

# Trinity Church of England First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123758
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	327980
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Billington

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	292
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	59
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Linds Wynne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Phil Burner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 September 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Nunney Road Frome BA11 4LB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01373 461949

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<b>Age group</b>	4–9
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 September 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	327980

**Fax number**

01373 472594

**Age group** 4-9

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**Inspection date** 24 September 2008

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**Inspection number** 327980

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the impact of strategies being used to raise standards in mathematics; the steps being taken to improve standards in writing, particularly for boys; and the way in which the school is strengthening arrangements for assessment and involving pupils in understanding what they need to do to improve.

Evidence was gathered from observations in lessons and around the school and scrutiny of pupils' work and a range of documentation. Parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This large first school has two classes for each year group, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools status. It is part of the Frome Learning Community Partnership (FLCP) that shares expertise across local schools and extends learning opportunities for pupils.

## 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. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and appreciate the range of activities in which they can get involved. Parents are also very positive about their children's experiences, making comments such as 'every day my son is enthused by something – in literacy, science or just a joke the teacher has made'. One of the key reasons for the school's success is strong teamwork. The headteacher, staff and governors share a clear sense of direction and work well together to enhance opportunities for learning. The school has a clear view of its strengths and staff know where there is scope for improvement. Well-structured action plans address key priorities and progress is reviewed regularly. However, the reviews tend to focus on the tasks that have been completed rather than on the impact that these have made on learning. This is because success criteria are not always specific and measurable.

Pupils achieve well during their time in school. Children join the Reception Year with skills broadly in line with those expected. By the time pupils move on to middle school, standards are above average but there is some variation in how well they do in different subjects. Reading is a particularly strong element and standards are high in this area throughout the school. Good progress is made in writing, an area in which children's skills are often limited when they start school. By the end of Year 2, standards are above, and in some years well above, average. This is also the picture at the end of Year 4 but, throughout the school, girls' performance is generally better than that of boys. Steps have been taken to boost boys' interest and competence in writing. These are beginning to have an impact and the most recent results show that the gap has been reduced.

Standards are above average in mathematics but not as high as in reading and writing. The school has implemented a range of strategies to tackle this but the impact so far has been limited. This subject is to be the key area of focus over this school year. Detailed analysis has been carried out on pupils' performance in different areas of mathematics. This has identified that their skills in using and applying knowledge of number and working out how to solve problems are weaker aspects. These areas now get particular attention in lessons and the school is sharpening the way that pupils' skills are being assessed so that areas of weakness can be addressed quickly.

Pupils behave exceptionally well and work well together. They are very well aware of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles, with a high proportion taking part enthusiastically in a variety of sporting activities. They feel safe in school and know that there is an adult to whom they can turn if they have any concerns. Pupils are attentive in lessons, work hard and are keen to succeed. They benefit from well-focused and purposeful teaching. Lessons are characterised by a positive atmosphere in which pupils' efforts are recognised and praised so that errors are seen as opportunities for learning rather than 'mistakes'.

Pupils' progress is tracked systematically and plans are in place to computerise record keeping to enable all teachers to access assessment information easily. Progress checks are being carried out on a termly basis as part of the plan to further strengthen assessment arrangements. Targets are set to inform pupils of the next stage in learning, but the way in which this is done is inconsistent. Pupils are not always clear about what their targets are. While positive comments are made when work is marked, these rarely relate to targets or give pupils clear guidance about how to improve.

Pupils make a good contribution to decision making through putting forward ideas to the school council. They have a high level of involvement in activities in the community, such as sporting events with local schools and a country dancing festival in Wells. Their appreciation of music, art and performance is enhanced through specialist teaching and performances by visiting artists and actors. However, their knowledge of the diversity of cultures represented in modern Britain is largely based on what they have learned in religious education. The school has identified this as an area for improvement.

Pupils' learning is enhanced through a good range of visits, visitors and themed events such as 'science week'. The school is planning to build on these successes to strengthen links across subjects and to extend opportunities for pupils to apply their key skills in a variety of ways. Good provision is made for pupils who have learning difficulties and they benefit from well-targeted support, particularly from teaching assistants. Parents are positive about the extra help that their children are given. As one commented, 'Teachers very quickly assessed my son's needs and have enabled and nurtured him to succeed.'

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start because staff are very sensitive to their needs and ensure that they feel safe and secure in school. Although this inspection took place early in the school year, children were confidently joining in discussions and making choices about their activities. Parents are very happy with the way that their children have settled in. This was apparent through comments such as 'My daughter has only been at Trinity a couple of weeks but loves school and has become more confident since starting.' Close observations of children's emerging skills and competences inform future planning and contribute to an ongoing profile of their progress. By the end of the Reception Year, standards overall are above average. However, there is some variation in attainment in different areas of learning. The school has identified that writing is weaker than other areas and has taken steps to address this. A specific programme has been introduced to improve children's skills in the early stages of mark-making and forming letters, but the impact of this has not yet been evaluated.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve pupils' skills in using their knowledge of number to calculate and solve problems in a variety of ways.
- Set clear targets for pupils and ensure that they know what they have to do to achieve these.
- Ensure that the success of specific initiatives to improve pupils' learning is evaluated by using clear and measurable criteria.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 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	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

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

29 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Trinity Church of England First School, Frome BA11 4LB

You may remember that we visited recently to see how you are getting on in school. Thanks to all those of you who talked to us about the work that you do and the activities in which you get involved. We could see why you really enjoy your time in school! I thought you might be interested in what we are saying in our report.

Trinity is a good school. You are taught well and have lots of interesting things to do that help you to learn. This means that you make good progress and you are well prepared for the move to middle school at the end of Year 4. You do particularly well with your reading. Your writing is also very good – we were pleased to see that boys are catching up with girls in this area – well done! Staff take good care of you and make sure that you get a bit of extra help if you need it.

One of the best things about the school is you yourselves. Your behaviour is exceptionally good, you work hard and you are keen to learn. We were impressed with all the activities that you do that help you to keep healthy. You told us how much you enjoy these and special events such as art and science weeks.

We have suggested three things that the school needs to do now.

- Make sure that you do as well in maths as in reading and writing by helping you to find different ways of calculating answers and solving problems.
- Give you clear targets so that you know the next steps in your learning and help you to understand what you need to do to achieve your targets.
- Check that all the hard work that your headteacher, staff and governors do to make the school better is really making a difference to how well you learn.

You can help by working hard towards those targets!

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Shirley Billington Lead inspector