

Holy Trinity CofE VC Primary School and Community Nursery

Cross Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9QX

Inspection dates	9–10 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement between the beginning of Year 1 and the end of Year 6 is not as good as it should be. Although achievement is improving, not enough pupils make or exceed the expected levels of progress.
- There are gaps in several year groups between the rate of progress of disadvantaged pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding and other pupils in the school.
- Some pupils who have special educational needs or disability do not make as much progress as they should.
- Progress in writing is variable. The quality of writing in several subjects is not as high as it is when pupils are in literacy lessons.
- Teaching requires improvement because it has been variable in quality. Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in their work are not consistently high enough.
- Attendance continues to be below average, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs or a disability.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, supported well by staff and governors, has brought about significant improvements during the past year. The school shows a strong capacity to improve further.
- Achievement is improving, and so is teaching, as the result of rigorous monitoring by the school's leadership and improved professional development for staff.
- Children in early years are taught well and make good progress.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe in school.
- School leaders have worked hard and successfully to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that it becomes consistently good, by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons
 - ensuring that pupils always do tasks in lessons that will enable them to fulfil their potential.

- Improve the attainment and progress of pupils by the time they leave school by:
 - continuing the efforts to close the gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, and others in the school
 - improving progress in writing, particularly by encouraging pupils to write at more length and in more depth in subjects outside of literacy lessons.

- Improve attendance, particularly of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has shown great drive and rigour in making significant improvements to the school since she joined the school just over one year ago. Governors and other staff, several of whom have joined the school since the previous inspection, share the leadership's ambition for the school.
- Parents recognise the improvements that have been made in pupils' achievement, teaching and behaviour since the previous inspection.
- The leadership's evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is accurate. The planning for improvement focuses on the key areas necessary for continued improvement.
- The headteacher has restructured the leadership. Subject leaders and year leaders have joined the senior leaders in rigorously and regularly checking the quality of learning and progress, and this is having a positive impact.
- There have been recent changes in staffing. All staff are now held accountable for pupils' progress throughout the school. Levels of pay are linked to staff responsibilities and the staff's success in bringing about progress.
- School leaders have developed an assessment system which has improved the school's procedures for identifying pupils at risk of underachievement and providing them with appropriate levels of support, both inside and outside the classroom. This has had a beneficial impact on many of the pupils concerned in improving their achievement. However, these systems are still being embedded in the school, and hence not all the previous underachievement has been eradicated, although increasing numbers of pupils are now on track to meet appropriate targets.
- Pupil premium funding was not previously used well enough to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. School leaders now ensure that it is used more effectively to improve progress through providing more targeted support for these pupils.
- School leaders have worked well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education as an integral part of the new curriculum. It is particularly evident in the school's award-winning environmental and garden area. The school also offers a good range of clubs and other activities which pupils enjoy. The additional sports funding has increased the quality of physical education, staff expertise and pupil participation in sport.
- School leaders have raised the awareness of staff, parents and pupils of the importance of keeping safe. Learning about the potential issues of radicalisation, extremism and safeguarding have a high priority. The school also successfully promotes equal opportunities and works hard to bring parents into school, for example to celebrate pupils' work.
- The local authority provided considerable support for the school, particularly in the months following the previous inspection. Because the local authority is now much more confident that the school is moving forward under the strong leadership of the headteacher, it has reduced its role, although it still monitors and supports the school on its journey of improvement.
- Existing strengths from the time of the previous inspection have been maintained, particularly in early years, where teaching and progress are good. Achievement and teaching in the school still require improvement because the many changes which the senior leadership have introduced in the last 12 months are having a positive impact, but are not yet fully embedded. There has had to be a lot of 'catch up', especially for pupils higher up in Key Stage 2, where until relatively recently there were frequent changes in staffing which created instability.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The governing body has been restructured, and governors have benefited from good training opportunities. Therefore they are much more focused on, and knowledgeable about, school improvement.
 - Governors understand the strengths and areas for development needed in teaching and progress. They understand the impact of initiatives such as pupil premium and sports funding, and are now more confident in holding the leadership to account.
 - Governors are now more active in doing their own checks on the quality of teaching and learning and listening to reports and action plans from subject leaders and year leaders. Governors ensure that the performance management for staff is suitably administered. They update key policies and make sure that they have regular training in important areas such as safeguarding. Governors are now more effective in supporting the leadership in the continued drive for improvement.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There are detailed and updated policies and procedures in place. Staff confirm that they have had appropriate training and know their responsibilities to recognise and articulate any concerns they may have about any aspects of safeguarding. School leaders also keep parents informed on how they can support the school in keeping their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because for some time after the previous inspection there was not enough good teaching to raise pupils' attainment and improve their progress to the extent where they would be well prepared for their move to another school by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons are not consistently high enough. The tasks set for pupils, particularly higher up the school, do not provide enough opportunities to develop their basic literacy skills to the expected level. This has adversely affected the progress of different groups of pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- Expectations are limited when pupils are studying subjects or topics outside their literacy or mathematics lessons. For example, some of the tasks in history do not give pupils enough challenge. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to write in depth and show a better level of understanding in science, because the written tasks set are too restricting.
- Although it is improving, not enough of the teaching has enabled disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs to close the gaps in their progress with other pupils sufficiently.
- Until recently, there has been instability in staffing, with several changes in teaching staff and a resulting lack of continuity. This has restricted pupils' ability to extend their range of skills and depth of understanding sufficiently.
- Until recently some teachers did not get enough opportunities for good professional training to develop their confidence and skills in teaching subjects such as mathematics.
- Since the new headteacher took up her post, there have been considerable improvements in teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the result of a restructuring of staffing and much better opportunities for developing the skills of teachers and support staff alike. There is also more effective checking of learning.
- Teachers now teach phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) more effectively.
- Teachers closely follow the school's policy on marking pupils' work. They give pupils useful information on how to improve their work and get them to think about the comments in books and respond to them. Pupils told inspectors how useful they found this.
- Teaching assistants now make a much stronger contribution to pupils' learning, especially for those experiencing learning difficulties. Leaders manage the work of teaching assistants constructively. Like teachers, teaching assistants are now more skilled at using the school's new assessment systems to identify any learning issues and plan more effectively to resolve them.
- Staff recognise the improvements in teaching and learning that have been made. School leaders acknowledge that there are still some inconsistencies in teaching, which is why it is an area for continued improvement.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The strengths identified at the previous inspection have been maintained, and the school has built upon them considerably.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibility which the school gives them. They appreciate the school council, which manages a budget and debates issues which interest pupils. Pupils work with staff, parents and volunteers on maintaining the magnificent environmental area. Pupils take part in community events like singing and raise funds for charity.
- Inspectors saw a large number of pupils enjoying the breakfast club, which gives a healthy start to the school day.

- Pupils told inspectors how much they like the good range of opportunities outside lessons, including visits and the varied sporting and other clubs. They have benefited from the better resources and opportunities provided by additional sports funding, as well as the extensive facilities and school grounds.
- Pupils and parents confirm that pupils are cared for well in school. They feel very safe.
- The school ensures that its Christian ethos has a high profile. It is demonstrated by displays around the school, in pupils' work and in assemblies, one of which an inspector observed during the inspection. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils, staff and parents confirm that behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. This is confirmed by the school records, which show that in the last year, the number of exclusions and incidents of misbehaviour have significantly fallen. It is very obvious that most pupils enjoy learning and respond well to good teaching.
- Pupils confirm that there is now practically no bullying of any sort. They are confident about speaking to staff about any concerns they might have. The school has a purposeful and calm feel about it.
- As the school's leadership recognises, there are still a few pupils whose behaviour has to be carefully managed, which is why behaviour is not yet outstanding.
- Attendance is not as high as it should be. It has improved, but remains below average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs. This has contributed to their underachievement. School staff have worked hard within the local school's partnership to engage those parents who do not appreciate the importance of regular attendance, and more staff effort and resources are being devoted to making further improvements.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- School outcomes require improvement because for a considerable time there has been a record of variable progress and underachievement, other than in early years. This was reflected in last year's test results in Year 6, which showed that the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the time pupils leave school.
- Although last year the attainment of pupils in Year 2 had improved to a level well above the national average, by Year 6 attainment had fallen to well below average. It was particularly weak in writing. From their previous starting points in Year 3, progress for all groups of pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who had special educational needs or disability, was much lower than it should have been.
- The reasons for the underachievement were varied. There was instability in staffing and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Pupil premium funding had not been used effectively, as the school leadership and governors acknowledged. Assessment was not used effectively to identify early enough which pupils needed support and there was not enough well-targeted support in place to address the problem.
- Several pupils joined the school during the school year from outside the school's usual catchment area. Several of these pupils were already attaining at a low level before they arrived.
- The new, restructured school leadership was very aware of the need to tackle the inconsistencies and weakness vigorously. With the support of the local authority, school leaders have made many changes. These are now paying off, with evidence of much improved progress in several areas. However, some of the improvements are not yet fully embedded, and it has taken time to make up for previous deficiencies, particularly towards the higher end of Key Stage 2.
- Writing remains a relative weakness. Many pupils now make much better progress in writing in literacy lessons, as inspectors saw in their English books. However, some pupils' work is not well presented because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough. There is not enough in-depth writing in other subjects outside of literacy lessons. For example, although pupils do a range of investigative science, older pupils rarely write up the results in appropriate depth because most of the work is done on worksheets. This restricts the ability of the most-able pupils in particular to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.
- In some other subjects like history and geography, there are too many low-level tasks which do not allow older pupils in particular to meet appropriate learning objectives and show knowledge and understanding at the expected level.

- The substantial effort made by the leadership to improve outcomes has begun to pay off in other areas. Year 1 pupils attained standards above expectations in the most recent national phonics check. Attainment and progress in reading have improved, with more pupils reading fluently and confidently, as inspectors heard for themselves. Attainment and progress in mathematics are improving, as teachers have become more skilled and confident in the subject.
- Overall attainment and progress are improving. Many pupils, including the most able, are now on track to meet more appropriately challenging targets. The progress in reducing the gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability is slower, partly because there are inconsistencies in some classes, which is why there are still improvements to be made.

Early years provision

is good

- As at the time of the previous inspection, children in the Nursery and in Reception make good progress. This is still the case. A higher than expected proportion reach a good level of development, above national expectations. Therefore by the end of Reception, children are well prepared for entry to Year 1.
- Children in early years behave well and feel safe. They quickly learn classroom routines and what is expected of them.
- There is good teaching by teachers and support staff. They record children's progress, which is very evident in the work seen in Reception, with a good range of writing tasks. Teachers mark these well.
- Leadership of early years is good. The early years leader ensures that the children's needs are met. For example, because she recognises that some of the current group have lower than expected characteristics of physical development, she has put extra resources in place to meet this need. She has also worked with staff in the Nursery to develop their confidence.
- Teachers share their planning to ensure consistency. Inspectors saw tasks being matched carefully to different needs. For example, disadvantaged children and the most-able children are able to make good progress. The most-able children sometimes join Year 1 for their guided reading sessions.
- The early years leader produces regular action plans. She also checks children's work, looking for consistency and to make sure that children have the right targets to help them make progress. Staff share and celebrate particularly good pieces of work.
- The school ensures good links with parents and with local pre-schools. This leads to a smooth transition into both the Nursery and the Reception classes. There are learning diaries for children. Staff make visits to the pre-schools and invite parents into school with an 'open door' policy.
- The leader recognises that more could be done to improve provision still further, for example by putting some computers in classrooms and developing outdoor resources for the benefit of children's physical development. There is more evidence of children's work on display in Reception than in the Nursery.

School details

Unique reference number	126911
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10002437

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	682
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Keedy
Headteacher	Fiona Daykin
Telephone number	01305 783200
Website	www.holytrinitypri.dorset.sch.uk
Email address	office@holytrinitypri.dorset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is close to average.
- The school does not meet the current floor standards, which are the government's minimum expectations of attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Children in Reception attend full time. Nursery children attend either full time or part time, with some attending in the mornings and others in the afternoons.
- The school operates a breakfast club.
- The headteacher has been in post for just over one year. Since the previous inspection there have been substantial changes in the teaching staff, both at senior leadership level and lower down the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons. Several of the observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also visited some lessons for shorter periods.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading. They also looked extensively at pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with several teachers, other staff and with pupils. They talked informally with parents. The lead inspector met with four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. He also met a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school improvement plan, governing body minutes, assessment data on pupils' current progress and information relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors analysed 64 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). They also analysed the online staff questionnaire and considered the school's own surveys of parents' views.

Inspection team

John Laver, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Brady	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Wilson-Chalon	Ofsted Inspector
Stewart Gale	Ofsted Inspector

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