

# Holy Trinity CofE VA Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135591
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	360732
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Frost HMI

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	185
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Bill Braviner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tina Murphy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Brockley Avenue South Shields Tyne and Wear NE34 0TS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons, saw 10 teachers and two teaching assistants teach and held meetings with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, the School Improvement Partner and two groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation relating to safeguarding pupils, pupils' progress and attainment, special educational needs, monitoring and evaluation, school improvement planning, the curriculum and the work of the governing body. They also scrutinised the work in pupils' books in writing and mathematics and analysed the responses from 43 parents and carers, 15 staff and 88 pupil questionnaires returned.

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

- The progress pupils are currently making in lessons, to assess if teaching is sufficiently challenging for boys and the more able pupils.
- The impact of the school's work to improve attainment in writing and move pupils nearer to age-related expectations in Key Stage 1 and tackle a legacy of underachievement in Key Stage 2.
- How well teachers use assessment information to plan activities which engage pupils and move them forward in their learning.
- The impact of the 'creative curriculum' model in improving pupils' basic skills.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels embed ambition and drive improvement.

## Information about the school

Holy Trinity Primary School was formed from two predecessor schools, St Mary's CE VA Primary School and All Saints CE VC Primary School. Both schools were previously in Ofsted categories of concern. The school is located on the All Saints site. It opened as a Fresh Start school in September 2008 and there has been extensive refurbishment to the school building.

This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. The pupils are predominantly of White British heritage with a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is very high, almost triple the national average. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities but, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is low, the school caters for some pupils with significant needs. Since the school opened there has been some staff turbulence, most notably in Years 2 to 4.

**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?**

**2**

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

**1**

## Main findings

This is a good school. The outstanding drive and ambition of the headteacher and senior leaders in the school has brought about rapid improvements to pupils' attainment and progress, their behaviour and engagement in the life of the school and in teaching and learning. Staff are committed to improving the life chances of every individual child in the school and have very high expectations, and these are communicated to pupils, parents and carers. A typical parental comment was, 'I could not be happier with the support my child and I have had over the past two years. The staff have supported all of my child's educational and emotional needs.'

Children are given a tremendous start to their education in the excellent Early Years Foundation Stage unit where they make outstanding progress and develop independence, curiosity and perseverance to enter Year 1 with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are broadly average. This accelerated progress continues throughout Key Stage 1.

The school is successfully tackling a legacy of underachievement in reading and writing in Key Stage 2. School data and observation shows an increasing number of pupils are working nearer to, or above, age-related expectations. This is being achieved through good teaching and a very well designed creative curriculum. The curriculum has an emphasis on basic skills, while also giving pupils a broad range of real-life experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, and a wealth of educational visits and visitors. However, writing remains a weaker subject and the school has rightly adopted a raft of individual one-to-one support, catch-up programmes and booster lessons targeted at raising attainment and accelerating progress for different identified groups of pupils.

During the inspection the great majority of teaching and learning observed was of a good quality. In the few satisfactory lessons seen, teachers were not using the information from assessment and marking robustly enough to plan activities which closely matched pupils' abilities, especially in writing and for the more able pupils. Work in pupils' books is neat, well set out and marked regularly.

The school's leadership team knows the school well and its self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. The school's track record of success in accelerating pupils' progress, rapidly improving attendance, creating an ethos of high aspirations where everyone is valued and challenged to do their best, and in narrowing the gap between the attainment of boys and girls in Key Stage 1 shows that the school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Improve pupils' attainment in writing in Key Stage 2, especially for more able pupils by:
  - using the data from assessments to plan more challenging writing activities as opposed to extension activities
  - setting individual writing targets based on day-to-day assessments which tell pupils the next steps in their learning and involve them in improving their work
  - making sure that pupils have the time and opportunity to respond to written feedback about their work
  - developing the creative curriculum lessons further to offer more opportunities to practise writing skills.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement is good and they enjoy their work. When children join the school their skills and knowledge are well below that expected, especially in communication, language and literacy and social and emotional development. They make good and often outstanding progress to reach broadly average attainment over time by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported to make consistently good progress. As pupils progress through Key Stage 1, they improve their independence and confidence and the gaps between boys and girls attainment and for the more-able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics have narrowed. In lessons observed and in scrutinising the school's own data, it is evident that pupils who joined the school when it opened in the Reception Year are on track to achieve the highest attainment so far and exceed national expectations for the first time. This is because they are confident learners who are not afraid to get things wrong. The school has devised innovative teaching approaches to smooth the changes in the curriculum as children move from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1.

Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe and all say they feel safe and cared for in school. Pupils say there is very little bullying and inspectors observed many examples of pupils helping and supporting each other in and around the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and have a very good moral code. In lessons, pupils' behaviour is exemplary and classrooms are oases of calm and endeavour where pupils work diligently and are eager and willing to contribute to their own learning. This unique caring ethos supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They make a positive contribution to their local community through strong links with the local church, fund-raising and coffee mornings and the many embedded links within the curriculum which enable them to work with local professionals; the fire service, local residential homes and the university. The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being is satisfactory. Their attendance is average although it is improving rapidly due to the excellent work of the child well-being officer.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Very well-targeted support for all pupils has enabled them to make the best of the opportunities available and the school can point to striking examples where pupils have been well supported, enabling them to engage fully in school life and learning. Productive partnerships with relevant external agencies, combined with the support provided by the child well-being officer, have ensured involvement with individual families and pupils is highly effective. The work of the school, especially with its more vulnerable pupils, is commendable and deeply embedded at all levels; a clear reflection of its caring yet expectant ethos.

A well-designed curriculum and good teaching is underpinning the development of pupils' basic skills through meaningful 'topics' which engage and motivate pupils to learn. The curriculum is very well enriched and pupils have many opportunities to visit places of interest linked to each topic. Pupils and teachers say they like this approach to learning. In lessons observed during the inspection there were good links between different curriculum areas which enhanced pupils' knowledge and gave them a purpose and context for their learning. In a lesson in Year 4, geography and information and communication technology had been skilfully combined to enable pupils to follow the River Tyne from source to mouth using internet-based maps. Pupils were able to consolidate their previous learning and ask searching questions before going on a boat trip down the river the following week. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' writing skills in

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meaningful contexts. Lessons move along at a brisk pace and there are many opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning with each other and their teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to explain their thinking and to work in groups to solve problems. Interactive whiteboards and other resources are used well to engage pupils in their learning and make it more exciting.

Although pupils have targets and work is regularly assessed, the use of these assessments to plan challenging activities especially for the more able pupils is still developing in some classes. It is not yet fully embedded across the school. Pupils do not always have the opportunity to respond to feedback about their work. The school is not sharing sufficiently the excellent practices evident in the Early Years' provision.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</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 headteacher, ably supported by her senior staff and the governing body, are very effective in their relentless drive for improvement. They carry out a rigorous timetable of lesson and book monitoring and feedback to teachers, which is ensuring that teachers continually seek to improve their practice. There are very good tracking procedures which follow the progress of individuals and groups of pupils including boys, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, looked after children, the more able pupils and those known to be entitled to a free school meal. This ensures equality of opportunity and eradicates underachievement. The governing body are knowledgeable about the school and support the drive to improve the life chances of every pupil by ensuring robust safeguarding procedures are in place. Records are regularly updated and staff are well trained to support the most vulnerable pupils in the school. Financial support is available to develop pupils understanding of the wider world through educational and residential visits, which is raising pupils' expectations and achievement.

Parents and carers are welcomed into the school to work alongside their children and are very well informed about their progress. Their attendance at school events and parent and carer consultation evenings has doubled and they appreciate the support they receive from the school for their own welfare and the opportunities the school gives them to contribute their views and to eat with their children in breakfast club and at lunchtimes. The school has many productive links with outside partners, other schools and health professionals. They have especially good links with agencies to ensure pupils' good social and emotional health. The school is promoting community cohesion well through meaningful links with schools locally and in other countries such as South Korea and China. A particular strength is a close link with a school in Vancouver, Canada which has a

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mainly Asian population and where pupils communicate regularly exchanging teddy bears, work and experiences.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The vast majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit with skills and abilities which are well below those expected, particularly in relation to emotional development and communication, language and literacy. They respond very positively to the exciting opportunities both indoors and outside, which develop their interests and learning across the curriculum. Consequently, by the time they leave Reception, they make outstanding progress, reaching expectations for their age in all areas of learning. As a result they are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1. Children with special education needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and supported, and staff monitor continuously to ensure all children's needs are met.

Staff are extremely well supported, motivated and inspired by the highly experienced and skilled Early Years Foundation Stage leader, and all are passionate about wanting the best for the children. There are clear pathways for development, for example, in developing reading through matching sounds and letters and writing, and children's personal development and welfare is successfully nurtured. Highly effective systems for assessment ensure that adults have a very good knowledge of children's needs, interests and talents. They use this information exceptionally well to provide an exciting and challenging curriculum, laying a firm foundation on which to instill a love of learning in those children who attend. For example, a group of children were totally absorbed in the challenge of building a fire engine. Working together, they talked animatedly about how the build should proceed, directed in their pursuit by their limitless imagination.

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Teaching is excellent, and children are ably supported by staff who are able to use their expert knowledge of individual children's development to extend their learning even further. As a consequence, all children thrive in this stimulating environment, busy and eager to discover things for themselves or to work with an adult to take the next steps in their learning. Excellent parental relationships are also established through effective induction and regular communication, which in turn has a positive impact on children's ongoing development and well-being.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
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

## Views of parents and carers

About a quarter of parents and carers returned the parental questionnaires which is a low response. Their views were overwhelmingly supportive of the school and especially the leadership of the headteacher, the care, guidance and support offered and how much their children enjoyed coming to school. Parents and carers also commented on the rapid improvements in teaching and support since the new school opened.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Trinity CofE VA Primary 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 185 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	53	18	42	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	25	58	18	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	42	25	58	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	49	21	49	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	56	18	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	47	22	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	44	23	53	1	2	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)	12	28	29	67	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	44	23	53	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	44	24	56	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	42	24	56	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	51	20	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	53	19	44	0	0	0	0

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are 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 and spring terms 2009/10 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.

## 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 pupils' 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.**



Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Holy Trinity CofE VA Primary School, South Shields NE34 0TS**

I visited your school recently with Mrs Utting and Mrs James to see how well your new school was doing. I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and for your willingness to talk to us about your school, which you are rightly very proud of. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and like the new school. We were very impressed with you all and thought that your behaviour was excellent in lessons and around the school and that you all care for each other very well.

We agree with you that Holy Trinity is a good school and we found that some things in your school are excellent. Your headteacher and senior leaders are determined that you all have the best opportunities you can and they work hard to achieve this. You are all making much better progress in your work because you have good teachers and teaching assistants who plan exciting lessons and help you when you need it. The youngest children in the Early Year's Foundation Stage have an excellent start to their school life and this is helping them make outstanding progress.

Some of you in Key Stage 2 are a little behind where you should be in writing and so we have asked the headteacher to improve your writing even further. We have asked her to make sure that you all have clearer writing targets so that you know exactly what you need to work on to improve your work. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that, when they mark your work, they make it easier for you to understand where you have done well and what needs improving and let you have a go at improving it. We want your teachers to use this information to plan more writing opportunities and more challenging activities for those of you who can do harder work so that you can achieve higher results.

You can all help your teachers by making sure that you attend school every day and continue with your excellent behaviour and attitudes. Well done!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Joy Frost

Her Majesty's Inspector

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