in the valuable link with other schools in the 'A10 Sports Partnership'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The good level of pastoral support and care from teachers and other adults ensures pupils feel safe and secure. Regular health and safety risk assessment involving site staff and governors takes place. Staff are well trained in first aid to deal with medical emergencies. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for and the recent appointment of a learning mentor is particularly helpful to vulnerable pupils. Good links with external support agencies ensure prompt action is taken when needed. A system of 'buddies', in which older pupils take responsibility for supporting pupils at playtime, and the 'breakfast club' are new

initiatives that enhance the good quality of care. However, systems for tracking pupils' achievement are not yet rigorous enough to provide an adequate basis for teachers to use targets and assessment to help learning and support good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Even though the headteacher has only been in post for just over one term, her good leadership has gained the confidence of staff and parents. Senior leaders provide good support as their new roles become clear. Good self-evaluation involving staff and governors, combined with clear vision, has led to a good school improvement plan. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils fully meet statutory requirements. Monitoring of teaching has been variable in quality and regularity, and subject coordinators' involvement has been limited. However, sharing of good practice has been a good feature. A new monitoring schedule is now in place to provide a systematic programme for the evaluation of teaching and training needs. In most ways, for example in the support for pupils with learning difficulties, the school is highly committed to the equality of opportunity for all pupils. However, provision for higher ability pupils has not ensured their achievement in mathematics has been as good as for those of middle and lower ability. Governors are very supportive but have not been sufficiently proactive in holding the school to account over falling standards.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	2
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	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

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

1 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Waltham Cross, EN8 8LU

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, seeing you learn and hearing about your experiences.

Your school provides a standard of education that is similar to many other schools and it is improving because new things are being introduced. You are learning as expected and we were pleased to hear that you find the teachers friendly and caring. Your behaviour is generally good, and you enjoy school, but we would like you to stay more focused on your work in class. Many of you enjoy the exciting sports opportunities that the school organises. Your teachers and the other adults in the classes try to make sure the work is interesting. We think your school is good about making sure you are safe, looking after your welfare, and that the new headteacher is leading the school well.

There are four things that we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do to make the school better:

- help all of you learn as well as you can in your lessons, but especially to make sure the more able pupils do better in mathematics
- study your test results and assessments in more detail to see how well you are doing in comparison with what is expected, and use this information to give the help needed and help you learn more effectively in lessons
- monitor and observe the teachers' work more regularly and thoroughly
- expect you to get on with your work in lessons without getting distracted or becoming restless.

We hope you carry on enjoying your time at the school and do well in the future.

David Benstock

Lead inspector