

Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103986
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	323937
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

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 controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	332
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	Christine Pegler
Headteacher	Dawn Elsom
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Trinity Road South West Bromwich B70 6NF
Telephone number	01215 531573
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

In this larger-than-average primary school, just over 90% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and very few are of White British origin. Among the minority ethnic groups, pupils with an Indian background are by far the largest group. Just over half of all pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as are those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school serves an area that reflects considerable socio-economic deprivation. The school provides a breakfast club for a small number of pupils. Children enter the Nursery on a part-time basis and move to full-time education at the beginning of Reception year. Until recently, the attainment on entry to Nursery has been well below the expected levels for this age group. It is rising, with more children coming up with skills that are closer to the expected levels, but the attainment on entry overall remains below these. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher took up their posts in September 2008 and the school currently has two newly qualified teachers. The governing body has a new chair and has seen some recent changes in membership.

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 school. The new senior leadership team has brought about a sense of urgency into the life of the school and has already made a positive impact. The school is now dealing satisfactorily with improvement issues pending since the last inspection and is making progress with these. A large majority of parents appreciate the care shown for their children. As one parent points out, 'The school takes care of my children and me very well.' Partnerships forged with the local authority and others in the community are effectively contributing to pupils' learning and to their personal development.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although it varies across the school. As a result, standards fluctuate but remain below or well below the national average. Children make a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and build satisfactorily on this when they transfer to Year 1. In 2009, the school is on target to improve upon its 2008 results at the end of Years 2 and 6, as an increasing proportion of pupils are achieving closer to the national average. Currently, the satisfactory overall quality of teaching mirrors the variation in the rate of pupils' progress. That is, where it is generally good, as is the case at the top end of the school, pupils' progress quickens and they make up some of the lost ground from previous years.

Pupils enjoy being at school and are keen to learn. Consequently, they concentrate on their work and behave well. All of this bodes well for securing better standards. Pupils' good personal development is reflected in the regard they show for their own and others' safety as well as in their willingness to contribute to good causes within their local community. They have a good idea of how to stay healthy, but some of them do not apply this knowledge when choosing food to eat at school. Pupils' steady progress in basic and personal skills equips them satisfactorily for their future.

The curriculum provides sufficient opportunities to meet national requirements. However, too little is done to improve links between subjects and to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes through more practical activities. Good pastoral care helps pupils to feel safe at school and confident to seek assistance when they need it. Marking and targets set for pupils are providing satisfactory guidance but do not equip them sufficiently well with skills that help them assess the quality of their own work.

The senior leadership team has established the right priorities for improvement. The checking systems are becoming increasingly robust, particularly the collation and use of data to improve standards and to hold staff to account for their pupils' progress. However, checking systems deployed to evaluate the impact of teaching on learning in lessons or on the quality of pupils' work in their books are insufficiently rigorous due to a lack of sharp monitoring skills. The leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but the early success of the new senior leadership shows that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Governors are supportive of the school and willing to take a more active role in the life of the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

From their generally low starting points, children make satisfactory progress overall but their attainment on entry to Year 1 remains below average in all areas. Because of the emphasis being placed on improving children's basic skills, more of them are now beginning to reach the

expected levels. Progress is good in personal and social skills and much of this is down to the priority given to their development. Consequently, children gain confidence and display acceptable levels of independence. They enjoy coming to school and quickly settle into routines because of the care they receive. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but in Reception it is good. All adults work well together and ensure that children learn in a safe and supportive environment. A suitable range of activities that have a good balance between those chosen by children and those led by adults are planned. However, the outdoor provision remains limited and restricts children's learning. Children are assessed regularly and their progress tracked as they move through the EYFS, but how the assessment informs the next steps in children's learning is often not clear. To make the collection and use of assessment information more efficient, the introduction of an e-Profile is planned. The EYFS is led and managed satisfactorily but monitoring is not yet robust enough to bring about consistency and improvement in the provision

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress across the school.
- Strengthen monitoring skills in order that all leaders are well equipped to evaluate the impact of teaching on learning in lessons and in pupils' written work.
- Adapt the curriculum more closely to meet individual needs of all pupils through improved links between subjects and more practical activities
- Improve academic guidance to prepare pupils better for assessing their own work.

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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The unvalidated 2008 results show that at the end of Year 2 pupils achieved well below average standards in reading and mathematics, and below average standards in writing. However, these results represent a modest improvement and the school has narrowed the difference between its performance and the national averages, particularly in writing. At the end of Year 6, the unvalidated 2008 results represent a considerable decline in English, mathematics and science and indicate that this cohort of pupils made less than satisfactory progress. The inspection evidence shows that standards remain well below for the present Year 6, but they are on target to improve on 2008 results and meet the challenging targets agreed with the local authority. As a result of the improved tracking of pupils' progress, an increasing number of pupils across the school are now working at, or close to, the national average. Most pupils, including those with English as an additional language and other additional needs, make satisfactory progress because of the rising expectations in the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good behaviour in the school contributes to a calm working environment in which pupils feel safe and concentrate on their work. Pupils report that when occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour occur, the school deals with it promptly. Pupils say that they enjoy being at school and particularly like activities that are practical. The current attendance figures are close to the national average, but the school remains alert to the fluctuations that continue to occur.

Although the school holds the Healthy Schools Award, the choices pupils make do not always reflect their awareness of the benefits of healthy eating. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults in the school and they show a good awareness of fair play. Respect for different cultures present in the school, and the ability to reflect on their actions, are strong signs of pupils' good all-round personal development. Pupils play an enthusiastic role in the life of the school and willingly contribute to the welfare of their local and wider community. Competence in the basic academic skills is gradually improving and preparing pupils satisfactorily for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching varies but is satisfactory overall across the school. At present, there are not enough lessons that enable the pupils to make good progress. In all lessons, pupils behave well and display good attitudes to their work. In the better lessons, teachers ask searching questions that make pupils think; they emphasise subject-specific vocabulary in order that pupils fully understand ideas being taught and make learning as practical as possible. In these lessons, teachers successfully plan to challenge and support pupils of different abilities. In the mainly satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning is slower and teachers do not always pay sufficient attention to building pupils' vocabulary, which many pupils with English as an additional language need. In these lessons, teachers' planning does not fully take into account the previous learning to map out the next steps. In all lessons, good use is made of the teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Strong emphasis is rightly placed on developing literacy and numeracy skills as these are the areas of relative weakness in the school. The curriculum meets the national requirements. The guidance available to teachers on how to combine subjects and adapt topics or themes to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes is insufficient. Consequently, opportunities for practising literacy skills across the curriculum are not maximised. The social and emotional aspects of learning programme promotes pupils' personal development well. The teaching of Spanish as a modern foreign language introduces a European dimension to the curriculum. A range of visitors from the local community, educational visits and a small range of extra-curricular activities effectively enrich pupils' learning and contribute to their personal development. However, some parents and pupils say more enrichment opportunities could be provided.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are looked after well and, as a result, they feel safe at school. Pastoral care, guidance and support are backed up well with effective arrangements for ensuring health and safety, child protection and risk assessments. The recent slight decline in the absence rate indicates that the school's efforts are beginning to show a modest success but more remains to be done to reduce the absence rate further as well as addressing the small-scale persistent unpunctuality. Pupils with additional needs, including those with English as an additional language, benefit from good levels of support. Most marking provides clear guidance for pupils to improve their

work, as do the targets set. Pupils, however, remain insufficiently prepared for the task of assessing their own work and taking responsibility for their own learning

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The new leadership team is deeply committed to raising pupils' achievement and improving their personal development. The current priorities for improvement are the right ones. The effectiveness of the school's checking systems is rapidly improving through the collection and use of data to map out pupils' achievement. Consequently, senior leaders and all staff have a better idea of pupils' progress. However, there is insufficient rigour in the evaluation of the impact of the quality of teaching on pupils' learning in lessons and in their written work. As a result, the school's analysis of some of the inconsistencies in teaching and learning is not as robust as it needs to be. The role of middle leaders is insufficiently developed, thus limiting their contribution to the school's self-evaluation and development. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It has formed strong relationships with parents and others who speak English as an additional language. This has increased their participation in the wider community, improved their access to local services and enabled them to better support their children's learning. Due to the recent turnover of governors and their currently limited monitoring of the school's performance, the governance is satisfactory.

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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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3

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	3
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	2
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**

28 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, West Bromwich B70 6NF

Thank you for making us welcome to your school. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms, looking at your books and talking to you about your work. There are many good things about your school. Here are some of them.

- You behave well and concentrate on the work given to you.
- You get on well with each other.
- Your teachers and other adults in the school take good care of you.
- You enjoy being at school.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception get off to a sound start.
- Your headteacher, Mrs Elsom, and deputy headteacher, Mrs Corbett, work as a team and are doing the right things to make your school better. . This is what I have asked the governors and the senior leaders to do.
- Make sure that all lessons are the best they can be so that all of you make the best progress you can.
- Improve the way all leaders in the school check how good lessons are and how good your work is in your books.
- Make sure that when teachers plan their lessons for you, they bring as many subjects together as possible and that they give you more practical things to do.
- Improve your skills at looking at your own work to find out how well you have done.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector