

Trinity School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131102
Local Authority	Barking And Dagenham
Inspection number	341092
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Karin Heap

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glenda Spencer
Headteacher	Peter McPartland
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2007
School address	Heathway Dagenham RM10 7SJ
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 27 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's activities, and checked pupils' work and the school's system for tracking pupil progress. A wide range of the school's documentation was also examined. This included policy documents for safeguarding and other statutory requirements, documents relating to the school's curriculum and teaching as well as governor and the local authority reports by the School Improvement Partner. In addition the team considered the views of parents, pupils and staff.

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

- how the school demonstrates outstanding outcomes for its learners
- how assessment to support learning has impact on pupils' learning
- how the school demonstrates a highly coherent and relevant curriculum for all learners and provides evidence that all of the provision, including extended services, is at least good with many areas being outstanding
- how the school demonstrates outstanding leadership.

Information about the school

Trinity is a very large day school for pupils with a wide range of needs. This includes pupils with severe, and often very complex, learning needs. Over one third of the pupils have autistic spectrum disorder. Two thirds of pupils are boys and two fifths are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with one third of the pupils eligible for free school meals. The school provides extended school activities and professional training programmes. The school is divided into three distinct phases: the lower school for pupils aged three to eight years; middle school for ages nine to 13; and, upper school for pupils aged 14 to 19. The school has provision for very young children from the age of three and a well-established sixth form. The Living and Learning Centre, which opened in 2004, provides 48 weeks of education for older and very challenging pupils with autism. The school has held the Investor in Careers award since 2001.

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

Trinity is an outstanding school. It is an inspiring school where highly committed staff make sure that everyone learns as well as they possibly can. Very strong relationships between pupils and adults underpin the very positive school ethos. Outstanding leadership ensures that the exceptionally creative and well-resourced curriculum enables high quality learning for all pupils and adults. The school is very highly regarded by parents and the local and wider community. It operates an inspiring 'Home Intervention Programme' which teaches parents relevant strategies to support their children effectively at home.

Pupils make very good progress across the school. On entry to school, pupils' attainment is exceptionally low. This is due to their complex needs. Most pupils experience a severe delay in their communication and learning skills. The school consistently develops pupils' communication and social skills, leading to a high degree of independence when the pupils leave school at the age of 16 or 19. All pupils leave school with skills that are very well matched to their next phase of learning. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are very well defined, but all teachers do not yet use information about individual pupils as effectively to inform their teaching.

The school has created a vibrant and very exciting learning environment in which all pupils thrive. The outstanding curriculum is complemented by a range of creative and innovative extended services. This includes very effective and highly regarded training for staff to support the structured teaching of pupils with autism. Pupils vividly enjoy school, are very happy and feel extremely nurtured and safe. As a consequence, all pupils learn very well. Highly structured learning and very consistent and appropriate communication ensure that pupils continually develop their independence skills. Behaviour in school is exceptionally well managed and pupils and adults are rightly proud of their calm and very orderly school. Most pupils show a very high degree of maturity in the sixth form, taking on significant roles and responsibilities such as school prefects.

The work of the school leadership is outstanding. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and leaders work together in a very supportive and constructive way. This is complemented by very strong governance and highly committed middle managers. The team persistently strives for improvement and creatively reviews, plans and develops the school to meet very effectively the changing needs of its pupils. Based on a very good track record and continuous very positive development, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- For a small number of staff, further consolidate the newly established assessment strategies by:
- learning to plan lessons that reflect the learning targets and strategies of all pupils in the class
- providing individual support and advice to staff
- extending staff's continual professional development programme
- moderating the assessments of pupils
- monitoring staff's effectiveness in using assessments of pupils in their planning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The school provides a rich source of evidence to show outstanding outcomes for all learners. This is consistent across all school phases. When starting school pupils quickly improve their communication and social skills so that they can access learning effectively. Their independence skills develop very well and by the time they leave school all pupils have reached a high degree of independence and have become very effective communicators.

Assessment and tracking information clearly indicate that progress over time is consistently good and for many pupils is outstanding. Pupils' high achievement is also clearly defined in their level of maturity and ability to interact effectively with others. Pupils achieve very well in their key skills to enable them to access the community and world of work. Relevant life and social skills ensure that pupils are very well prepared for their future. The school prudently analyses its data to understand the difference in pupils' performance during half-termly progress meetings. As a result, staff are able to adapt strategies for learning, for example by providing reading recovery programmes. Inspectors saw compelling evidence that the school's individual approach to meeting pupils' learning needs is very effective. The leaders of the three school phases use annual audits to identify areas for school development. They analyse the pupils' progress to identify areas where learning is less successful. During the past months, for example, the lower school focused on individual pupils who were not succeeding within the classroom and, as a consequence, set up a recovery room. As a result, two pupils were able to return successfully to the class base within the term.

Pupils clearly enjoy learning; they show this through good attendance and there are no unauthorised absences. Inspectors visited almost every class and saw a high proportion of good and outstanding learning. Pupils learn so well because of the inspiring curriculum which allows them to become excited about learning. For example, after-school sports clubs resulted in three pupils joining the Essex County Cricket team for young people with disability and a group of 13 pupils was invited to join a London-wide dance assessment. All pupils have clearly defined learning targets which are followed up consistently and shared with parents and carers.

Pupils are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles through a wide range of sporting and

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exercise activities. They show clear understanding of aspects of personal safety and feel very well supported and safe. They have formed very secure and trusting relationships with adults and peers and their behaviour is excellent. The very active school council was instrumental in improving school dinners, the refurbishment of pupil toilets and the development of a brand new outdoor classroom. Pupils' contribution to the school and local community is highly developed, providing many opportunities for independence and the celebration of pupils' exceptional achievements. Pupils have many exciting opportunities to learn about different cultures and beliefs. They show a clear ability to accept difference through their caring and supportive attitudes to each other, their respect to adults and conformity to school structures.

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	*
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?

The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good or outstanding, with

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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the highest number of lessons seen graded outstanding. Particular strengths in the lessons included:

- the teaching of very good and consistent communication skills
- the exceptional behaviour of pupils, who have learnt to take turns and make appropriate choices
- prudent and effective use of resources, including very effective support by adults
- the highly structured and very well organised learning environment
- exceptionally strong relationships between pupils and staff
- very effective planning which is focused on individual pupil assessment.

All lessons included elements of these very positive characteristics. In very few lessons, the planning seen was less detailed to explain how individual pupils need to learn.

Support staff, however, know pupils very well and are very skilled in ensuring the lesson content is accessible to all pupils in the class.

All classrooms are very well resourced and every area of the school is designed to support learning. The school uses its workforce very creatively and has very effective partnerships with several agencies, especially the primary care trust. Therapists and medical support for pupils are well organised and the school employs its own speech and language therapists to ensure communication remains of the highest quality. The extended curriculum is exceptional.

Pupils are very well cared for and every effort is made to ensure all their medical, physical and emotional needs are met to a very high standard. The school has very well thought out systems and structures to ensure pupils are safe and receive the best support. Safeguarding procedures are very rigorous and of the highest priority.

Inspectors were shown rigorous documentation to support vigilant monitoring of all aspects of health and safety. Parents and carers are extremely satisfied with the care and welfare of pupils in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 school's outstanding leadership demonstrates a continuous drive for improvement and thorough development planning. The school has a track record of sustained, very strong leadership and has shown no complacency in developing the school to meet the continually changing needs of its pupils. Leaders are very well supported by a governing body that has driven specific school improvements such as improved school security,

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safeguarding procedures and many areas of the extended provision including the summer play scheme. Governors have clearly delegated responsibilities and are very committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The headteacher uses delegation very effectively, thus enabling middle leaders to develop their skills and also to prepare for general leadership succession. The school's programmes to support and develop staff are impressive. As a result, the school is able to grow its own workforce through additional qualifications and post-graduate degrees. Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers express very high satisfaction and value the active, practical support they receive from school leaders. Community cohesion is good and the school has many ideas of how to develop this area further. Prudent management of the school's finances offers very good value for money.

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn very well. It is clearly evident how much they enjoy school. They settle very quickly into productive learning routines and speedily build trusting relationships with adults, thus enabling effective assessments to take place. Children make very good progress in their social, communication and early learning skills with outstanding outcomes in all other areas. The very thorough planning and well-organised structure of activities allow children to feel safe and secure. They learn essential skills to communicate with others. Children with profound needs learn equally well because adults build excellent relationships with the families and therefore

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very quickly get to know the children. Teachers, parents and carers work in close partnership to enable children to achieve as well as they do.

The classrooms are exceptionally well resourced and the learning environment is very well adapted to enable exciting lessons to take place. Very strong teaching and outstanding support and care ensure that provision for the very young children is of a very high quality.

Leadership is very forward looking and inspiring. All staff work very well together and continually look for improvement. High quality monitoring, planning and assessment underpin their work and secure extremely positive outcomes for all children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Sixth form

The school is very rightly proud of the outstanding provision. Students feel that this is the best part of their time in school. They thoroughly enjoy learning and are able to explain what they learn with confidence and pride.

All outcomes are outstanding. Students make exceptionally good progress, leaving school with a very good range of qualifications appropriate to their needs and abilities. All students progress very well in their key skills and they learn important life and social skills to enable them to move on to college or appropriate work-based learning. There are very strong links with parents, carers and other agencies to ensure very successful transition. Students' personal and social development is excellent. Students develop relevant skills, such as independent travel or finance management. They make a very strong contribution to the school and local community, for example, undertaking catering for special school events and the daily tuck shop.

Teaching is impressive for all groups. Teachers plan very thoroughly and effectively and include all groups of learners, including those with very challenging autism or with very complex learning needs. Excellent development of students' vocational and independent living skills are achieved because of the outstanding curriculum which is flexible and adaptable to meet everyone's learning needs. The Living and Learning Centre is an inspiring provision for students with very challenging autism and operates for 48 weeks of the year. The centre secures very positive outcomes for its students as they learn to manage their own behaviour, all achieve very good accreditation and excellent transition to appropriate provision after school.

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Very strong leadership underpins the excellent work of the sixth form. There is a continuous drive for improvement and a strong commitment to care, nurture and support for students and their families. Staff at all levels are highly effective in evaluating their work with a clear drive to achieve and maintain excellence.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who made their views known to the inspection team expressed very positive views of the school. (26 questionnaires had additional comments that were positive).

For example:

- pupils' speech is excellent
- my child is very happy in school
- my child has become a confident young man
- the school is very supportive, my child loves schooling
- this is a fantastic school.

A very few parents suggested that:

- therapies should be part of the school's curriculum
- home diaries do not give enough information
- children should be signing instead of being asked to talk.

Staff and pupils also contributed by filling in a questionnaire. 129 staff completed the form, with the vast majority being positive returns. 76 pupils returned the form of which all were exceptionally positive.

During this inspection, pupils' behaviour was exceptional. Pupils feel that bullying is not an issue. But, as they are well supported, they can turn to their teacher with any problems they might experience. During the inspection, the safety and security of the pupils were very well provided for and unauthorised access to buildings was not possible. Pupils felt exceptionally safe and happy at school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trinity 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 216 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	75	22	24	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	65	31	34	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	64	30	33	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	49	41	45	2	2	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	53	58	37	40	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	51	41	45	2	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	46	47	51	3	3	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)	36	39	45	49	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	51	38	41	4	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	45	44	48	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	43	48	52	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	49	42	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	58	34	37	2	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



8 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trinity School, Dagenham, RM10 7SJ

Thank you for letting us visit your school, we enjoyed seeing you learn so very well.

We think you have a 'WOW ' school'!

This is a great school. You really enjoy lessons and you love it when everyone celebrates how well you do.

This is because the adults in school help and support you greatly and they know you very well.

We are very impressed with how well you learn on your own and how you become very mature and responsible by the time you join the upper school.

Adults have taught you how to express your views and they listen to you very well. You take great pride in your school and you have helped the headteacher to make your school look very nice.

The school is doing very well but even so there is one thing it could improve. We have agreed with the school that it should:

- check that all staff use the information about how well you are doing to help them plan work that is always at the right level for you.

You can help too by keeping up your excellent work. Well done.

Yours faithfully

Karin Heap

Lead Inspector

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