

Trinity St Mary's CofE VA Primary School, South Woodham Ferrers

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115200
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	379036
Inspection dates	28–29 May 2012
Lead inspector	Derek Watts

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Tuff
Headteacher	Christina Gooday
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2006
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Watts

Additional Inspector

Mark Jones

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons or part lessons, taught by eight different teachers. They held discussions with the headteacher, the staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers and pupils. Pupils were heard reading. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. The inspectors analysed 136 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as 85 from Key Stage 2 pupils and 19 from staff.

Information about the school

Trinity St Mary's is slightly smaller than the average primary school. Almost all of the pupils are White British. The overall proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average, but the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. A below-average proportion are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. There is on-site pre-school provision for children aged three and four in the afternoons. This provision is managed by the governing body and was part included in the inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Trinity St Mary's is a good school. All groups of pupils achieve well because of good teaching and an interesting curriculum. It is not outstanding because inconsistencies in the quality of teaching prevent pupils' achievement from being better than good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. This continues throughout the school and by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average. A focused drive to improve writing has had a positive impact. Pupils write accurately and imaginatively for a range of purposes. They solve mathematical problems effectively and apply technology skills well.
- Teaching is good overall. There are examples of outstanding practice but teaching is sometimes satisfactory. Lessons have a clear purpose and most teachers convey high expectations of learning. Teachers use demonstration, explanations and questioning well to promote good learning and to engage pupils. Effective assessment systems mean that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Tasks are usually well matched to pupils' different abilities so that all are challenged and their interest is maintained. Just occasionally, lessons do not move on at a quick enough pace and tasks are not sufficiently challenging.
- Most pupils are well behaved, and they are kept safe. Their attitudes to learning and behaviour are first rate in classes where the teaching is strongest. Pupils are courteous, friendly and considerate of others. Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher provides clear leadership and educational direction. She is well supported by other key leaders. Leaders and staff promote good achievement and good behaviour. The monitoring and development of teaching are effective, as is the management of performance. The school has improved its assessment systems and has plans to extend the sharing of outstanding teaching practice.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, and ensure that teaching is consistently at least good, by:
 - implementing plans to share the existing best practice within the school
 - conveying consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons
 - planning tasks that are always challenging and closely matched to pupils' different abilities
 - always maintaining a quick pace in learning as lessons move along .

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and achieve well. This judgement is reflected in the views of the vast majority of parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire. Pupils told the inspectors, 'We like learning new things'.

Children enter the school with knowledge, understanding and skills that are broadly at the levels expected for their age. Good teaching and interesting learning activities lead to children's good progress in the pre-school and reception classes. Children talk confidently about their learning. They enjoy books and their writing skills are developing well. For example, children in reception wrote clear descriptions of African animals and stories about the 'Greedy Zebra'. They enjoyed exploring colours and made good progress in painting an elephant, giraffe or lion.

Across the school, most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are carefully assessed and they receive well-targeted individual or small group support. More-able pupils are extended and an above-average proportion attain the higher than expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps between boys' and girls' attainment in reading and writing in some year groups are narrowing because of the specific support provided. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because of the well-planned opportunities provided for them to discuss their learning and to express their ideas. Good progress is made in reading because of a regular, discrete and effective programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). In the current Year 2, attainment in reading is above average.

The drive to improve pupils' achievement in writing is working well. Pupils in Year 2 wrote informative accounts of different ocean creatures such as the great white

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shark and the bottlenose dolphin. They enjoyed writing challenging 'sea creature' riddles. A successful visit to the 'Sea Life Aquarium' inspired the pupils to write some exceptional poems. Pupils in Year 5 wrote impressive persuasive letters promoting the benefits of residential visits for primary pupils. They used rhetorical questions, emotive language and similes to great effect. In Year 6, pupils successfully improved their pieces of writing by correcting spellings and punctuation, and including more imaginative vocabulary. Pupils write effectively for a range of purposes and they apply their writing skills well to subjects other than English.

Pupils make good progress in their mathematics lessons because tasks are well matched to their needs and they have good opportunities to solve problems. In Year 1, pupils made good gains in recognising and extending number patterns. Pupils in Year 4 used mathematical vocabulary correctly in finding direction.

Modern technology is used well by pupils to support their learning. In Year 5, pupils used podcasting effectively to create and enhance an audio presentation of their recent residential visit. Some pupils skilfully faded music or sound effects in and out of their broadcast.

Quality of teaching

Good teaching promotes enjoyment and good learning in most lessons. Pupils told inspectors, 'Teachers make learning fun'. Most parents and carers stated that their children were well taught. Examples of outstanding practice were seen in English and in information and communication technology in Year 5, and in English in Year 2. In these lessons, the teacher's high expectations, enthusiasm, strong subject knowledge and challenging activities led to outstanding gains in pupils' learning. Pupils successfully assessed their own and others' learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those initiated by the children. Children have good opportunities to explore, be creative and learn independently.

Teachers set clear learning objectives so lessons have a clear purpose and pupils know what they are expected to learn. Success criteria effectively guide pupils' learning. Teachers successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They create a positive atmosphere for learning and foster strong relationships. Pupils are encouraged to be cooperative and supportive of others. They have plenty of opportunities to work collaboratively and to discuss their learning in pairs, and this has a positive impact on their speaking and listening skills. The teaching of basic skills such as letters and their sounds is effective. Reading programmes and specific support are effectively extended into Years 3 and 4 for pupils whose reading is below age-related expectations.

Questioning is used skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking and to check their understanding. In most lessons, assessment information is used well to plan teaching and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities. Pupils are set clear individual learning

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targets for reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. This improvement point from the previous inspection has been tackled well. Just occasionally in lessons, tasks are not sufficiently challenging. In a few lessons, the pace of learning slows with over-long introductions rather than moving pupils on to the main task. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and make good contributions to pupils' learning, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. These pupils make good progress because tasks and support are well matched to their needs. The marking of pupils' work is usually helpful and constructive.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Even the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage feel safe, secure and behave well. Most pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 behave well in lessons and around the school. Records of incidents indicate that behaviour is typically good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Exemplary attitudes and behaviour were seen in lessons in Years 2 and 5. Pupils' enthusiasm and their outstanding behaviour contributed very well to the pace and flow of the lessons, and to their exceptional learning.

Almost all parents and carers who completed the questionnaire believe that their children feel safe at school and that they are well looked after. Pupils told an inspector that they feel safe, behaviour is good and they are very well looked after. Most parents and carers believe that the school deals with bullying effectively. Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name-calling, cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying relating to race. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about disruption to learning in lessons. A few pupils exhibit challenging behaviour in one or two classes, but they are well managed and supported by staff and do not disrupt learning. As a parent correctly wrote, 'The majority of children are very well behaved and kind.' Pupils' attendance is above average because of the school's positive approach to monitoring and celebrating good attendance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and staff have created a positive school ethos where all groups of pupils can learn and develop. Senior leaders and staff are suitably focused on improving teaching in order to raise achievement. Through accurate self-evaluation, the school has a clear overview of its performance and takes positive action to bring about needed improvements. Senior staff and subject leaders are effectively involved in monitoring and improving their areas of responsibility. Professional development and training are linked closely to the school's improvement priorities, such as assessment and writing. Procedures for the monitoring and development of teaching contribute well to the good practice.

The curriculum promotes good achievement and good personal outcomes for pupils. A wide range of additional activities, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. Parents

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and carers said that they like the after-school clubs available. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils are successfully encouraged to help and to respect others and to stand up against inequality and prejudice. Through the curriculum and visits, pupils gain a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. Opportunities for prayer and reflection are provided in assemblies.

The members of the governing body show a good understanding of the school's performance. They are actively involved in the life of the school and provide support and constructive challenge. Good emphasis is placed on safeguarding and all requirements are met. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination is effectively tackled. The school strives to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The school engages well with parents and carers. The survey indicates that the vast majority are pleased with the care and education provided for their children.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



30 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trinity St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, CM3 5JX

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school. By giving us your views, including those some of you supplied in questionnaires, and showing us your work you helped us to make our judgements. We enjoyed our visit. Trinity St Mary's is a good school. These are the main strengths:

- You enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Attendance is higher than we usually find.
- Children in pre-school and Reception have a good start and progress well.
- Good progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2 because of good teaching and an interesting range of topics.
- You are set clear learning targets so you know how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve your work.
- You get on well with others and your behaviour is usually good. Behaviour is outstanding in some lessons.
- You feel safe at school because teachers and other adults take very good care of you.
- The school is led well by your headteacher, and she receives good support from other key leaders and members of the governing body.

We would like to help the school on its journey to being outstanding. To do this we have asked the headteacher and governors to make teaching outstanding by ensuring that teachers' expectations are always high, so all of you are suitably challenged with work that is not too hard or too easy, and that lessons always move along at a quick pace.

You can all help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts
Lead inspector

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