

Trull Church of England VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123850
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	292814
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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 on roll	205
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	A Husband
Headteacher	Heather Cunningham
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2002
School address	Church Road Trull Taunton TA3 7JZ
Telephone number	01823 333239
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This voluntary aided primary school is of average size. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly above average. All pupils have attended local playgroups before they start school. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school is part of the Sports College Partnership programme and has gained the Healthy School award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Overall effectiveness is outstanding. The school ethos is warm and supportive and pupils blossom in the positive learning environment. Pupils receive an outstanding education. They learn to become part of and contribute to the school and wider community. The school works closely with and is strongly supported by parents. Pupils and parents are positive about the school, describing it as 'Excellent, friendly, fun, with hardworking, dedicated teachers.' 'Children feel they are part of an extended family, whilst the school encourages them to do their best.' Pupils' achievement is excellent and enables them to reach standards that are exceptionally high by the time they leave school. A balance of good teaching and well-planned activities ensures Reception children make good gains in all areas of learning. They all enter Year 1 comfortably above average in all areas of learning. They continue to make good and often exceptional progress in Years 1 and 2. By the age of seven, achievement is excellent and standards are exceedingly high in reading and well above average in mathematics and writing. Teaching is very strong throughout the school and pupils continue to make significant gains in their learning. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 they attain exceptionally high standards in mathematics, and high standards in English and science. High standards are also achieved in subjects such as history, design and technology and music. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make the same excellent progress as their peers. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, reflecting top quality care, guidance and support. All pupils say they feel safe and that they are confident any problems will be dealt with swiftly by adults. The school council does an excellent job and encourages pupils to consider what they can do to improve their school and the wider world. Pupils gain a full knowledge of how to adopt healthy lifestyles; they appreciate exercise and activity and confidently identify unhealthy eating habits. Preparation for economic well-being is excellent, with pupils developing very competent skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. They build on this further through the excellent opportunities to manage a small business, and in carrying out this work also develop impressive social skills. Strong links with a village in Ghana and one in India contribute to pupils' understanding and knowledge of life in cultures very different to their own. Teaching is outstanding and this contributes to the significant gains in learning. Lessons are challenging and well matched to pupils' abilities. There are good systems in place to check on how well pupils are doing but these need to be streamlined to help teachers access information more swiftly. The curriculum is outstanding. Discussions with pupils indicate that they learn a lot and thoroughly enjoy activities provided, such as the Vikings day. However, pupils' progress in science is occasionally hampered because they are not provided with clear methods to record investigations. Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is fully supported in realising her vision for the school by her deputy and members of the senior management team. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and their enthusiasm to raise standards is evident. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has excellent capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Streamline the current assessment systems so that teachers can access the information gained quickly and efficiently.
- Review and refine current methods for recording science throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school successfully enables all groups of pupils to show excellent achievement. Children in the Reception class build well on their prior attainment because the quality of teaching is consistently good. They far exceed the expected level for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to make excellent progress and the National Curriculum 2006 tests show that in Year 2, pupils reached exceptionally high standards in reading and well-above-average standards in writing and mathematics. In the same year, pupils in Year 6 reached exceptionally high standards in mathematics, placing the school in the top 5% of all primary schools. Standards reached in English and science were well above average. High quality teaching and learning in Year 2 and 6 contribute to the significantly high standards achieved. Effective monitoring identifies pupils who need the extra support or additional challenge, and strategies are in place for these pupils. As a result, these pupils make the same excellent progress as their peers because their needs are responded to expertly by staff and their learning is carefully assessed and managed. More-able pupils achieve better than similar pupils nationally in all aspects of their work. A focus on writing has been successful and current results and standards show marked improvement in writing throughout the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Attendance rates are well above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. Behaviour is excellent and pupils are confident there is no bullying, saying, 'We do not have bullying here.' The school council has a strong involvement in helping develop the school site and pupils appreciate that their views are valued. They know how to keep themselves safe and are crystal clear about the need to pursue healthy eating and maintain good levels of fitness. Pupils are confident and relish opportunities to take responsibility. Year 6 enthusiastically prepare, plan their own music and lead the school in a daily five-minute exercise session known as 'Take 5.' They have a very good awareness of life in countries and cultures very different to their own because the school has strong links with a village in Ghana and sponsors a girl called Seema in India. Pupils are polite and demonstrate mature sensitivity to the needs of others. They talk enthusiastically about projects such as '£3 Business' and other business enterprise events. These help them to gain excellent skills to promote their progress and well-being in the future. Children in Reception play and work well alongside each other because expectations are clear.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Good teaching in the Foundation Stage combined with well-planned activities ensures children make good gains in all aspects of their learning. Pupils continue to benefit from excellent teaching as they progress through the school. Teachers are experienced and are supported by well-qualified support staff and consequently this contributes to the excellent learning. Planning is excellent and takes account of pupils' different abilities. As a result, pupils enjoy the lessons, which are often enriched by exciting projects. The teachers have excellent subject knowledge

and enthusiasm, combined with high expectations. Pupils are challenged to do their best, to think and to explain their ideas precisely. The staff know and track pupils' progress well but the methods used to record progress, however, are less well developed. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those pupils who need the additional challenge make excellent gains because support is carefully targeted. Marking is frequent and of good quality; consequently, pupils learn what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy learning through an exciting range of experiences and activities. Parents confirmed that 'there are always new and exciting activities for the children to look forward to.' Curriculum planning is detailed and well matched to pupils' abilities. The use of information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy to enrich other subjects is excellent. Provision for Reception children is good and staff make very good use of the outdoor area to enrich learning. Highly effective social and health education activities enable pupils to grow in confidence and maturity and consequently the school has gained the Healthy School award. Curriculum enrichment is extremely good and covers a broad range of interests. Clubs such as gardening and multi-skills are well attended and provide excellent opportunities to extend skills and knowledge. Pupils appreciate the many trips, visits and residential experiences. They talk with fond memories about the Book Week and theme days such as Tudors and World War 2 train journey, and Indian Day. Opportunities for music, dance and sport are strong; for example, all Year 4 learn to play the ukulele, and the school swimming pool is well used.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding level of care shown by everyone in school makes pupils feel safe and secure and contributes significantly to the confidence with which they approach learning. Parents greatly appreciate the high levels of care provided by the school. There are excellent arrangements for child protection and safeguarding pupils, which are known to all adults involved with the school. Excellent relationships mean that pupils are confident that they can approach adults with any problems. Those with learning difficulties receive excellent support and their individual education plans are well matched to their needs. The excellent pastoral care is enhanced by a strong focus on academic monitoring and guidance. Support for academic guidance is very effective because pupils' progress is checked rigorously. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and benefit from the many additional activities and experiences planned for them. The very strong home-school partnership contributes to pupils' welfare and well-being.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher gives a very clear direction combined with drive and enthusiasm. She is sensitive, conscientious and rigorous and has the respect of all staff, parents, governors and pupils. She knows the pupils very well and is passionately committed to raising standards and the quality of education still further. The senior management team are an experienced and dedicated team of professionals who work very well together to support the headteacher. All staff know what needs to be done to raise standards and achievement even more. There is a

clear sense of purpose and unity among all staff, who are passionately committed to tackling any perceived weakness, for example, writing and boys' achievement, to enable all pupils to reach their full potential. As a result of highly effective leadership and management at all levels, the school has been particularly successful in improving the achievement of boys and writing across the school. All aspects of the school's work are monitored carefully, resulting in an excellent understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. The governing body carries out its responsibilities well. The chair has good knowledge and understanding of the work of the school. Highly effective leadership and management have enabled the school to improve well since the last inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- 21 May 2007 Dear Pupils Inspection of Trull Church of England VA Primary School, Taunton TA3 7JZ Thank you for helping with the inspection. I enjoyed visiting your school and talking to you and your teachers. I will remember how considerate you were and how much you enjoyed the 'Take Five' exercise session after lunch and the gardening club. These are the things I liked most about your school:
- You make a good start to your education in Reception.
- You make excellent progress in Years 1 to 6 because you are well taught. Teachers give you activities that make you work hard and you clearly enjoy your lessons a lot. Your teaching assistants are very skilled and help those who need the extra help very well.
- You are all extremely polite, well behaved and consider the needs of others.
- You enjoy the activities in school, after school and the many trips, visitors and visits. These all help you to learn more about yourselves and the wider world.
- You told me that school helps you learn to lead a healthy life.
- Your school is extremely well led and managed and this contributes to your good achievement and helps you feel safe and well cared for.
- You make excellent gains preparing for later life with activities such as 'Take 5' and opportunities to take part in business enterprise activities such as £3 Club. Things that your school now needs to do:
- Your teachers should agree as a whole school how you are going to record investigations in science. You can help by writing about why your results are as they are.
- Teachers record how well you are doing, and note the progress you are making, but the way they do this could be better. I wish you well for the future. Marion Wallace (Lead Inspector)