

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Longlands Close  
Crossbrook Street  
Waltham Cross  
EN8 8LU

#### Diocese: St Albans

Local Authority:	Hertfordshire
Date of inspection:	17 February 2011
Date of last inspection:	16 November 2007
School's unique reference number:	117428
Headteacher:	Sarah Chaloner
Inspector's name and number:	Catherine Large 482

#### School context

Holy Trinity is similar in size to most primary schools. Most pupils come from White British families and about one third come from Black and Black British backgrounds. Since the last inspection, the number of pupils with special educational needs and entitlement to free school meals has increased significantly. There have also been many changes in staffing and to the governing body. The majority of pupils come from Christian backgrounds.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Holy Trinity as a Church of England school are good.**

Under the guidance of the school leadership team, the Christian ethos of the school has been really strengthened since the last inspection. The major factor in this process has been the vibrant partnership with the church and the practical and spiritual support it provides. There is a strong sense of teamwork between school and church. Pupils recognise, value and benefit from the place of faith in the school's life.

#### Established strengths

- The strong relationship between school and church which impacts upon and guides decision making and has supported the school through times of change;
- The positive attitudes of pupils to religious education;
- The good spiritual, moral and social development of pupils as they move through the school.

#### Focus for development

- Build up the leadership potential of pupils in collective worship and provide regular opportunities for them to experience worship in church;
- Ensure all teachers of RE are clear about standards in the subject and the means to assess pupil progress.
- Strengthen the process by which the governing body reviews the effectiveness of the school's Christian ethos.

**The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners.**

There is a strong sense of community and harmony in the school. Pupils are able to identify the Christian values that matter to them and give examples of the strong bonds of friendship they form. As they move through the school, they develop good spiritual, moral and social awareness, showing concern for each other and for their environment. Records show that there is no bullying or racism and this is confirmed by the pupils. They feel safe and respond to opportunities to take responsibility, for example, by training to become play leaders and running their own clubs. Relationships between pupils, and between adults and pupils, are very good. The Christian ethos of the school is confirmed in pupil surveys. The strong presence of the clergy and church members in the school has a positive impact on pupils' understanding of faith. Many families attend the local church and the pupils are able to participate actively. In recognition of the needs of some of the pupils, the school has provided support by appointing a counsellor. The school environment reinforces Christian values by good quality RE displays, Christian symbols and by the values placed on environmental issues in the grounds. The 'Wildlife Wonders' group is very active and enthusiastic and the school has responded well, creating special areas and natural habitats for wildlife amidst their urban environment. Teachers find some opportunities to promote spiritual development and this was evident in the presence in the school of eggs and chicks being hatched. In recent years, the school has improved pupils' skills of reflection providing 'Reflection areas' in the classroom. It has some links with a school in Ghana and there is growing recognition of the range of communities from which pupils originate. However, the school recognises that links with their own local communities and other faith groups could be strengthened.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.**

Pupils benefit from worship. It is valued by them because it creates a sense of community. This was evident on inspection. Pupils are respectful and attentive, entering and leaving quietly. They are able to talk about what happens in worship and feel that it makes their day better. They sing enthusiastically and respond when given the opportunity to do so. They show reverence for moments of prayer and reflection. The pattern of worship is varied and well established and includes contributions from members of other denominations. The school celebrates key Christian festivals so pupils are well aware of significant times in the Christian calendar. The pupils' surveys showed that they really enjoy worship in church. This has become erratic lately for a range of reasons but the school and clergy are committed to restoring the regularity of this experience. Pupils also enjoy worship led by their peers. Worship permeates the school day as there are prayers at the beginning of lunchtime and at the end of the day. Through their worship at church, they become familiar with some Anglican prayers. One boy spoke of the 'good feeling' he gets when they 'give the peace' to each other. There is satisfactory planning in place although this could be more coordinated by leaders. Pupils have the ability and positive attitudes to become even more involved in the planning and leadership of worship.

**The effectiveness of the religious education is good.**

Planning for religious education has improved since the last inspection. The RE curriculum now has a clear direction and the school has benefited from Diocesan support and by working alongside another local church school. The subject is well resourced. There is now more consistency in teaching and learning and lessons observed on inspection were always good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers use stimulating strategies to gain pupils' interest and good learning takes place in consequence. Pupils respond very positively, entering into discussion, showing creativity and an ability to reflect on the significance of what they are learning. As they move through the school, they reach standards at least in line with expectations in relation to Christian beliefs and practice. Pupils gain in their understanding of the features of the church through their curriculum visits and these are supported by members of the faith community. Their ability to listen to others and to express their own ideas and beliefs is above average. They are less secure in their knowledge and understanding of other world faiths. Some teachers lack confidence in this aspect of the subject although the appointment of a teacher with RE subject specialism is likely to be of benefit. As the planning for RE has improved, teachers are clearer about standards in the subject but this is an aspect the school recognises needs to be developed so that the assessment of pupils' progress in the subject can be better planned.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good.**

The Christian foundation of the school is well articulated and supported at all levels of management. There are outstanding links with the church. School and clergy work together as a team, promoting the Christian ethos of the school and bringing benefit to the pupils in consequence. Since the last inspection, this support has developed and has been a critical factor as the school has undergone several changes to its teaching staff and governing body. The school has also had good support from other local Christian denominations. Parental surveys on the Christian ethos of the school show very high levels of support. The school has also implemented a strategy for gaining feedback from pupils on their experience of life in a church school and how this has made a difference to them. Results from this survey show that pupils value the ethos of the school. The school has responded to some of their suggestions for improvement. There are good links with the diocese and with local schools, particularly church schools. The governing body is very supportive and is beginning to take an active part in monitoring aspects of school development. It has undertaken some training in church school management but is at an early stage of implementing a systematic review process. Communication with parents is good. The school is aware of the inconsistency of parental involvement and is working hard to improve the situation. There are satisfactory links with the local community and plans are in place to implement contacts with groups across a wider area.