

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105536
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	324239
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Sheila O'Keeffe

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	236
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Noone
Headteacher	Mr Aelred Whelan
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Floatshall Road Baguley Manchester Lancashire M23 1HP

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Inspection number	324239

Telephone number
Fax number

0161 9983419
0161 9456507

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	18-19 March 2009
Inspection number	324239

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sacred Heart is an average-sized primary school within the diocese of Shrewsbury. Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage. There are a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups with a small group who speak English as an additional language. The school serves an area where there is significant social disadvantage and the proportion of pupils who receive free school meals is higher than the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and a Reception class. The awards achieved are: the Healthy Schools, Activemark, Eco-Schools Bronze and an Inclusion Award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sacred Heart is a good school with outstanding features. The good curriculum, quality of teaching and outstanding pastoral care contribute to its success. These features are accompanied by excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning by pupils. There is a shared vision for all pupils of high expectations and aspirations. Parents overwhelmingly agree, saying, 'This is a loving, nurturing school,' and, 'The school is a family where everyone knows and helps each other.'

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2 pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and progress is satisfactory. Progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6 so that, in Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average. This represents good achievement from below typically expected starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups make good progress as a result of the good support they receive from effective teaching assistants.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is evident in their relationships and consideration for others. Pupils have an excellent awareness of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle. They say they feel safe and know there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. They value opportunities to express their views, for example as school councillors. The school involves pupils very well both in the school and wider community through, for example, the local parish and links to Italy.

Teaching and learning is good overall. However, the consistency and quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory leading to satisfactory progress. The curriculum is good and it meets the interests and needs of most pupils effectively. However, the more able pupils are not always provided with learning experiences that meet their personal needs sufficiently well. Within the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities there are good opportunities for the development of writing, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills plus music and sport. Because pupils' basic skills are good, this prepares them well for their next steps in education.

Good care, guidance and support enable pupils to be well looked after, safe and encouraged to do well. Leadership and management are good. The senior leadership team gives the school clear direction. This has helped the school make good progress since the last inspection. Effective partnerships with other schools and outside agencies help the school with its work. Governors contribute well to this process. Their clear understanding of the school's work and their expertise are used well to provide good support and challenge. Consequently, the school provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are helped to settle very quickly into Nursery and learn classroom routines. They respond well to teachers' high expectations as a result of effective leadership and skilful early years practitioners. Staff help children to achieve well in all areas of learning in relation to their starting points, which are usually below those expected for their age, particularly so in their communication and language. Staff further help children in acquiring outstanding personal

development and well-being and social skills. Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes and by the time they start Year 1 many are working at the levels typically expected for their age. Nursery staff work well together to provide the youngest children with learning activities that capture their imagination and make them eager to communicate with each other. When working in a pretend school, for example, children were demonstrating good teamwork and social skills. When children move to the Reception class they continue to develop and respond well, for example they engage in effective, short and focused writing opportunities. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage children cooperate very well with each other and behave exceptionally well. Staff meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and record evidence to illustrate children's good progress and achievement to inform children's next learning steps. The school has made significant improvements to the Nursery class, as well as the outdoor provision, since the last inspection. Excellent use is made of the well designed resource areas. Parents are welcomed and receive regular updates about the progress and welfare of their children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the challenge and consistency of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1.
- Improve challenge for the more able pupils across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Good progress is made in the Early Years Foundation Stage. During Years 1 and 2 progress is satisfactory so that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 inspection evidence and school data indicates that pupils' progress is accelerating and standards are rising. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress from their starting points and standards are currently broadly average. However the more able pupils do not currently achieve as well as they could. Initiatives are already in place to improve standards for the more able pupils but it is too early as yet to see the impact of this work in terms of the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. They are given excellent opportunities for reflection and discussion to develop their self-esteem. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is evident in their consideration for others and the way they conduct themselves in lessons, around the school and at play. Pupils make an excellent contribution to their school and the wider community. This is evident in, for example, the work of the school council in making improvements to their environment, in particular the playground equipment. Year 3 pupils prepared and presented a wonderful assembly for the whole school and their parents. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they have the confidence and maturity to act as playpals, study buddies and special friends to younger pupils. Pupils have positive attitudes and a good knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe, fit and healthy through the many programmes and activities on offer. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils are encouraged to attend well but there remains some pupils who find attending well hard, although the school does a lot to encourage good attendance. Pupils are well equipped with good basic skills and a sense of teamwork to enable them to get off to a good start at secondary school and for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some examples of outstanding practice, particularly in Key Stage 2. Generally, pupils learn well and develop a keen interest in their lessons. Pupils say, 'Our teachers are really interesting.' Pupils are quick to settle in lessons and listen carefully to their teachers. Where teaching is at its best, lessons are stimulating and challenge pupils creatively. Expectations are high and learning takes place at a good pace, keeping pupils fully motivated and engaged. As a result, pupils progress rapidly. Although the school has shared this good practice there are still pockets of satisfactory, rather than good, teaching and learning where tasks do not fully meet the needs of all pupils, especially during whole-class activities. In these lessons teachers' expectations are not high enough and sessions lack pace and challenge. As a result, progress in Key Stage 1 is no better than satisfactory. The quality of planning is good overall but in some lessons it lacks a sharp focus to challenge and extend all pupils, particularly the more able. The quality of marking is very good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Generally, most pupils have a clear idea of how to improve their work. Throughout the school, strong, warm relationships and effective management of pupils ensure positive attitudes and excellent behaviour, and this underpins learning well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by staff who ensure they have the right level of help through programmes that carefully meet their individual needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is an increasing emphasis on encouraging pupils to see links between subjects, and on fostering their writing skills, through a topic approach. The well-planned personal, social and health education provision makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The 'smart learner' programme, for example, effectively raises pupils' self-esteem and aspirations for their future. Pupils speak highly of the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them. There are many opportunities for sport as well as music. The school provides extra lessons to boost pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 learn Italian and some learn Spanish. Visitors to the school enrich the curriculum; for example, the school provides narrative therapy groups for pupils who would benefit from such support. Information and communication technology plays a prominent part in many lessons across Key Stage 2 and pupils' skills are developing well as a result.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils flourish as a direct result of the good quality of care, guidance and support. Pupils typically remark that 'This is a happy place to be.' Pastoral care is particularly strong and this promotes pupils' personal development well. The school ensures that all appropriate procedures are in place to safeguard pupils and that these meet current government requirements. There is high-quality support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which ensures that they make good progress. A new system to track pupils' progress has been introduced and the staff now have a better understanding of monitoring the progress of pupils. Pupils are clear about their targets and many teachers produce good feedback about how pupils can improve

their work. There is a range in the quality of marking. The majority sharply focuses on how pupils can improve their work. This good practice now needs to be shared with all staff. Transition between year groups, when children start school or begin secondary school is good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. Members of the senior leadership team have high expectations and a shared vision of aspiration for all pupils. Leaders and managers take considerable care to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and that there is no discrimination. There is a clear focus on raising standards and setting challenging targets, which is reflected in the good progress pupils are making. However, the school does recognise the need to increase opportunities for the more able pupils. Monitoring has correctly identified that although teaching and learning are good overall, there is a need to improve their consistency and quality across the school. The school has improved the quality of leadership and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which was an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection. The school promotes community cohesion well, particularly in relation to ensuring good awareness of other religions and cultural diversity. The pupils are encouraged to support good causes both locally and abroad and are taught to understand the needs of wider communities. Well established links with the Italian consulate and opportunities for the pupils to learn Italian gives pupils a good understanding of this European country and its people. The governing body offers good support and challenge to the school. The school provides good value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Manchester, M23 1HP

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you all for making us feel really welcome when we came to inspect your school. I particularly enjoyed the assembly led by Year 3. Thank you to all of you who chatted to us. I know you are rightly proud of your school and we consider that you go to a good school.

These are some of the good things we found out.

- You are extremely polite and your behaviour is excellent.
- You are happy coming to school, are good friends to one another and help others.
- Your school looks after you well and you feel safe. Because of this your families really appreciate everything your school does for you.
- Most of you make good progress and enjoy your work.

These are some of the things that can help your school to do even better.

- Make sure that children in Year 1 and 2 have even better teaching and learning to help them make good progress.
- Make sure that more of you reach high standards in English, mathematics and science (you will know this as Level 5) by the time you leave school.

Please continue to work hard at school. I send you all my best wishes for the future.