

# Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, Eight Ash Green and Aldham

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115075
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	338505
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheelagh Barnes

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	136
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ann Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Karen Springett (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Fiddlers Folley Fordham Heath Colchester
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 240880
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<b>Email address</b>	admin@eightashgreen.essex.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Seven lessons were observed and five teachers were seen. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff, including the executive and the newly appointed headteachers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, policies and data about pupils' progress and the standards they attain. No formal meetings were held with parents, but fifty parents' questionnaire responses were analysed as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- the progress pupils, particularly those who are potentially higher attaining, make in mathematics
- how effectively information from assessment is used by teachers to respond quickly to pupils' changing needs and how well pupils understand their own next steps in learning
- how rigorous the newly formed leadership team's assessments are, and how effective they are in enabling leaders to manage the school through this period of transition.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school that mainly serves its local community. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and virtually all speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. There is a small, but significant, regular influx of pupils who transfer in from other schools. The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children who are taught with Year 1 pupils in one class. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and the Investors In People award. There is pre-school provision on site, but it is not run by the governing body and is inspected separately.

An executive headteacher was appointed in January 2010, following the promotion of the previous two headteachers who shared the role, until a new headteacher could be appointed and take up her post. The new headteacher has now been appointed to start in September. There have been significant unavoidable staff changes in recent terms.

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It has several strengths including the good quality of care, guidance and support it provides for all pupils. This in turn results in pupils making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Behaviour is good and the atmosphere around the school is that of a happy and co-operative community. Pupils' spiritual development is very strong which has a positive impact on their perspective on life and their respect for the feelings and values of others. Pupils value their school community and willingly participate in taking on responsibilities both in and outside lessons. They say that they enjoy school and demonstrate this with their above average attendance. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep themselves safe.

Pupils from all groups make steady progress in all year groups. Children enter the Reception with skills and abilities that are in line with those expected for their age. The progress they make throughout Reception and both key stages is satisfactory. In consequence, attainment is average by the end of Year 6. However, attainment in mathematics, while broadly average, is weaker than that in English and science and pupils' progress in mathematics is less consistent. This has been identified in the school development plan as an area for improvement.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there are examples of good practice. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and high expectations of behaviour. Marking is variable in the information it provides to pupils about how they are getting on and what they need to focus on next. Teachers use the information they have on pupils' performance to tailor the content of lessons to their abilities. However, this match of work to ability is not always as sharp or as individualised as it might be and this is the key reason why pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory, rather than good.

The executive headteacher has a clear vision for the school which is shared by the newly appointed headteacher. Self-evaluation is accurate and is being used well to plan future improvement. The school's systems for checking pupils' progress are satisfactory. They are comprehensively detailed, but labour intensive. As a result, analysing information to monitor the progress of particular groups is time-consuming. Leaders have correctly identified the need to further refine this. They have also highlighted the need to develop provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that Reception children have more opportunities to choose from a range of indoor and outdoor activities. The work on improving the outdoor area for these children has already started. Despite the many changes the school has undergone, it has shown improvement since the previous inspection and demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Boost the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - sharpening and finely tailoring teaching and learning to pupils' individual capabilities and needs
  - ensuring that teachers' marking and feedback are more consistently focused on letting pupils know the progress they have made towards the specific targets they have been set.
- Simplify assessment procedures to make it easier and quicker to extract information on pupils' progress and share this more consistently with all leaders and managers.
- Develop the provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children in the Reception class to enable more outdoor and child-initiated learning to take place.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Attainment of pupils at the start of Year 1 is in line with that expected nationally. Observation of work in books and of pupils' learning in lessons confirms the satisfactory academic progress of pupils throughout the school. For example, the 2009 results show that pupils' attainment was average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 standards of attainment are broadly average in English, mathematics and science and the 2009 end of key stage tests reflect this. Although progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall, it is more inconsistent than progress in reading, writing and science. This is because of variations in the quality of lessons. While some lessons are well planned to enable pupils of all levels of prior attainment to make good gains in their learning, in other lessons progress is only satisfactory. This is generally because work is given which does not meet the varying needs of all of the pupils accurately enough. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers. Relationships are positive between adults and pupils, which has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to their lessons.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about school, because all staff genuinely care about them and are friendly and tolerant, whilst at the same time maintaining consistently high expectations. Pupils say that they know who to go to if they need any help. The range of physical and creative activities during and after school is popular. Pupils show a great deal of interest in their place within the community and their relationships with others. They work well together in the school and local community. Their good behaviour is well regarded in the locality. Pupils show great willingness to reflect on their experiences and demonstrate great respect for the feelings of others. They show great care and compassion for friends who are upset. They are very thoughtful and tolerant of each other. Social and moral development is outstanding and, as a result, school is a pleasant

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

and friendly place to be. Pupils who have arrived at the school recently talk warmly of the welcome they received from others. Cultural development is satisfactory and pupils have a satisfactory understanding of cultural diversity. In view of pupils' satisfactory numeracy and literacy skills and developing responsibility for their learning, they are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education and future lives and well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching enables pupils from all groups to make satisfactory gains in their learning overall. Relationships are good and teachers plan good amounts of practical and interesting tasks. In some lessons, pupils from all groups make good progress. However, scrutiny of work in books and observation of lessons indicate that too often groups of pupils sit while the teacher gives instruction or explanation to others in the class. On these occasions, some pupils sit quietly through explanations of work they already understand, or of work that is too hard for them to follow. This slows the pace at which they acquire knowledge and skills. On some of these occasions teaching assistants also

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

sit quietly, waiting to work with a particular group during the activity part of the lesson. Teachers plan work carefully and mark pupils' books regularly, giving praise and encouragement. Some marking is linked very effectively to letting pupils know how well they have met their own particular next challenge. However the quality of marking is not consistent in the information it provides to pupils to enable them to take responsibility for their learning. The curriculum is good. Activities such as 'VIP day' are much enjoyed and provide a good vehicle for a lot of learning across subjects such as literacy and design and technology. Innovative use is made of visits and trips so that pupils are interested in and enjoy what they are taught. There is a good range of extra activities and opportunities that extend pupils' learning and personal development effectively, such as trips to Sutton Hoo and the Isle of Wight.

Good arrangements provide support and care for pupils and help them develop and learn. Parents receive good quality and regular information on their children's learning. The school works well in partnership with other agencies to effectively meet the needs of pupils and their families. Parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the care and support their children are given. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including vulnerable pupils, are supported well so that they make progress in line with their peers. A range of strategies are used to effectively encourage above average school attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The interim executive headteacher has provided a good steer to the school through a period of turbulence. Her positive manner and incisive evaluation have ensured that staff morale remains good. In their questionnaire responses, teachers and support staff say they are proud to work at Holy Trinity and that they feel their contribution is valued. The governing body has provided stability through this period by remaining supportive, well organised and visible to staff, pupils and parents alike. They hold the school to account for tackling weaknesses and ensure that they engage with parents regularly. As a result, the links with parents and with other agencies, such as local schools and the church are strong and have a positive impact on the provision for pupils. Community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has developed strong links with the local and international community. Leaders have started to plan, based on their analysis, to develop national and business links and to strengthen cultural links further to improve

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pupils' cultural awareness. Arrangements for safeguarding children are good and are placed high on the agenda for rigorous and regular review. The drive for improvement is having a satisfactory impact, as many new policies and systems are starting to show their effect. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Leaders have pertinent information about the groups of pupils who attend and about their participation in school life and the progress they make. There has been improvement where the school has targeted its actions, for example in the recent push to improve progress in writing across the school. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children settle happily into the Reception classes with pupils from Year 1 and quickly become confident about class routines, because provision for their personal and social development is good. Arrangements to keep children safe are good. Staff are alert and monitor all aspects of child protection diligently. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Adults are supportive and encouraging and a suitable range of different teaching methods is used. However, the youngest children spend too long sitting on the carpet and the focus of lessons is sometimes too advanced for them to make more than satisfactory progress. The teachers and support staff make regular observations of what children can do and record this carefully. However, a very labour intensive system is used that does not easily enable the teachers to make a swift evaluation of the progress of groups of children. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily. Although



children enjoy the opportunities for selecting their own activities and are given opportunities to make their own choices across the areas of learning, these opportunities are limited. In part this is because of the small size of the classroom and outdoor area but also by the focus on the National Curriculum for pupils in Year 1. Children are motivated by the good use of praise for their efforts and share and engage well with their peers. They are looked after with care. Leadership and management are satisfactory; there is recognition that the outdoor learning environment needs improvement and that children need to be given more opportunity to initiate their learning, by following through their own enquiry. For example, they should find out for themselves whether cuboids will roll rather than having adults show them. There are positive relationships with parents who are well informed about what their child will experience and learn through weekly newsletters and notice boards. By the end of the Reception year, most children reach standards that are expected for their age. Transition from Reception to Year 1 is smoothly organised and this helps to ensure that children continue to enjoy school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents are supportive of school and very largely positive in their views. Those who responded to the questionnaire were unanimous in their view that school keeps their children safe and that their children enjoy coming to Holy Trinity. Inspection evidence endorses these views. A very small minority of parents disagreed with statements across a range of other areas surveyed.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, Eight Ash Green and Aldham 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	66	17	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	66	17	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	62	18	36	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	50	23	46	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	54	20	40	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	50	21	42	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	54	21	42	2	4	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)	25	50	21	42	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	50	22	44	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	56	21	42	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	44	23	46	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	23	46	20	40	3	6	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	60	18	36	0	0	2	4

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](http://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.

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## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



19 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, Eight Ash Green and Aldham, Colchester, CO3 9UE

Thank you very much for making us so welcome and talking to us when we visited your school recently. I know we both really enjoyed watching you work and joining you in assembly and at lunchtime. You behave well and most of you attend school regularly and arrive on time. You think deeply about things and your consideration of others and the world about you is very good. You get on well with each other and you listen carefully to your teachers.

The school is providing you with a satisfactory education. Children in the Reception class are provided with a sound start and you all make satisfactory progress as you move through the school. The staff all care for you well and help you if you have problems. Those in charge of the school are working to make it even better. I think some of you occasionally could do even better in your work and I have asked your teachers and governors to make easier for you by:

- making sure that when teachers plan work for you it is at exactly the right level for each one of you
- involving you more regularly in knowing what is the next most important thing for each one of you to do in your work
- making the way teachers check how well each of you is doing simpler
- improving the area for the youngest children so that they have more opportunity to work indoors or outdoors and take more responsibility.

I know your new headteacher is looking forward to working with you. You can all help by continuing to work hard and by doing your best all of the time.

Yours sincerely

Sheelagh Barnes

Lead inspector

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