

Leatherhead Trinity School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135009
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	316303
Inspection dates	26–27 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr J Swanson
Headteacher	Mr P Smyth (interim headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Woodvill Road Leatherhead KT22 7QT
Telephone number	01372 813615
Fax number	01372 813619

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Leatherhead Trinity was established a year ago as a result of the amalgamation of two infant schools and one junior school. The building of a new school, which was due to be completed at the beginning of this school year, has been delayed indefinitely. As a result the school continues to operate on the three original school sites. The site for Key Stage 2 pupils is situated roughly centrally between the two Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 sites, which are a mile and a half apart. The school serves an area of mixed social and private housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than that found nationally as is the proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities. At the time of the inspection an interim headteacher is in place as the headteacher is on maternity leave. The school has a Children's Centre and a Language Unit.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school with some good features. The governing body, headteacher and senior managers have successfully maintained the support and commitment of staff and parents in meeting the challenges of working from three sites and despite the frustration felt by all in the delay to the new school building.

Children feel safe at school and behaviour is satisfactory. The ethos within the school and the contribution made by the three Churches successfully promotes care and respect for others and good relationships between staff and pupils. Parents are positive about the school. One wrote, 'I am confident that my children have a well-rounded outlook and approach to life as well as a sound educational background due to their time at the school.' The school works very well with other agencies and organisations to promote pupils' well-being. Attendance is getting better, but despite all the school is doing, it is still below national levels and some pupils miss out on important learning because of this.

Effective improvements have been made to the quality of teaching because a close check has been made on how well lessons are taught and the proportion of good quality teaching has improved. As a result, the school has halted a legacy of underachievement and pupils are making better progress. Better teaching is ensuring that pupils continue to catch up. However, more remains to be done to ensure that more teaching is good rather than satisfactory. Currently the rate of pupils' progress is sometimes too slow and expectations are not always high enough, particularly for the pupils that are more able. Activities in some lessons, and the curriculum overall, are not always challenging enough. Pupils particularly enjoy their lessons when they are active and able to participate. One pupil said, 'We think it's fun when we get to do things like acting or trying things out for ourselves. We understand it and remember things then.' There are too few opportunities in lessons to promote pupils' personal skills such as collaborating, negotiating and independent thinking and learning.

Standards are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are better than those in science. However, across the school, too few pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing. Reading is a strength. Mathematics is improving as a result of good guidance and subject expertise.

Pupils participate in a range of local community events including those with the three churches linked to the school. This positive contribution is enhanced by the pupils' involvement with Uganda and India. Pupils' personal and basic skills mean they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders and managers have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a clear sense of the school's future direction. The school has demonstrated that it has a satisfactory capacity to secure further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress and settle well in the Foundation Stage. One parent wrote, 'The teachers have been successful in creating an environment that is structured, safe and welcoming, laying the foundation for a happy and healthy education for life'. Children enjoy learning and feel safe and secure and leave their parents happily. Teaching is good because the activities in the classrooms and in the outdoor areas are stimulating and provide many practical hands on

experiences. Staff and children work extremely well together with the Children's Centre. Children's personal development is given a high priority and circle times and other activities are used to build strong positive relationships. Children's early literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well. Children's attainment when they start school in the Nursery or reception classes varies because of the wide intake area, but are, on average, below expectations for their age and well below in their language skills. They make good progress as a result of good teaching and by the time they start in Year 1, most reach the expected goals for their learning except in their communication, language and literacy skills. A good balance between teacher led and children's independent chosen activities provides valuable opportunities to develop independent learning skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the teaching has a greater impact on raising standards throughout Key Stage 2 and on writing across the school.
- Modify the curriculum to provide pupils with more exciting learning opportunities that develop their independence and thinking skills.
- Set more challenging targets for pupils, particularly for the more able, to increase their understanding of how they can improve.

A small proportion of the 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

Progress is satisfactory. Pupils generally meet the targets set for them and achievement is satisfactory. Standards by Year 2 are broadly average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. In reading, more pupils reach the higher Level 3 than found nationally but the percentage reaching the higher level in mathematics and writing is lower. In the 2007 national tests, standards by the end of Year 6, although below average, improved from the previous year and significantly so in English and mathematics which are better than those in science. The focus on reading has improved and extended pupils' skills, and standards across the school are better than those in writing. The school sets targets which do not always provide enough challenge, particularly for more able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the effective support that they receive, both in mainstream lessons and in the language support unit.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Strong links with the three churches make a significant contribution to pupils' good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, value the backgrounds and beliefs of others and respect their cultures. They are keen to discuss issues of interest and importance to them, such as how the world began and why people have religious beliefs. Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. They like school but some pupils are compliant rather than enthusiastic about their work. There are too few opportunities for pupils to engage in activities which develop their independence, thinking and problem solving skills. Pupils chat and play together reasonably well. They enjoy using the playground equipment, an initiative of the school council, but say that some pupils are not willing to share and

arguments can arise. However, pupils say that adults listen to their concerns and take action. A few pupils need to be reminded of the rules and are not yet managing their behaviour well out of lessons without support. They have a good awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils take their roles of responsibility seriously. This contributes to their understanding of how to be a good citizen. Recycling monitors collected up the banana skins with great enthusiasm.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In the main, lessons are well organised and planned so that pupils of all abilities can make at least satisfactory progress. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and teaching assistants contribute much to the good progress they make. Pupils say they enjoy learning when lessons are fun and exciting, but that not all of them are. More learning activities need to be exciting and challenging. Some teachers ask good questions to involve all pupils and help them to improve their speaking and explanation skills but this is inconsistent. Teachers have good strategies to help pupils who have behaviour problems and ensure others are not disrupted in their learning. Good relationships between pupils and adults support this. In some cases work is well marked and gives pupils pointers to improve. Even where comments are helpful, pupils are not always acting on them and are not always sure how well they are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is a good range of interesting enrichment activities to enhance pupils' learning and broaden their experiences, including clubs and sporting activities that contribute to healthy lifestyles. The curriculum meets all the requirements but is not enlivened enough in some lessons to make learning fun and exciting. Too few opportunities are created for pupils to learn through exploration and problem solving activities and thereby develop personal skills of collaboration, negotiation and independent thinking and learning. Pupils say that they would like more opportunities to discuss in greater depth, ideas and issues that arise in religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. The curriculum support in the language unit is well matched to pupils' needs. The school has implemented a good range of additional support for pupils who need extra help with their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a caring community. Support is extended to children and their families and all agree that children are looked after well. Child protection procedures are firmly established and all staff have received training. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities are identified early and given effective, additional support. A parent wrote, 'I cannot speak highly enough of the Language Unit. Staff are committed, caring, considerate and very helpful and my child is making good progress.' Academic guidance and support is satisfactory. Teachers mark and praise pupils' work but do not consistently tell them what they need to do to improve. The school has started to use systems which efficiently track pupils' progress but information is not yet used effectively to set challenging targets to further improve standards. Targets are

set in English and mathematics but pupils lack guidance in the skills required to evaluate their own progress towards reaching them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and senior team provide effective leadership and have demonstrated this by securing improvement in the year since the school was formed. Standards have improved over this time, as has the proportion of good teaching. Some aspects of monitoring work have not been in place long enough to have a real impact on raising standards further. Other leaders are developing their roles well but the full impact of their work has yet to be seen. The school has worked productively with the local authority to help focus its work. The school is now at a stage where it can pursue its priorities to ensure a more rapid pace of improvement and set more challenging targets. There is a commitment to include all children including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are more able. The governing body provides a good level of support, challenge and expertise and strategic planning, works well with senior staff and is highly committed to driving the school forward and raising 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	NA
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	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	2

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2
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	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	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

8 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Leatherhead Trinity School, Leatherhead, KT22 7QT

I am writing to thank you for helping us when we visited your school. Thank you for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school. You were all very friendly and polite.

Leatherhead Trinity is a satisfactory school. You told us that you like school and you and your parents think that everyone looks after you well. We agree with you.

Even though you learn in three different buildings, your headteacher and all the staff have worked hard to make you all feel part of one school which you told us you do, even though you would prefer it if you were all together. All the teachers have worked hard to improve the school and as a result you are doing better in your work.

There are some things you and your teachers should do to make your school even better.

- You have shown that you can improve and so those of you in Years 3 to 6 should work even harder in your English, mathematics and science lessons and all of you should work really hard to improve your writing. Your teachers should give some of you harder work so you can think things out for yourselves.
- Many of your lessons are taught well by your teachers and we think that all your lessons should be good.
- You told us that you learn best when lessons are exciting and so we think the work you do should give you more interesting opportunities to learn and more opportunities to share and respond to your teachers' questions with each other. This will mean that everyone has to think, not just the children who put their hands up.
- Your teachers should help you understand how you can judge how well you are doing and expect more from you to help you do well.

I am confident that with your help, the school will improve further. Thank you again for all your help.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Coussins

Lead inspector