

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Dartford

Chatsworth Road, Dartford, Kent DA1 5AF

Inspection dates

20–21 September 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The resolute leadership of the headteacher has brought about significant improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and to pupils' outcomes since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders share the headteacher's vision and provide high-quality support to teachers. As a result, the quality of teaching is continuing to improve.
- Governors provide effective strategic direction. They give good support to the headteacher and provide helpful challenge.
- Pupils enjoy their learning because teachers plan activities that are fun. All groups of pupils currently in school make good progress in a wide range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged achieve well because of the good support they receive.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils know the importance of good manners and are keen to put the school's values into practice.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Typical comments include, 'an excellent and well run school' and 'we couldn't wish for better'.
- Children are safe and happy in the early years. They enjoy the good range of exciting activities provided.
- Leaders recognise the need to provide further training for middle (subject) leaders in order for them to be able to contribute fully to school improvement.
- Teaching is typically good. However, at times teachers do not challenge pupils well enough, especially the most able pupils.
- The good practice evident in most classes is not shared well enough across the school. This leads to some pupils making steady, rather than rapid progress.
- Attendance rates are improving but remain too low for some groups.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement still further by ensuring that:
 - teachers set appropriately challenging tasks to extend pupils' learning, especially for the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils.
 - the best practice in teaching is shared fully across the school so that pupils make even better progress.
- Develop the role of middle leaders so they play a full role in school improvement.
- Further improve attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is determined to raise standards. She has worked successfully to eradicate previous weaknesses in teaching and learning by taking well considered and effective actions. She has managed turbulence in staffing well. As a result, the quality of education has improved and there is an ambitious culture for pupils and staff.
- Senior leaders know the school well. They make accurate evaluations of the school's performance and set appropriate priorities for action. Leaders lead by example, taking the staff with them as the school continues to improve. Staff morale is high.
- Leaders are determined that all pupils achieve well, no matter what barriers to learning they may have. Frequent meetings are held with teachers to discuss the progress of each pupil. Speedy action is taken to provide additional support to pupils who need it. As a result, there has been an improvement in the progress of all groups of pupils, particularly pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who are disadvantaged.
- Much good work has been done to improve teachers' skills and expertise. Training and support is targeted sharply to meet the needs of individual teachers. Staff value the support they receive.
- Middle leadership is underdeveloped. Senior leaders recognise that more needs to be done to improve subject leaders' skills. This will enable them to evaluate standards effectively in their subjects and play a full part in the school's drive towards being outstanding.
- Equality of opportunity is fundamental to the school's values. Leaders take appropriate steps to make sure that all groups of pupils have an equal chance to succeed. Strong provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that funding is used effectively to meet a wide range of needs. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is carefully targeted to support pupils' individual needs. For example, some has been used to support their emotional well-being. This has played an important part in their learning, helping them to take part fully in lessons.
- A revised curriculum has been introduced, designed to improve pupils' interest and joy of learning. The success of this is evident. Pupils appreciate the changes and are enthused by the exciting activities, for example making burgers or building a 'submarine'. Topics often begin with an interesting visit, for example visiting a castle or a country park. Leaders frequently check the impact of the curriculum on pupils' achievement and make changes where needed.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in the extra-curricular clubs and lunchtime activities, such as dancing and gymnastics. These types of activities make learning memorable and promote pupils' academic, physical and personal development effectively.
- Leaders make sure that pupils' physical health is given a high priority. The primary physical education and sport funding has been used well to provide increased opportunities for competitive sports and tournaments with other schools. Additional training for staff to refine their skills in teaching physical education, particularly gymnastics, has helped to ensure that the improvements are sustainable.

- British values are promoted well, particularly through the school's values which prioritise the importance of friendship and working together in the school community. Pupils work and play happily together. For example, pupils help younger ones to enjoy reading and act as 'citizen leaders' to help pupils to behave well. Pupils learn about democracy by voting on aspects of school life, for example which pupil has been the best ambassador of the school's values, or who should be head boy or girl. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the importance of core values such as friendship, justice and peace.
- Links with parents are positive. The very large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, or had discussions with inspectors would recommend the school to another parent and considered their child to be happy at school. One parent captured the opinion of many by saying, 'an excellent and well run school'.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors have provided strong support to the headteacher, especially while she has dealt with difficult staffing issues. This support has been invaluable and emphasises the shared vision of governors and leaders that pupils deserve the best teaching possible.
- The governing body makes good use of individual governors' skills and experience. Governors fulfil their role in making sure that teachers' pay is linked to the achievement of pupils. Governors check that additional funding, for example for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is used effectively.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the aspects that could be improved. They make frequent visits to the school to check for themselves the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and development. They ask challenging questions, for example about how well disadvantaged pupils are achieving. As a result, the governing body has contributed significantly to the improvement in teaching and outcomes since the previous inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are appropriately trained and stay vigilant to ensure that pupils are safe. Appropriate checks are made on employees and visitors. Staff know the pupils well and detailed records are kept about all safeguarding issues. The school works well with parents and outside agencies, including health and other professionals, to make sure pupils are supported effectively and kept safe.
- All staff work hard to make the school a very welcoming, secure place. Pupils feel safe because staff work well together to make sure there is a strong culture of safety and care at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The effective support provided to teachers has resulted in the quality of teaching improving since the previous inspection. It is now good.
- Classrooms are well organised and inviting places in which to learn. Displays reflect the rich curriculum and celebrate pupils' work. As a result, the high expectations that teachers have of all pupils are evident around the school.
- Teaching assistants receive high-quality training and, as a result, contribute very effectively to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants have a very good understanding of the individual needs of the pupils they work with. They provide the right support for lower-attaining pupils, breaking activities down into small steps and helping them to tackle tasks successfully. This calm, well-timed support particularly helps pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.
- Teachers generally use their knowledge about pupils' capabilities well to meet their differing needs. However, at times teachers do not challenge pupils in the tasks they provide, especially the most able pupils. Sometimes pupils spend too long on tasks which they have already understood, or start with work that does not challenge them sufficiently. This means that they do not make the rapid progress they could.
- Teachers promote reading as being important and enjoyable. Pupils read every day. The most able pupils read appropriately challenging books. Good support is given to less confident readers and this helps them to catch up. Adults ask probing questions which help pupils to understand the texts they read.
- Teachers are skilled in the teaching of writing. They link writing to the exciting curriculum and this encourages pupils to write interesting and lively pieces. For example, writing letters from evacuees following a visit to Dover Castle in Year 6 and creating recipes for caterpillar kebabs following a minibeast hunt in Year 2. Teachers provide helpful prompts, such as word lists and planning sheets, which allow pupils to become independent in their writing. Careful planning of technical writing skills allows pupils to develop their skills systematically as they move through year groups.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers use imaginative ways to teach skills which make learning memorable. Effective use is made of practical equipment to help pupils develop secure calculation skills. Pupils enjoy solving real-life problems, such as planning a trip to the USA, working out cost and distance.
- Although teaching is typically good, some inconsistency remains. There is work to be done to make sure that the effective practice in many classes is shared fully across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's motto of 'growing tomorrow's leaders' is evident in the way that pupils develop in their self-confidence and self-awareness. They take responsibility for their

own actions and look for ways to help others. Pupils thrive in this nurturing environment and learn to be respectful and tolerant of the rights of others.

- Pupils feel safe. All parents and staff who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaires feel pupils are safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe in different situations, including using the internet safely.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. Pupils talk confidently about the school’s values, including that of friendship. They are confident that teachers sort out any problems quickly. School records show that incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils learn about the different ways to keep healthy and enjoy the activities at playtimes which help them to keep fit.
- Staff, rightly, place a high emphasis on promoting pupils’ emotional well-being. Relationships across the school are strong. These help to promote a real sense of care which permeates the school. Appropriate support from external agencies is given to support individual pupils who need it.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, respectful to adults and kind to each other. Pupils move around the school sensibly and hold the doors open for other pupils and adults. Pupils present their work neatly and take pride in their achievements.
- Occasionally, during lessons, a few pupils find it difficult to stay focused when the work is not appropriately pitched. When this happens, they become restless or begin to chat.
- Most pupils attend regularly and arrive punctually. Attendance has improved for all groups of pupils. A portion of the pupil premium funding is used to pay for breakfast club for some disadvantaged pupils and this helps to improve attendance rates. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities still lags behind that of other groups.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils enjoy learning and finding out new things. Their achievement has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. By the end of Year 6, pupils have the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes they need for their secondary school. Most parents who responded to Parent View feel that their children are making good progress.
- In 2017, the provisional results of the national assessments show that pupils’ attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading was similar to the national average and above the average in writing and mathematics. This continued the upward trend in standards since the previous inspection. Work in pupils’ books, as well as information in the school’s rigorous tracking system, shows that, typically, most pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils also make good progress in a range of other subjects. For example, pupils

develop their scientific understanding by investigating solids, liquids and gases as part of their 'Harry Potter' topic or by explaining how a submarine works. Year 6 develop a better understanding of the Second World War when they visit Dover Castle. During the inspection, pupils were keen to talk about how they develop their skills in physical education, which helps them to be more successful in sport.

- In 2017, the provisional results of the national assessments show that standards rose at the end of Year 2, especially at the higher levels. This meant that pupils joined Year 3 with standards higher than the average of pupils nationally. This prepared pupils well for key stage 2.
- Strong leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities means they receive timely, good-quality support and make good progress.
- A close scrutiny of the progress of disadvantaged pupils, together with carefully planned support, has resulted in a marked improvement in their achievement. In the 2017 national tests for Year 6, provisional results show that disadvantaged pupils made better progress and more reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally. Pupils' books show that most disadvantaged pupils currently in school are also making good progress and catching up in the way they should.
- The achievement of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, is mostly good. However, there are times when teachers do not challenge this group of pupils well enough to make the rapid progress of which they are capable. This is because the most able pupils are not consistently encouraged to work at a level that requires them to think deeply about their learning.

Early years provision

Good

- During the inspection, children were spending half-days in school as an introduction to school life. Adults had carried out 'home visits' to begin to get to know the children and to establish positive relationships with parents. Although it was early in the school year, it was clear that children had settled quickly into school.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of early years has been above the national average consistently, often from low starting points. This level of achievement ensures that children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is good. Adults provide activities, both inside and outside the classroom, that excite children and encourage their independence. Even early in the year, children work well together on their own and in groups. During the inspection, children were keen to examine tadpoles using a magnifying glass, write letters to their friends and use the plentiful 'scrap' materials to make pictures.
- Adults emphasise the routines expected of children in Reception. For example, children quickly learn to tidy the classroom at the end of an activity and wash their hands before eating lunch.
- Children behave well. The school's values are emphasised right from the start. Adults encourage children to eat their snack sensibly and to share fruit with their new friends.
- Adults make careful assessments of children and check frequently to make sure they achieve well. However, at times learning time is lost when activities do not provide

enough challenge for children.

- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used effectively to make sure that they achieve as well as they should. Effective partnerships with external agencies mean that additional support can be given to children if needed.
- There is good leadership of early years. The leader recognises that because of changes in staff, the good practice can be further shared across the two classes in order to bring the overall quality of education in early years to its previous high standard.
- The leader for early years ensures that safeguarding arrangements are in place. Children in early years are well looked after and enjoy playing and learning.

School details

Unique reference number	118859
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10036938

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Martin Henwood
Headteacher	Vikki Wall
Telephone number	01322 224474
Website	www.holytrinitydartford.co.uk
Email address	schoolheadteacher@holytrinitydartford.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2015

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity is larger than the average primary school. Children in the early years are taught in two full-time Reception classes.
- There has been a high turnover of teaching staff since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The largest ethnic group is White British, with a range of other ethnic groups represented in the school.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors evaluated learning across the school. Many lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and heads of phase or the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work for the current year as well as from last year to inform their judgements about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors talked to groups of pupils about their learning and their experiences of school life. Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed assembly, lunchtime and playtime.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, a representative from the local authority and a group of governors.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from the 28 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also had conversations with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of the 18 responses to the staff online questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including the school's own information about how well pupils are achieving and the school's development plan.
- A review of safeguarding records and procedures was also carried out.

Inspection team

Joanna Toulson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Teresa Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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