

Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Trinity Road, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1LU

Inspection dates

12–13 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders are effective. They evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately and act swiftly to make improvements. As a result, their plans for improvement have strengthened provision across the school.
- Most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- The quality of teaching has improved to good. Teachers research good practice and share ideas effectively. This has led to a generally consistent approach to teaching across the school, although work that teachers plan for pupils sometimes lacks challenge.
- Governors have undertaken a skills audit and engaged in relevant training that has strengthened their capacity to challenge school leaders. Monitoring visits are purposeful. Nevertheless, over time, governors have not reliably ensured that all policies are up to date.
- Children make a good start to their learning in early years. They are supported well in Nursery and settle quickly to the established routines in Reception. As a result, they are well prepared for the transition into key stage 1.
- Teachers inspire pupils to learn. Teachers model skills effectively across the curriculum and instil a desire to succeed. However, the most able pupils do not achieve highly in mathematics because they are not sufficiently challenged.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils use the phonic skills they learn well, so that they read with accuracy, confidence and enjoyment.
- The curriculum is engaging. For example, pupils delight in the 'enrichment day' activities. However, skills, knowledge and understanding are not always carefully planned or evaluated across all subjects.
- The school has experienced a time of instability in staffing. New middle leaders have been appointed and the staffing is now stable. Senior leaders and governors rightly recognise that further work is needed to ensure that middle leaders are highly effective in their roles.
- Pupils show respect for one another. They have a strong understanding of what equality means. They behave well and know how to stay safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership further, by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders effectively enable pupils, and staff within their teams, to excel
 - governors hold school leaders to account effectively, so that all policies are up to date, published and comply with statutory requirements.
- Strengthen outcomes across all subjects, by:
 - ensuring that pupils experience a clear progression of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum
 - using assessment information effectively to plan challenging work for pupils.
- Ensure that the most able pupils are challenged sufficiently to make strong progress in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of education at the school. They use evidence from monitoring and assessment of pupils' work appropriately to inform their plans for future improvement. As a result, senior leaders' evaluation of the quality of education is accurate and plans for improvement are purposeful.
- Leaders have worked diligently so that the quality of teaching has improved and is now good overall. They have introduced a range of clear expectations for lessons so that there is now greater consistency than previously in the quality of teaching across the school. Leaders ensure that teachers are supported well in constantly developing and refining their practice, including through visits to other schools. As a result, there is a culture of aspiration and improvement across the school.
- Recently appointed middle leaders are supported well by senior leaders. However, middle leaders are not yet well enough established in their roles to have a positive impact on the outcomes for pupils across the curriculum or the performance of staff.
- Leaders make sure that the additional funds for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are spent well. The special educational needs coordinator has a clear understanding of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Training for staff has ensured that the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. These pupils are supported well and make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders use the pupil premium grant effectively to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils. They have a clear understanding of the key barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils and are working hard to provide pupils with an engaging curriculum that is accessible to all.
- Leaders utilise the physical education and sport premium funding effectively to increase pupils' engagement in sport. Leaders have used a clear rationale to provide a range of sporting activities for pupils, both within the curriculum and in competitive activities. For example, pupils were seen enthusiastically participating in a dance activity that built on prior learning and challenged their physical skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are encouraged to learn about democracy. For example, pupils have elected a school council and have visited the House of Commons. The school's values of respect, honesty and love are understood and upheld by pupils. They show a genuine respect for one another and an interest in learning about the cultural differences of others. Pupils learn about British values throughout the curriculum and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn. The school has introduced 'Wonderful Wednesday' and 'Terrific Thursday' as weekly enrichment days that offer an engaging range of activities for pupils. Pupils and their parents and carers are very positive about the enrichment days.

The comment, 'My son played the guitar for the first time. His confidence has gone through the roof,' was typical of the very positive view from parents about the activities taught on the weekly enrichment days. However, middle leaders are not yet clear about how well pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding progress within all these wider curriculum activities.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is effective overall. Governors have undertaken a skills audit and have used this to build a training programme to strengthen their capacity to hold school leaders to account. The governing body, under the direction of a new chair and vice-chair, has confidently addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what the school needs to do to improve further. They undertake regular visits to the school and have been diligent in ensuring that they monitor the impact of the school's plan for improvement. However, the monitoring of the school's website has not always been thorough, and some policies published there are beyond their date of review.
- Governors challenge the school well. They use assessment information well to ask pertinent questions of school leaders to ensure that outcomes are improving for all pupils, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, pupils who speak English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils. Governors diligently review the impact of the performance management of staff and ensure that the process is both supportive and challenging for staff. This has led to the restructuring of the staff and creation of a stable staff team after a period of instability in staffing.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders diligently maintain records and act on concerns raised. Robust systems are in place to ensure that relevant checks are undertaken for all staff and volunteers. Detailed records of concerns raised about the safety of pupils are securely stored. Staff work tirelessly to support vulnerable pupils and families. As a result, concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively, helping to ensure that pupils remain safe.
- Pupils and parents state that pupils feel safe. Staff provide good pastoral care and support for pupils and families. Pupils value the systems in place within the school to keep them safe, including the use of pupils as mentors and a post-box for their concerns. As such, pupils are confident that any concerns raised will be supported by a trusted adult.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge in reading and mathematics lessons. They use questioning skilfully to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the concepts being taught. Pupils are encouraged to respond to questions well, giving

articulate answers to explain their understanding. This was seen in the use of 'mathematics journals', for example, where pupils are encouraged to explain their mathematical thinking. However, in mathematics teaching, the most able pupils are not consistently given opportunities to deepen their mathematical understanding.

- Support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. Strong support is given to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities by teaching assistants in individual or small-group provision. Resources are matched well to the individual needs of pupils so that they make good progress from their starting points.
- Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is strong. Pupils who speak English as an additional language who are new to the school are supported in developing confidence in speaking and listening and quickly gain confidence in core literacy skills. As a result, these pupils make strong progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they reach the end of key stage 2.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Phonics lessons are engaging and challenging. Teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge, allowing them to skilfully guide pupils to understand the structures of reading. As a result, pupils confidently apply the skills they have learned when reading.
- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is not as carefully planned to help pupils attain highly. While some activities on the enrichment days engage and inspire pupils, some are less effective as the progression of knowledge and sequence of learning are unclear. School leaders are aware of this and are now working hard to ensure that there is a clear progression of knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects taught.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show respect for one another. They are courteous when moving around the school. They uphold the school's values of respect, honesty and love. The comment from a pupil, 'Nobody would ever treat anybody differently here because of their beliefs or background,' was reflective of the views held by pupils. As a result, pupils play confidently with one another, cooperate well in class and feel safe.
- Pupils are encouraged to make healthy choices. The school promotes healthy eating. For example, pupils showed great interest during a cookery lesson when making fruit kebabs. Pupils are also encouraged to make healthy choices during lunch. In a dance lesson, pupils were encouraged to be resilient and keep going when the activity was tiring.
- Pupils value their education and are keen to attend. The school has highly effective systems in place to encourage pupils to attend. Strong attendance is celebrated by the school in assemblies. The introduction of enrichment days has improved attendance further. Attendance is above the national figures for primary schools and pupils are keen to attend.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful towards adults and one another. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The school's 'golden rules' are widely and prominently displayed, and pupils follow these dutifully. Staff conscientiously remind those pupils who need help to self-regulate their behaviour.
- Pupils' behaviour in the playground is good. Pupils are trained as mentors to support their peers' well-being. The school has an effective system of talking through incidents with pupils. As a result, behaviour has improved and incidents of misbehaviour during lunchtime have reduced.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across both key stage 1 and key stage 2. Where pupils' progress has been less strong, it is improving. Pupils are encouraged to build more effectively on their prior learning since the school was previously inspected. Work in books shows a strong progression of skills in writing and development of concepts in mathematics for middle- and low-prior-attaining groups. However, the most able pupils do not attain consistently highly in mathematics by end of key stage 2.
- Following a successful whole-school focus on writing, pupils write well. In key stage 1, where writing attainment was below the national average in 2017, pupils now develop fluent handwriting and experience a wide range of writing styles. In key stage 2, pupils are encouraged to use adventurous language in their work. They competently use correct grammatical structures in their writing, both within their writing workbooks and when writing across the curriculum. As a result, attainment in writing has risen at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2018.
- Pupils read enthusiastically. They enter key stage 1 with a good foundation in phonic knowledge and build confidently on this because of the strong teaching they receive. By the end of key stage 1, pupils use a range of phonic skills they have been taught to read unfamiliar words. Most pupils continue to make good progress in reading during key stage 2.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Across key stage 2, the difference between disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities compared with other pupils nationally is diminishing.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well. As they move through the school, the difference in attainment between pupils who speak English as an additional language and other pupils diminishes.
- Pupils make progress across subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics. However, leaders do not always have a clear understanding of how well pupils build on their skills, knowledge and understanding across the wider curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Children's transition to the school is effective. Many children join Reception from the school's Nursery. They settle quickly into the well-established routines in Reception. After just two days in school, at the time of the inspection, children were settled and played confidently with one another in their new environment.
- Children make good progress in early years. Most children enter Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding typical for their age. Work in learning journals shows that children have a wide and engaging curriculum that motivates them to learn. The number of children attaining a good level of development by the end of early years has improved since 2016.
- Parents feel involved in their child's learning. They speak positively about the support for children who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Phonics is well taught. Strong routines support children to listen attentively. As a result, children build strong phonic knowledge over time, allowing them to be well prepared for the transition into key stage 1.
- Teachers support learning well. Children's Nursery experience equips them for the level of challenge in the activities they meet in Reception. Teachers and adults use high-quality prompts to guide children's learning in a range of purposeful activities. Children are encouraged to concentrate hard to complete tasks that challenge them. Care is taken by adults to make sure that these activities are safe. Children are keen to talk about their learning and build positive attitudes to learning. However, the use of the outside area in Reception is less strong, limiting opportunities for children to explore their learning outside.
- Leadership in early years is good. Leaders are working hard with the newly appointed teachers. They have drawn on support through links with a local nursery. Leaders are now well positioned to ensure that the early years provision continues to strengthen.
- Safeguarding in early years is effective. Adults speak with children about how to stay safe. Staff have appropriate training and are aware of procedures in place to report any safeguarding concerns.

School details

Unique reference number	118848
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10053060

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	482
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kelly Goodayle
Headteacher	Denise Gibbs-Naguar
Telephone number	01474 534746
Website	www.holytrinity-gravesend.kent.sch.uk
Email address	8865202.admin@holytrinity-gravesend.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 February 2016

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The school was rated as good under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools on 5 July 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons, including nine jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons, in groups and at breaktimes.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and a range of staff, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority. There was a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocesan board of education.
- Inspectors carried out a check of pupils' work with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's assessment information, the school's self-evaluation and plan for improvement, the school's website, policies, minutes of governing body meetings, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The views of 73 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. The views of 41 staff were gathered through a staff survey.

Inspection team

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Timothy Rome	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Marshall	Ofsted Inspector

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