

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103413
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	323817
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	211
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Willey
Headteacher	Christine Dunford
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Havelock Road Handsworth Birmingham B20 3LP
Telephone number	01214 649900

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2008
Inspection number	323817

Fax number

01214 644960

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size multicultural school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children of Nursery and Reception age. Sixteen different ethnic backgrounds are represented, of which the largest group are Black Caribbean. A small proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Mobility is high, and approximately one quarter of pupils start or leave the school at times other than is usual. Before and after school care is available on site, but these facilities are not managed by the governing body.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Holy Trinity provides a satisfactory education for its pupils within a caring and welcoming community. There is a calm, supportive and respectful ethos throughout the school, where pupils from many backgrounds and faiths co-exist very happily. Very good relationships between staff and pupils are present everywhere, guided by strong links with the local church. Parents and carers appreciate the school's work and their evaluations are overwhelmingly positive.

Children make good progress in the EYFS, but begin Year 1 with skills that are below average. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Although standards are below average by Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Writing and mathematics are weaker aspects of pupils' work, and there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. The curriculum is satisfactory, although in some year groups, pupils do not have daily English or mathematics lessons and, in some instances, the time spent in one session is far too long to maintain pupils' concentration. Although there are strengths in the pastoral care that pupils receive, care, guidance and support are only satisfactory as their academic guidance is less effective. Teachers do not use assessment information consistently well to ensure the right activities are planned to accelerate pupils' progress. Despite this, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as those who are at the early stage of learning English.

Robust attention to pupils' safety and well-being demonstrates the strength of the school's pastoral care. This ensures pupils' personal development is good and contributes towards their enjoyment of school. Pupils say, 'Teachers are kind and will always help you.' The majority of them work hard and behaviour is good. They are friendly and polite, speaking enthusiastically about the extra-curricular activities and wider opportunities offered by trips and visits. Pupils know the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and welcome the opportunities to help others within the school or local community.

The impact of leadership and management is satisfactory. Since the school's last inspection, senior leaders have taken successful steps to create conditions to support improved learning. They have developed satisfactory monitoring and evaluation systems, but much is done by senior leaders, as middle managers are inexperienced. Evaluations have not focused well enough on pupils' learning or exploring whether progress is good enough. Actions have not always been specific enough to improve standards, as shown by the unexpected decline in mathematics in 2008. These elements are being tackled by senior leaders and improvement since the previous inspection shows the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents speak highly of the good EYFS provision, and say they are very much included in promoting their children's learning. They value the very good relationships they have with staff, and recognise how well their children are cared for. Because of this welcoming and supportive atmosphere, children thoroughly enjoy school and because of effective teaching, they make good progress in the Nursery. The good teaching and learning continue in Reception, but children's skills are below average on entry to Year 1. Even so, this represents good progress from when they first start at school with skills well below those expected for their age.

Achievement is good. The emphasis on learning through play enables them to benefit from a wide range of engaging activities. Accurate assessment information is used effectively to match tasks precisely to children's needs. Leadership and management are good. The EYFS leader is trying hard to improve outdoor learning opportunities for Reception children as currently these are constrained by an unappealing outdoor environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide daily English and mathematics lessons for all pupils and plan opportunities for them to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Ensure teachers use assessment information to plan work that is specifically matched to pupils' different learning needs.
- Ensure monitoring at all levels focuses sharply on pupils' learning, resulting in action that will accelerate pupils' progress.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science, but achievement is satisfactory overall, considering children's low attainment on entry in the EYFS. Reading standards are improving, and an increasing number of pupils throughout the school are working at the level expected for their ages. Mathematics and writing are weaker aspects of learning, and the school's leaders know pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. In mathematics, despite a focus last year on improving calculation strategies, standards have declined even further. The 2008 provisional test results show that only about half of pupils attained the level expected for their age by the end of Year 6. However, in other year groups, there has been a slight improvement and evidence suggests standards will rise this year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because their needs are well understood and provided for through good targeted support. Pupils who are at the early stage of learning English are also well supported and their achievement is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils clearly enjoy school, and describe it as an 'interesting, friendly place where everyone one helps each other'. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good, and there is a notable atmosphere of mutual respect and care between all ethnicities and faiths throughout the school. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils are polite and well-behaved. They have a good understanding of healthy living, knowing the importance of making sensible eating choices and taking regular exercise. Pupils have no concerns about bullying, as they are confident that 'teachers sort things out'. They have a clear understanding of how to keep safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social and community awareness is effectively promoted through collections for different charities and those people in need of extra help. Pupils are proud of having responsibilities, such as members of the school council or peer mediators. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Relationships throughout the school are very good, which means pupils enjoy learning and are very willing to ask and answer questions. They work well on their own and in groups. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable, and they carefully support any pupils who need additional help. All teachers share the intentions of the lesson with their class, so pupils are clear about the learning expected of them. Also in some lessons, pupils know exactly what they have to do to achieve success in their written work. However, independent activities are not always appropriate and not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils are able to do. For example, making a puppet during a writing lesson meant some pupils missed the opportunity to develop their independent writing skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

In response to concerns about boys' underperformance, the school has begun to make changes to its curriculum. The introduction of the International Primary Curriculum gives greater flexibility in designing a curriculum sensitive to the needs of all learners. However, as yet, there is an insufficiently sharp focus on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In some year groups, pupils do not have daily English and mathematics lessons and the length of time given to these subjects in one session is far too long. For example, a two and a half hour mathematics session for Year 1 pupils is inappropriate. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular opportunities in sport and music, and there are well-attended homework clubs. Links with other schools and agencies through the local cluster and through the church widen the opportunities for learning and engaging pupils. These extend to parents and carers so the wider community is served well by this provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents praise the staff's attention to the welfare of all pupils. Enhancing the pupils' social and emotional awareness is a very positive feature, helping them to develop confidence and self-esteem. Robust safeguarding systems, including close monitoring of pupils' personal health, are in place. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the school's good home-school links, and support through effective education plans. Those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English also receive good support. Good links with a range of services help to nurture pupils' behaviour and social development, and create racially harmonious relationships. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The useful system for tracking and setting targets provide satisfactory information about pupils' progress, but senior leaders know that not all staff use assessment information well enough to plan the next steps in learning. Marking is satisfactory and there are examples of good marking in writing. However, this practice is not consistent, and pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides clear direction. The inclusion of all is central to the leadership's vision, and the school successfully creates an ethos where pupils feel safe and secure. All staff are committed to promoting equality and encouraging pupils to value diversity. Consequently, the school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Self-evaluation is accurate and systems to monitor the quality of provision are satisfactory. However, these are operated largely by senior staff. Subject leaders have a monitoring role, but this is at an early stage and has not fully influenced standards and provision. Although monitoring is regular, there is insufficient focus on how well pupils learn and actions are not always precise enough to raise standards. For example, despite the focus on mathematics last year, standards continued to decline in 2008. Governors contribute supportively to leadership and management and are developing their capacity to act as critical friends to the school satisfactorily.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/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?	2
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
The extent to which 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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 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	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

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

14 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Birmingham, B20 3LP

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school this week. We were particularly impressed with how polite and well mannered you were and with your willingness to talk to us about school and about your work. We found that your school is satisfactory, which means it does some things well and there are other things it needs to do better. These are some of our findings.

- Children in the EYFS get a good start to their education and make good progress.
- Teaching is satisfactory and you enjoy your lessons.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support those of you who sometimes find learning hard or who are learning English for the first time.
- You behave well, and are very willing to help each other as school councillors or peer mediators.
- The adults in the school look after you well and you say that they will always sort out any problems.
- You all get on so well together and it is good to know your parents or carers are pleased with the school's work. There is still work to be done to make Holy Trinity the best school it can possibly be. We have asked the headteacher to check that staff do three things.
- Give you all a daily lesson in English and mathematics, and have lots of opportunities to use your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Use information about what you know already to plan activities carefully to help you reach higher standards in your work.
- Make sure staff with leadership responsibilities check carefully that you are all learning as well as you can and take the right actions to help you make faster progress.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and coming to school regularly.

Yours faithfully

Lois Furness Lead inspector