



**Trinity High School
Renfrewshire Council
3 May 2011**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects schools in order to let parents¹, young people and the local community know whether their school provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with school staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the headteacher and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities which young people are involved in. We also gather the views of young people, parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well young people are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and young people work together and how they go about improving the school. We also comment on how well the school works with other groups in the community, including services which support young people. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the school, please visit www.hmie.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from young people, parents and staff, and details about young people's examination performance. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals. Where applicable there will also be a report on the learning community surrounding the school.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

Contents

1. The school
2. Particular strengths of the school
3. How well do young people learn and achieve?
4. How well do staff work with others to support young people's learning?
5. Are staff and young people actively involved in improving their school community?
6. Does the school have high expectations of all young people?
7. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?
8. What happens next?

1. The school

Trinity High School is a denominational school which serves the communities of Renfrew, Erskine, Inchinnan, Bishopton and the Gallowhill district of Paisley. A number of pupils from the City of Glasgow attend the school as a result of placing requests. The roll was 954 when the inspection was carried out in March 2011. Young people's attendance was in line with the national average in 2009/2010.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Polite, motivated young people committed to service for others.
- Outstanding leadership of the headteacher.
- Leadership at all levels contributing to school improvement.
- Strong caring ethos firmly based on a community of faith.
- The approach to developing young people's citizenship skills.
- Partnerships to support young people's learning.

3. How well do young people learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Young people are motivated and engage well with their learning. Almost all are well behaved, polite and attentive. They enjoy very good relationships with staff and feel valued, safe and secure in school. Young people enjoy many opportunities to work together in paired and group activities and learn well in this way. In most lessons, young people are aware of the purpose of the learning. They would benefit from a more consistent approach across the school to sharing the learning intentions. At the middle and upper stages, young people regularly discuss their progress with their teachers and set targets for improvement. This is helping them to develop confidence in understanding their strengths and what to do to improve their work.

Young people are achieving very well. Most are becoming confident and responsible citizens who make a strong contribution to the school and wider community. Through the Fairtrade groups, the Ozanam group and the Youth Philanthropy and other initiatives, young people show care and concern for others. They also demonstrate increased knowledge and understanding of important issues and confidence in

public speaking. As responsible citizens putting their faith into action, young people fundraise for numerous charities at home and abroad. They engage very effectively with their partner community in India through the *Association of People with Disability* (APD) project. Through this and other activities they demonstrate well the skills of global citizenship. Many young people gain awards and qualifications through participating in sport and dance activities with a number achieving national recognition. Students across the school also demonstrate effective leadership skills. For example, young people in S3 to S6 produce the *Trinity Times*. In S6 the Leadership Group plays a significant role in organising and running many events and activities in the school and in the community. The Millennium Volunteer Awards are used well to recognise individuals and this is coordinated by learners themselves. Young people have also received recognition through the Diana Awards.

At S1/S2, most young people are progressing well in reading, writing and mathematics from prior levels of attainment. From S3 to S6, young people's overall performance has been consistently better or much better than the performance of schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds. In 2010, performance was in line with the national average in almost all key indicators in a school where levels of deprivation are above the national average. Across the school there are a good number of strongly performing departments and a few others with scope for improvement. The school continues to have a strong focus on the ongoing improvement in attainment across all subject areas. Almost all young people on leaving school progress well into employment, training, further or higher education. This is an improving picture with the numbers going on to university in 2010 well above authority and national averages.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

The school has in place a broad curriculum. It is firmly based on the vision and values of the school's Catholic ethos drawing on experiences in and outwith the classroom. Most young people are able to progress well from S1 through to S6 in a good range of subject

areas, including at Advanced Higher level. The school is aware of the need to extend the range of provision for some young people as they move into S5. From S4 to S6, not all young people are receiving two hours of quality physical education in line with national expectations. The school is working towards addressing this. A number of young people follow valuable vocational programmes which are offered in partnership with local colleges. In S4, almost all young people gain important experience and skills for work through placements with local employers. The curriculum provides many opportunities for young people to develop enterprise and citizenship skills through initiatives such as Dragons Den, Press Awards and the annual *sciafathon*. The school has effective programmes and approaches in place to support young people with additional support needs. The school has taken a measured and considered approach to implementing Curriculum for Excellence. Staff are becoming more confident as they introduce new programmes in S1 and improve links across subjects. The successful S1 APD project based on a partnership with a community in India is helping young people make more connections in their learning. Staff have made a good start to developing young people's skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the curriculum. The school has very good links with its associated primary schools. Staff are building on these in the context of Curriculum for Excellence to further improve young people's progress in learning as they move from primary into secondary.

Staff meet young people's learning needs very well. In most lessons, teachers match tasks and activities well to the range of pupils within their classes. Staff have begun to track progress more effectively to improve pace and help young people set realistic targets. Class teachers find the information, advice and in-class support from specialist staff very helpful in ensuring young people with additional support needs progress well. The school has very effective procedures for identifying any young person in need of additional support. Pastoral and support for learning staff are alert to young people's needs. They are prompt in responding and putting appropriate plans in place to provide additional help as required. Young people and parents are involved in this planning. Staff also

work very well with a range of external partners to help them identify and meet the needs of young people requiring additional support.

4. How well do staff work with others to support young people's learning?

Staff engage well with parents and continually look for opportunities to involve them in their children's learning. The active Parent Council and parent-teacher association both provide very good support to the work of the school. Parents find the school website helpful and most feel well-informed about their child's progress. The school deals effectively with any complaints. Staff also work very effectively with many local, national and international partners to support and enhance young people's learning. The campus policeman, for example, contributes well to the school's personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) and many school activities. The home link workers make an invaluable contribution to supporting more vulnerable young people. Through a range of partners, students are involved in many volunteering activities in the local community.

5. Are staff and young people actively involved in improving their school community?

Young people have a clear voice in improving the school and feel their views are listened to and valued. Increasingly, staff are gathering their views and using them to improve learning programmes and other aspects of school life. The S6 Leadership Group makes a particularly strong contribution in this area. Staff are strongly committed to improving young people's learning and achievement. Most are becoming more skilled in reflecting on their classroom practice and sharing ideas across the school. Senior managers regularly visit classes and support staff in reflecting on their practice. As a result, in recent years, staff have introduced more active learning approaches which are successfully engaging learners. Teachers also work well with senior managers to analyse young people's results in national examinations. Most staff use this information effectively to plan changes where necessary. Staff willingly take part in working groups

to plan and implement improvements in line with school and national priorities. All of these approaches are helping to ensure that young people's achievement is consistently high in comparison to schools which serve young people with similar needs and backgrounds.

6. Does the school have high expectations of all young people?

Staff have suitably high expectations of young people, in terms of attitude and behaviour, as well as in their achievements. Young people respond very positively to these expectations. The school has a very supportive, inclusive ethos. It places a strong emphasis on putting gospel values into practice, particularly in service to others. Opportunities for religious observance are very regular and links with local parishes are strong. The school chaplain, working with the Liturgy Group, contributes greatly to the faith life of the school. Through the PSHE and religious education programmes, young people are well informed about other faiths and about issues of equality and diversity. Many have taken part in initiatives to counter racism and sectarianism.

7. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?

The headteacher has a clear, shared vision for the school, firmly rooted in the Catholic values which underpin all of its work. He provides very strong leadership and a clear sense of direction while encouraging and supporting others, including young people, to take on responsibilities. He is ably supported by a very effective team of senior managers, including the business manager, who all provide strong leadership across their areas of responsibility. Staff at all levels work very effectively to put the school's vision into practice. Young people, parents and partners fully support the work of the school. This school is very well placed to continue to improve.

8. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the school, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

The education authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

We have agreed the following area for improvement with the school and education authority.

Continue to develop in line with Curriculum for Excellence, building on strong practice, to ensure:

- clear progressive pathways for all learners;
- stimulating and challenging learning programmes; and
- greater responsibility for young people in progressing their learning and achievement.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *How good is our school?*. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Trinity High School.

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector: Mairi Timmons

3 May 2011

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

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