

Holy Trinity CofE (Voluntary Aided) School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110471
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	337507
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Sheila Browning

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Fawcett
Headteacher	Catherine Carter
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fourteen teachers were observed in 20 lessons or parts of lessons. In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks and displays, the school's assessment and tracking information, the minutes of governing body meetings, the school's evaluations of teaching and learning and safeguarding documentation. Inspectors met with staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body. They looked at questionnaires from 121 parents and carers, 97 pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 33 members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the teaching of, and pupils' achievement in, writing and mathematics
- the impact of leaders and managers, at all levels, on driving improvements
- how senior leaders, including the governing body, promote improvement in pupils' understanding of, and involvement in, diverse communities within the United Kingdom.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most junior schools. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage, although there are very small numbers from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. None is at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities and those who have a statement of special educational needs is below average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The school has awards for promoting pupils' healthy living. There has been a change in senior leadership since the last inspection as the deputy headteacher was appointed first as acting headteacher and then substantive headteacher in April 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Most parents and carers commented positively in the Ofsted questionnaires, and one comment typified many, 'this is a great community school which offers a well rounded education'. Pupils' attainment is high and they make consistently outstanding progress because of very effective teaching. They develop many excellent personal skills, reflecting the high-quality care, support and guidance they receive and the excellent curriculum on offer. The school is exceptionally successful in supporting vulnerable pupils, helping several to overcome significant barriers to learning. Pupils say they feel very safe and secure. The new skills-based and creative curriculum is making learning more relevant and fun. Extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities are extensive and very popular, and during the inspection Year 4 pupils visited a local historical building dressed as Victorians while Year 5 pupils broadened their experiences in France. The whole school was enthralled when an actor shared his West End acting experiences as part of the school's careers week.

The school has made rapid improvements since the last inspection. For example, the school has improved attainment in English successfully through a range of initiatives including introducing a daily guided reading session, training on creativity in writing, and development of more regular timed extended writing opportunities. In mathematics, a sharper focus on applying pupils' practical mathematical skills to real-life situations, greater use of information and communication technology (ICT) and interventions for any pupils at risk of underperformance has accelerated pupils' progress further. Consequently, attainment improved significantly last year. Current data used to check pupils' progress and inspection evidence confirm an equally strong picture in the current Year 6. There are no obvious differences between groups of pupils.

Teaching has improved as a result of a sharper focus on using assessment strategies to help accelerate learning. Most teaching and learning observed by inspectors were judged as either good or outstanding reflecting the school's own views. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, as seen in their above-average attendance. They are collaborative, work well independently and thoroughly enjoy school whether taking part in sports, music, building a greenhouse or organising events for a healthy schools day. They contribute greatly to school life as mediators, buddies and house captains, run a stationery shop and make decisions through the school council. The headteacher and leadership team have extremely high expectations of staff and pupils and set ambitious targets based on rigorous and accurate self-evaluation. The established track record of raising attainment to a high level confirms that the school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve. The governing body has radically changed its role and is increasingly proactive. However, the governing body has yet to become fully involved in

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the life of the school and provide high levels of professional challenge to hold the school to account and so ensure that the high quality provision and outcomes for all pupils are sustained.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help the governing body to develop their awareness of the school's work so that it can more rigorously support and challenge it to sustain high quality provision and outcomes for all pupils by:
 - ensuring more regular planned visits are sharply focused on monitoring and evaluating specific aspects of the school's work
 - liaising more closely with staff on curriculum development
 - systematically providing more opportunities to consult with and gather the views of all stakeholders: pupils, staff, parents and carers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They show high levels of interest and enjoyment in lessons. Their excellent skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, underpinned by their good use of vocabulary, ensure high-quality and insightful discussions. Year 6 showed great empathy when drawing up philosophical questions about the role of Japan in the Second World War and the bombing of Hiroshima. As one pupil said, 'we need to think outside of the box - think wider' while another asked, 'is revenge ever right?' Pupils understand what they are trying to learn and check how well they have done and what they still need to do. While changing a story they had written into a play script, Year 3 pupils skilfully evaluated one of their classmate's efforts to improve it. Year 5 pupils thoroughly enjoyed working collaboratively when they designed a Viking settlement. The excellent use of talk partners and resources, are some of the key reasons why pupils make excellent progress from their broadly-average attainment when they join the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make excellent progress across the subjects.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of their own and others' safety and the importance of leading healthy lives. Peer mediators and buddies help to organise games and resolve any conflicts. Pupils in Year 3 said 'Hazard Alley', where they experienced real-life simulations and potential dangers to teach them about how to stay safe, 'was brill and scary'. High numbers participate in extra-curricular clubs and represent the school in music and sports events, from cross-country to 'Hope in the Park'. As Eco warriors and during 'dig-in' days, pupils, parents and the local community help clear up the environment. The school council sub-committees discuss teaching, learning and school environment issues, have established the Trinity Vowels rules and have set up a half-termly lunch survey. Year 6 pupils develop and use their basic skills to 'play' at business in real-life scenarios and organise careers week. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social

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and cultural development is impressive and extends well beyond the school as seen in their considerable charitable and environmental work locally and afar.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Each child is treated as an individual and pupils are encouraged to fulfil their potential. Biannual individual tutorials enable teachers to talk to pupils about progress made and to give support and guidance. Pupils are very well supported through an extensive range of intervention programmes. Strong links with outside agencies, parents and carers and teachers' expertise ensure pupils' individual needs are met most effectively. Gifted and talented pupils attend master classes and an inter-school quiz. Very good links with a local sports partnership and music centre ensure further learning opportunities. As a result, attainment for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able, is high.

The school is at the forefront of curriculum innovation; it has instigated strong links with local schools to develop assessment and share best practice such as 'P4C', a philosophy project. Staff training and liaison work with a local secondary school, targeting help for

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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mental health, have enhanced transition support for vulnerable pupils, while external funding provides support for targeted pupils to access extended services. Opportunities for pupils to use and develop their reading, writing, numeracy and computer skills are excellent.

Teachers and well-trained teaching assistants work together very closely to ensure all pupils' needs are met and they regularly question pupils to assess their understanding. Their secure knowledge, very positive relationships, and well-established routines reinforce high-quality learning. They confidently use technology, resources and different teaching methods to ensure pupils are very well motivated. For example, in mathematics Year 4 enjoyed investigating different sports kits and colours based around football and the World Cup. Year 6 used drama to explore the emotions of different characters and then produced presentations using ICT for and against an international search rescue. Teachers' high expectations of pupils include tough challenges for pupils of differing levels of ability. Pupils' books are well marked with clear guidance. Pupils are clear about their targets, next steps in learning and enjoy assessing their own and each other's work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher gives outstanding direction for the work of the school. She has been very well supported by staff, parents, carers and the governing body throughout the developments she has led as acting, and now substantive, headteacher. Management at all levels shares and is involved in the drive for improvement. Subject and year leaders engage in a wide range of moderation activities within the school and local authority to ensure consistency of standards and the development of their areas of responsibility. Members of the governing body are attached to curriculum areas and governance has developed substantially, but governors do not regularly conduct sharply-focused visits to monitor and evaluate specific aspects of the school's work. There is also some further scope to liaise more closely with staff on curriculum development and to gather the views of all pupils, staff, parents and carers.

The school promotes equalities and tackles discrimination vigorously and effectively. Procedures for safeguarding, risk assessments, and vetting of staff are very detailed and strong collaborative working with other agencies is secure. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good, because links with a contrasting school community within

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the United Kingdom are being firmed up. Consequently, pupils' awareness of this strand though good is not as advanced as their very well-informed views of the immediate local community and excellent understanding of those much further afield. Creativity week, links with Marlow's twinned town Marly-le-Roi in France and with South Africa and India enable numerous multicultural opportunities that raise pupils' awareness of different cultures and religions. The parent teacher association is very strong, and has won a national award for its work. Feedback and consultation with parents and carers are good but the majority are not closely involved in decision-making on key matters. Their views are actively sought through the use of questionnaires, an evening with the headteacher, and an informal 'Tea@3' where parents and carers can talk about the school's work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

An average proportion of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Most were very positive about the work of the school and there were many positive comments on questionnaires. The few points raised for improvement related to individual incidents or concerns; a few parents and carers were concerned about the school meeting their child's particular needs and how they were helped to support their child's learning. Inspectors found pupils' individual needs to be very well met through the excellent pastoral support, guidance and a wide range of effective interventions and programmes. The school has an 'open door' policy and parents are invited to a variety of meetings, workshops and consultations so that they can support their children's learning. The message books and homework diaries provide useful information for

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parents and carers and a place to exchange information.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Trinity Church of England (Aided) School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 121 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 290 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	60	44	36	2	2	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	87	72	33	27	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	47	39	62	51	7	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	42	56	46	11	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	56	46	61	50	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	39	57	47	12	10	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	58	47	39	3	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	70	52	46	38	2	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	41	53	44	14	12	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	40	58	48	11	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	39	61	50	7	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	66	55	50	41	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	60	37	31	6	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England (Aided) School, Marlow, SL7 3AG

Thank you for helping us so much when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and were impressed with your behaviour and courtesy. We would like to tell you that we agree with you and your parents that yours is an excellent school. These are some of the reasons why:

- You make outstanding progress and work really hard so that when you leave school at the end of Year 6 your standards of work are always high.
- You told us how much you enjoy everything at school, you have so many different exciting activities to choose from and your teachers work hard to make learning fun.
- You told us how very safe you feel and we agree with you; all of the adults make sure that you are very well cared for, supported and guided to do your very best.
- You contribute so much to your school and the local community as buddies and mediators, through the school council and your eco work.
- Your headteacher and staff lead the school exceptionally well and it has improved so much since the last inspection.

Even in outstanding schools, some things can be made better. We have asked the governors to find out more about how the school works so that they can support and help the school to improve even further. We also want them to work more closely with teachers, staff and you, to get your views and act on them. You can help by always working as hard as you can and by letting governors know your views about how to help the school become even better than it is now.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Browning

Lead Inspector

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