

Inspection of a good school: Holy Trinity Academy

Teece Drive, Priorslee, Telford, Shropshire TF2 9SQ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Outcome

Holy Trinity Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a culture of care and respect at Holy Trinity Academy where everyone is valued for who they are. In their 'prayer and liturgy' worship time, pupils from all year groups come together in an act of collective spirituality that is inclusive of all, whatever their faith or personal beliefs. Pupils talk with respect and understanding about diversity and difference.

Pupils get on well with each other and there is a positively sociable feeling around the school. They feel safe and many praise the pastoral care they receive. Pupils are clear about the high expectations staff have of their behaviour. Most meet this standard. Pupils work well to meet the high academic expectations of them and make good progress in their learning.

Pupils appreciate the many enrichment opportunities available to them. They enjoy taking part in activities from chess to cycling to community service. Pupils value being able to follow the Duke of Edinburgh and Archbishop of York programmes to enhance their personal development. Sixth-form students are supported to be ready for living as independent adults, learning a breadth of life skills from financial management to tiling.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed an academically ambitious curriculum that is followed by all pupils. They have reshaped their curriculum as they want more pupils to follow the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of subjects. The learning in each subject has been carefully mapped in a way that means pupils build layers of learning over time. Outcomes are improving and A level results are strong.

Lessons are characterised by a calm climate for learning. Almost all pupils are focused on the task in hand and do not disrupt others' learning. However, a few pupils are not as actively engaged in their learning activities as they should be. Teachers often select tasks that encourage pupils to develop their independent learning skills.

Teachers carefully assess pupils' learning at the end of each unit and revisit any gaps in knowledge. However, the checking of pupils' understanding during the earlier stages of learning is less secure. For example, pupils mark their own learning in green pen, but not all teachers respond quickly to address misunderstandings or errors. This can mean that pupils do not understand how to do better next time.

Leaders have identified some of the barriers to learning faced by different groups of pupils. To overcome these barriers, they have adopted different approaches to organising classes. Leaders have also supported teachers to find ways to adapt learning activities for pupils. However, not all staff are consistently applying these strategies to enable all pupils to learn as well as they should.

Staff identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and assess their needs. Teachers use strategies on the 'pupil passports' to ensure that pupils with SEND successfully learn the curriculum. Leaders have recently changed their approach to supporting the weakest readers to ensure that they make rapid progress in becoming fluent, confident readers.

Pupils and sixth-form students follow a personal, social, health and economic curriculum that includes relationships and sex education. This curriculum covers all the key topics required. However, pupils do not have the opportunity to explore a few topics in sufficient depth. Leaders ensure that all pupils learn about the world of work and the range of careers and next steps open to them. Staff offer personalised support to sixth formers when making decisions about their future and applying to university.

The school's values and ethos underpin leaders' work to ensure that all pupils develop into well-rounded, active members of society. They know this does not happen by accident. Leaders have created a programme of personal development based on eight pillars, including teamwork and enterprise. All pupils access enrichment opportunities within the school day on Fridays which support these pillars. The pillar of service includes involvement in the local community and working with neighbouring primary school pupils. There are more extra-curricular activities available on top of this provision so that pupils can spend time pursuing other interests.

Leaders and governors know their school well and, as a relatively new school, are working hard to develop stronger links with key groups in their community. Leaders have set up a working group to identify ways of reducing staff workload, but this is in the early days of showing impact. Staff are proud to work at the school and feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture in which everyone understands their role in keeping pupils safe. When staff pass on any concerns they have, leaders take swift action and are relentless in ensuring that pupils and families receive the support they need. Pupils are

also actively involved in keeping each other safe by being part of the 'student safeguarding board'.

Pupils learn how to stay safe through lessons, assemblies and 'impact days'. This includes input from external agencies, including the police and specialist theatre companies.

Leaders carry out all appropriate recruitment checks before staff start working at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers are not carefully checking what pupils have understood during the different stages of learning. This means some pupils do not secure all the foundations of knowledge required for later success or do not understand how to get their work right next time. This slows down the progress some pupils make. Leaders should ensure that teachers' checks on learning help pupils to remedy any misconceptions and move forward in their learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers know how to apply the strategies they have identified effectively to support different groups of pupils. As such, some groups of pupils experience inconsistency in how they are supported in some lessons. This slows the pace at which these pupils make progress. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach to supporting the needs of specific groups of pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we the school to be good in May 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	142067
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10269452
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	853
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Anderson
Headteacher	Angus Neal
Website	www.holytrinity.academy
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is under the trusteeship of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Church of England Diocese of Lichfield.
- The school's last section 48 diocesan inspection was in May 2018. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors focused on the following subjects: mathematics, computer science and history. Inspectors examined leaders' curriculum plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, the curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised safeguarding records. They also looked at how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors visited tutor times. They also observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They met with the chair of the governing board. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Nicola Beech, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Geoff Renwick

Ofsted Inspector

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