

Northbrook Church of England School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100749
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354884
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Joanna Beckford-Hall

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	462
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gale Exon
Headteacher	Father Richard Peers
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 32 lessons involving 24 teachers. In addition meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, groups of students and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work and scrutinised the school transformation plan, department self-evaluations, students' work, minutes of meetings and school policies. Inspectors analysed student and staff questionnaires and 14 parental questionnaires.

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

- How effectively the school is raising achievement for all students, especially in mathematics.
- The progress made in lessons by students from different backgrounds such as those in receipt of free school meals and Black Caribbean students.
- How effectively teachers use assessment information to plan learning.
- The impact of senior and the new middle leadership academic board in driving whole-school improvement.

Information about the school

Trinity Church of England School is smaller than the average secondary school. Over 75% of the students come from minority ethnic groups, with the highest proportion being students of Black British or Black Caribbean heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly above average. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is above average. The school has been located on a temporary site in an old primary school for the last three years and will move to a new building in January 2011.

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

2

Main findings

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership of the school and has guided staff through a period of rapid transformation and full restructuring. Many improvements have had a positive impact and Trinity now provides a good quality of education. The vision for the school to be outstanding by 2012 is passionately communicated to all stakeholders. The headteacher is skilfully supported by the deputy headteachers, whose ability to work incisively with assessment information and provide support to middle leaders is securing greater accountability between all leaders. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and there is judicious acknowledgment that a few areas of relative weakness remain, such as engagement with parents and carers. Good behaviour, rising standards, a more positive culture of learning and a greater commitment of students to leadership roles provide striking evidence of success so far and the school's good capacity for further sustained improvement.

The three pillars of the Trinity philosophy – learning, relationships and leadership – are the foundations on which the school has transformed itself. Students enjoy greater leadership responsibility for the quality of learning and support leaders in setting priorities for improvement. Leaders respond well to student ideas and feedback about lessons. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is outstanding and students have a deeper respect for each other. Better relationships secure good behaviour around the school and in the large majority of lessons. Students speak positively of celebrating the cultural diversity of the school in assemblies, curriculum projects and performing arts events.

Good teaching encourages students to become independent learners. In good and sometimes outstanding lessons students make good progress as result of planning that supports different learning needs. Challenging debate, lively pace and imaginative use of resources ensure students are motivated to do well and extend their knowledge of new concepts in each lesson. Comprehensive assessment information is often well used to plan learning, but in some satisfactory lessons learning is not matched to the exact needs of each student, slowing their progress.

The good curriculum meets the needs of students through work-based learning courses and vocational options, as well as traditional academic subjects delivered in partnership with local further education and sixth form colleges. Attendance is above average, an indication that more students now value education. Levels of persistent absence have fallen significantly as a result of effective work by the attendance officer and middle leaders, and to a lesser degree parents. Care, guidance and support are good and students know they have someone turn to turn to if they have any concerns. Students rightly expressed concern about how diligently some of their colleagues make healthy

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food choices, and requested a greater range of extra-curricular fitness activities.

The governing body have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development at Trinity. They care for students and support leaders in developing the ethos of the school. Leaders acknowledge that engagement with parents and carers is not yet good enough to fully support learning and there is a need to give the parental voice more prominence in shaping whole-school development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers systematically use detailed assessment information to:
 - plan lessons which use different levels of work for students of differing ability
 - change the pace of different activities so that more-able students can be moved on to new learning quickly and less-able students have longer to complete work
 - use different levels of handouts and resources to support all students.
- Develop greater opportunities for students to learn about diet and nutrition, and to commit to health-related fitness activities.
- Secure greater parental engagement so that parents and carers:
 - understand how to play a greater role in supporting their child's education
 - have a greater voice and role in implementing school policies and influencing school improvement
 - become part of a parental community through extended services and activities which better meet local needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In the large majority of lessons observed, students made good progress because learning was challenging and captured their interest. Assessment data and lessons observations verify that the school is quickly closing gaps in progress between different groups, such as students in receipt of free school meals or those of Black Caribbean heritage, and their peers. Rigorous use of data helps leaders use small group intervention more strategically. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, enhanced by individualised support in lessons. The progress of a very small minority of White British students is not yet improving as rapidly, because their persistent absence limits opportunity to learn.

Standards in Key Stage 4 are broadly average, with the percentage of students achieving five GCSE grades A* to C reaching a three-year high of 53% in 2010. The '70%' badges worn by staff and Year 11 students are a symbolic reminder of the ambitious target for GCSE results in 2011, reinforcing a 'can do' attitude and greater ambition for students. The percentage of students achieving higher-grade GCSEs of A* and A rose in 2010, testimony to the school's work in stretching more-able and gifted and talented students. Progress in mathematics is improving, reflecting the fact that this has been a key priority across the school. Lesson observations in mathematics confirm

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the school's view that standards in mathematics are rising and are now broadly average. The large majority of students speak positively of three changes at Trinity: much-improved behaviour, which inspectors agree is now good; better safety, because students get on well with each other; and more good and outstanding lessons. Students comment that the culture and values have changed, noting that 'the school is a very different place now and we all have greater respect for each other'. A few students remain less positive, causing occasional disruption in lessons. Teachers quickly resolve this, and fellow students and prefects are confident in reminding these students that such behaviour is no longer tolerated.

Students make a good contribution to the school and wider community as Year 11 prefects, learning zone monitors, and peer mentors in the house tutor group system. Staff comment on success of the student leadership roles and the 'voice of Trinity' council informs decision making about how to improve the school. Innovative projects support links with local primary schools. For example, an environmental project to clean up the local park and river has successfully led to permission to convert a derelict building into a green classroom for children's and community use.

Most students understand the concept of healthy lifestyles but say the canteen does not always promote healthy eating. They do not consistently make appropriate dietary choices. Students enjoy physical education lessons and appreciate the commitment of staff in providing opportunities through off-site facilities. Even so, students, especially girls, wish for more fitness activities and would like more guidance about adopting healthy living routines.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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external agencies. A strong sense of community means students feel safe and the inclusive ethos supports students in transition from Year 6 to Year 7. Students appreciate the on-site police officer. They are increasingly willing to share concerns to quickly resolve any emerging issues. The restorative justice system has significantly reduced the number of exclusions at the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The resilience and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders in leading the school through a difficult period of restructuring and firmly reinstating higher expectations of students are praised by the governing body and the local authority. Restructuring of middle leadership as a new academic board with very precise job descriptions gives all middle leaders ownership to shape improvement at department level. The energy of the academic board is infectious and a clear perspective about key strategic priorities means that departmental self-evaluations are increasingly focused on raising standards. All leaders have made good use of systematic monitoring of teaching to raise the quality of learning in lessons, but forms to record daily learning walks are too broadly focused and lack detail. Staff development days and cross-departmental observations increasingly provide a richer understanding of what constitutes best practice in the classroom.

The effectiveness of the governing body is good. Streamlining of the committee and meetings structure has helped to ensure that it is now more purposefully tracking the targets in the school transformation plan. Minutes of meetings are starting to show a better focus on outcomes for groups of students as well as quality of provision and procedural matters. Recent additional training has enhanced the work of the governing body so that governors ask challenging questions about levels of progress and the quality of teaching.

Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. Staff have a good understanding of child protection. Meticulous attention is paid to the health and safety of students both on site and on school trips, and also in managing the off-site provision for physical education.

Parents and carers have accessible channels for parents to communicate with the school, but while communication is regular through newsletters, progress reports and review days, gathering and responding to the views of parents and carers and finding

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ways to draw on their expertise are currently limited. Parental questionnaires show that parents want more support in knowing how to help their son or daughter improve their work.

Leaders carefully monitor equality of opportunity through the achievement of students and through opportunities for students to develop understanding of different communities and cultures, drawing on the school's multi-faith and multi-ethnic community. Black History month, cross-curricular themes of identity and diversity, and citizenship projects such as a focus month on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender awareness enhance students' ability to value difference. Links with the local community through the diocese, community groups, primary schools and events led by students for charity work enrich students' experience of and contribution to the place of the school in the community.

Value for money is good and the school is fastidious in making sure that finances support its changing needs.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received very few completed questionnaires, although the responses were generally positive. While the large majority of parents and carers feel that the school is well led, inspectors judged that parents and carers are not sufficiently well engaged by the school to know how to effectively support their children's learning. Both students and their parents and carers commented that students' appreciation of how to make positive choices in diet and fitness is not promoted effectively enough.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trinity Church of England 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 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 462 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	6	43	7	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	6	43	6	43	1	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	4	29	8	57	1	7	1	7
My child is making enough progress at this school	5	36	5	36	3	21	1	7
The teaching is good at this school	3	21	9	64	2	14	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	4	29	7	50	2	14	1	7
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	21	7	50	4	29	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)	4	29	7	50	0	0	1	7
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	14	6	43	3	21	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	29	8	57	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	3	21	7	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	3	21	9	64	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	4	29	7	50	2	14	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 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). 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



24 September 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Trinity Church of England School, Lewisham, SE13 5HZ

Thank you for being so welcoming when the inspection team visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting many of you in student groups and seeing your work in lessons. We were impressed with the way you shared your views. Nearly everyone we talked to told us how much your school has improved since the last inspection and we agree. We have judged that Trinity is a good school.

The headteacher helps leaders to improve the quality of teaching and the very large majority of students make good progress in lessons. The school works hard to make sure that the curriculum matches your aspirations for the future. The good quality of the curriculum, coupled with good teaching and learning and much improved behaviour, means that more students enjoy school and attendance is now above average. Your willingness to take on leadership roles is impressive and the contribution that many of you make to your school is good. Your outstanding spiritual, moral social and cultural development has helped Trinity to be more a more inclusive and friendly student community.

Although there are many good things about Trinity, we have asked your headteacher to make the following improvements:

- make certain that all teachers consistently use assessment information to plan lessons to match the needs of all ability groups
- work with you to develop a better understanding of diet and fitness, especially in making healthy choices in the canteen
- better engage your parents and carers in the community life of the school, and help them to learn how to support your work.

We wish you all the very best for the future. We would like you to read the inspection report and hope you will want to continue to make a valuable contribution to the many things which now characterise Trinity as a good school.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Beckford-Hall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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