



Holy Trinity Church of England VC Primary School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 115066
 LEA Essex

Inspection number 282926
 Inspection dates 7 - 8 December 2005
 Reporting inspector Anthony Knight

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

Type of School	Primary	School address	Beridge Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Halstead
Age range of pupils	4 - 11		Essex
			CO9 1JH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01787 472096
Number on roll	175	Fax number	01787 478291
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs T Rogers
Date of previous inspection	9 - 12 December 2002	Headteacher	Mr J Smith

Age group 4 - 11	Published January 2006	Reference no. 282926
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Holy Trinity is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School for boys and girls aged 4 -11. There are 175 pupils on roll. There is one pupil whose first language is not English and fewer pupils than are found nationally are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has increased over the last three years and is now almost twice the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. The school has had considerable instability of staffing over the last two years. The number of pupils on roll has fallen which has resulted in the re-structuring of classes. However, a substantive Headteacher joined the school in September 2005 and there is now a complete team of permanent teachers. Following the last inspection in December 2002 the school was placed in special measures. The school was last visited in June 2005 when it was judged that the school had made reasonable progress since being subject to special measures and good progress since the last monitoring inspection.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with Section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school has made good progress overall since the last inspection. While standards are inhibited by a legacy of underachievement, highlighted when the school was placed into special measures, there has been recent marked improvement in the progress being made by pupils in lessons. Standards and achievement are now satisfactory overall. A similar pattern exists in the Foundation Stage where standards are satisfactory although pupils make good progress from below average attainment on entry.

There has been good improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitudes as a result of the high level of care, support and guidance provided by the school. Innovative curriculum arrangements have had a dramatic impact on the behaviour and attitudes of a group of disaffected pupils. The school is aware that not all classes have the same level of support and is considering ways to ensure that all pupils, especially those in the largest class, have equal learning opportunities. The quality of provision has shown a marked improvement with most teaching now good and a significant amount of teaching being outstanding.

Leadership and management are good and there is clear evidence of the capacity for improvement. The contribution of subject leaders is good and there is a clear recognition of the need to further deepen their subject knowledge and provide more direct support to colleagues in the classroom. The school has improved relationships with parents and is beginning to raise the status of the school in the community. The school judged its effectiveness as satisfactory but inspectors judge the school's effectiveness as good. The school is providing good value for money.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to address the legacy of underachievement through focussed interventions informed by the increased data on pupils' progress.
- Ensure that all pupils have equal learning opportunities.
- Increase the impact of subject leaders through giving them more opportunities to deepen their knowledge and support colleagues.
- Continue to involve parents and raise the status of the school in the local community by celebrating how much the school has improved.

Achievement and standards

Standards in Key Stage 1 improved significantly in 2005 following a fall in the previous two years. Attainment in reading exceeded the national average particularly at Level 3, the highest level. Attainment in writing and mathematics also improved overall but relatively few pupils achieved the highest levels in these subjects.

Standards also improved in Key Stage 2 in English and science although the overall attainment was still below the national average. The results for mathematics fell especially at Level 5 and above. The school's targets for mathematics and science were not reached but were very nearly achieved in English. Boys did not achieve as well as girls and there was some underachievement particularly by the lower ability boys and pupils eligible for free school meals. In 2005 the standards reached by Year 6 pupils reflected much better progress than the previous year.

Achievement in lessons in both key stages has improved significantly. Pupils made good progress in nearly all lessons and achieved well in relation to their capabilities. The achievement of some pupils is remarkable given the level of prior attainment. While standards are still low due to the legacy of underachievement, for example in spelling and number, progress in lessons was good. A similar pattern exists in the Foundation Stage where progress is good but standards are satisfactory as the overall level of attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below national expectations.

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

Good improvement has been made since the last inspection and personal development and well-being of pupils are now good. All the staff have high expectations of behaviour and work hard to provide a consistent approach. They act as good role models and place good emphasis on raising pupils' self-esteem. In response, pupils now behave well and have good attitudes to their learning. Many are eager to please their teachers and do well. They clearly enjoy being in school and are keen to share their work with adults. The progress made with a group of disaffected pupils has been remarkable.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There has been good progress in pupils' spiritual development which is developed effectively through assemblies, in lessons and through the school's displays. Pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others.

Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of healthy eating which the school develops by providing fruit and vegetable snacks for the younger children at break time and through comments made in lessons. Pupils are given increased opportunities to take part in physical activity through the newly introduced clubs and regular physical education lessons. They have developed a sound awareness of the contribution they can make to the community through their participation on the school council and active involvement in charity projects. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Satisfactory improvements have been made in the school's systems for encouraging regular attendance. These are proving to be successful and attendance is now in line with the national average. Good information is given to parents to inform them of the importance of regular attendance but some continue to take holidays during term time.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly. All teaching was satisfactory or better. Teaching was satisfactory in two lessons and in all other lessons it was good or better. Several lessons were outstanding. All teachers consistently and rigorously applied the agreed codes of behaviour and so all pupils were very clear about what was expected. Appropriate teaching strategies were used effectively and skilful questioning provided exactly the right level of challenge and support for pupils. Very good use was made of the interactive whiteboards. Much of the work completely engaged pupils as it was made interesting and relevant.

Some of the outstanding lessons swept pupils along at an exciting and challenging pace. Other outstanding lessons created great calm and stillness and enabled pupils to reflect and develop confidence and self-esteem. Teaching assistants provided excellent support, consistently working at a very high level of professional competence. Two outstanding sessions were led by teaching assistants. The lessons that were less effective were managed well but did not engage the pupils. The large number of pupils in one class made it very difficult for the teacher and the teaching assistant to provide the individual support needed and so progress was limited.

Self-assessment is used effectively in many lessons and pupils were quick to ask for help when this was needed. Marking has improved and the best practice provides clear instructions about how to improve the work. Some marking occasionally adds an additional challenge to raise the standard of work even further.

Staff in the reception class have a good understanding of how young children learn and provide activities which help them to settle well and develop their learning through play and investigation. Considerable progress has been made since the last inspection and the overall quality of teaching and learning is now good.

Grade: 2**Curriculum and other activities**

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum for all children which meets the national requirements, stimulates learning and helps children to make good progress. Some aspects of the curriculum are very effective, for example the innovative development of small group teaching which has had a marked impact on the level of behaviour. Other aspects are in the process of being developed. For example, the school is sensibly reviewing the curriculum with a view to making more links across subject areas. Some links have already been established, such as in the pupils' work on World War II where their literacy skills and their ability to gain evidence from a wide range of sources were developed effectively. These sources included a well planned visit to the Imperial War Museum. The improved provision for information and communication technology is helping to support learning across the curriculum.

Parents and pupils are enthusiastic about the recent introduction of clubs after school. These are well attended and provide opportunities for children to develop social skills in a less formal setting as well as encouraging healthy lifestyles through physical activity.

Grade: 3**Care, guidance and support**

The school provides outstanding levels of pastoral care for all pupils. This is seen, for example, in the dramatic improvement in the personal development and well-being of the group of disaffected pupils. Child protection procedures are well established and staff are quick to identify those pupils who are failing to thrive. Pupils of all ages are comfortable about sharing their concerns with staff and are confident they will be acted upon quickly.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good because their needs are now quickly identified and good support provided. Good contacts are made with the parents of these pupils to ensure that staff and parents are both helping pupils to succeed.

Individual and group targets in literacy and numeracy help the pupils to build on their existing strengths and show them the steps they need to take to improve their learning still further.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

The recently appointed substantive Headteacher has provided outstanding leadership and has successfully built on the improvements achieved by the previous acting Headteacher. He is liked and respected by staff and pupils as he has acted consistently in a firm but caring manner. The school is much calmer and is a very pleasant place in which to learn and teach. The high quality of displays around the school has done much to increase a sense of pride in the school. Recognition must also be given to the deputy Headteacher who has stoically kept the school together over a prolonged period of instability.

The subject leaders have begun to monitor systematically the quality of provision and are increasingly making effective use of assessment data to identify where intervention is required. The school is aware that these developments are at an early stage and that more time is needed for the subject leaders to increase their depth of subject knowledge and to contribute more directly to the teaching of their subjects across the school. Good leadership is provided by the SENCO.

The Self Evaluation Form was developed effectively with all staff and the governing body and provides a good, honest picture of the school, although most judgements are too cautious.

The governing body is providing good support to the school. Designated governors have monitored the work of subjects and sub-committees have contributed significantly to the working of the school. The Chair of Governors provides good leadership and has developed the membership of the governing body so that a wide range of professional advice is now available. Recent vacancies for parent governors were oversubscribed.

Parents are more involved in the school and commented positively on how it has changed. While communication with parents has greatly improved, the school is aware that further work is needed to raise the profile of the school in the community. The school council has made a significant contribution to the school through the writing of the school rules. They are currently considering the development of a mural for the new school hall and will help to interview artists and choose one to work in the school. Pupils commented very positively on the improved behaviour in the school and how they now feel safe. Everyone is clear about what is expected and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. School work is more fun and the quality of resources has greatly improved.

The links with a local special school have been very effective and contributed in no small part to the outstanding improvement of a significant minority of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. The Local Authority and Diocese have also provided good support to the school.

Difficulties with the accommodation have now been resolved and a new school hall is being built.

Grade: 2

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	NA

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Holy Trinity Church of England VC Primary School
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9 December 2005

Dear Pupils

I really enjoyed coming to your school and seeing you all in your lessons and at play. I particularly enjoyed talking with you about your work.

You may know that your school has been given extra help over the last two years to make sure you all have as good an education as possible. I am very pleased to tell you that many improvements have been made and that the school is now judged as a good school. This could not have happened without your help.

What I liked most about your school

- I was pleased to see that you all enjoy being in school. All the adults look after you very well and make sure that you are happy.
- You all wanted to make me feel welcome and were very keen to tell me about your work.
- You were all very well behaved and worked hard in your lessons. I was very impressed with the way that you ask for help when you need it.

What I have asked your school to do now

- I have asked your teachers to make sure you have learned everything you need to make even better progress. You will need to continue to listen carefully and work hard at the parts you find more difficult.
- I have asked your Headteacher to help your teachers find out even more about the different subjects and to learn from each other. You can help by telling your teachers what you enjoy most and what you have learned.
- I would like your parents to know how much the school has improved and how much they can help you by talking about your work and by not taking you on holiday during school time.

I wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony Knight
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools