

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Floatshall Road, Baguley, Manchester, Lancashire, M23 1HP

Inspection dates 8–9 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6 standards are at least average, and in reading are above average.
- As a result of the good opportunities for learning and the relationships developed with staff, children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress well.
- Teaching is good overall; consistently strong teaching is seen in all key stages.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding; their very positive attitudes to learning contribute to the good standards in all areas of the school.
- Pupils feel safe at school and have confidence in their teachers and other adults to help them if they have any concerns.
- The temporary leaders have ensured that what the school offers pupils continues to be good, including the quality of teaching, and maintains pupils' good achievement.
- All staff and governors actively promote the strong ethos of the school which supports pupils to achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information about how well pupils are achieving is not used well enough to make sure there is the right amount of challenge, particularly for a few of the most able pupils.
- Middle leaders are not as effective as they could be in leading improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons. All classes were seen at least once.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, representatives of the governing body, and groups of pupils. A representative from the local authority was contacted by telephone.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documentation including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's own data on pupils' achievement, minutes of the governing body's meetings, monitoring records and the records of how the school uses its funding, especially how money from the pupil premium and sports funding is used.
- Inspectors analysed the 13 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and took into account these views.
- There were 10 responses to the staff questionnaire and these were taken into account by the inspectors.

Inspection team

Jane Salt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Bardon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to an average -sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above average.
- Most of the pupils are White British; the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, but increasing.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the autumn term an acting headteacher has been in post providing temporary leadership for the school; a new substantive headteacher will take up post from the beginning of the summer term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve attainment and progress for all groups of pupils, particularly the most able, by:
 - making full use of school assessment information to adjust the targets set for the standards pupils are expected to reach by the time they leave the school, particularly for the most able
 - ensuring that teachers use all available information to set and maintain high expectations of what all pupils can achieve.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring those with specific areas of responsibility are given training to carry out their roles successfully and effectively
 - ensuring subject leaders scrutinise all available information about pupil attainment and progress to identify areas where improvement can be made
 - providing all leaders with opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subject or area of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in the Nursery with skills that are less well-developed than those typically expected for their age. They progress well and when starting the Reception class a significant proportion of children are working at levels appropriate to their age. At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is slightly above average and most children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Comparisons with national data show that standards in Key Stage 1 have improved year on year. Pupils' work shows that they make good progress from their starting points and develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills well.
- Pupils continue to make good progress from individual starting points in Key Stage 2 so that by the end of Year 6 standards are at least in line with national averages.
- The most able pupils make good progress overall. They are often given more difficult work in lessons and they enjoy the challenges they are set. A Year 1 child said to one inspector that she is good at spelling 'because the teacher gives us hard homework'. However, the targets for these pupils have not been adjusted to ensure that the work provided, particularly in upper Key Stage 2 classes, prepares them to tackle work at higher levels in national assessments. As a result, the proportion of pupils who reach standards above those expected for their age, particularly in writing, is lower than in other schools nationally and one of the reasons why standards are not yet above average overall by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in reading are above average and the progress made by pupils in reading is significantly above national average. Pupils of all ages have good reading skills and can demonstrate a range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words and make sense of more difficult texts;
- Although standards in mathematics in the 2013 national tests were lower than in previous years, school tracking information shows pupils in all Key Stage 2 classes are achieving well and making good progress. Pupils' books show that they are developing a range of mathematical skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make good progress and are well supported through intervention programmes and extra support in lessons.
- Pupils from a minority ethnic background achieve well reaching standards that are often above average.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress from their starting points and do as well as other groups of pupils; they make particularly good progress in reading. School and national data shows that the attainment in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils eligible for free school meals is no more than a term behind other pupils and is improving. Much of the pupil premium funding is spent on additional staffing to ensure these pupils have targeted support readily available.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well; school leaders ensure all pupils are given support so they have an equal chance to succeed.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall and there is consistency across the school. This is demonstrated by what can be seen in lessons and the pupils' books. Pupils make good progress over time in all classes as a result of teaching which is interesting and sometimes exciting, so that pupils want to learn. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors consider teachers to be 'kind and helpful, they help you in your work without giving you the answer'.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children are taught to behave well and are given good quality guidance on other aspects of their learning. The children have good self-management skills and can work well with others. They are encouraged to be active participants

in their learning and there is emphasis on learning the basic skills of reading, writing and communication. Adults support the children well to develop skills which will help their future learning, for example, ensuring they can hold pencils properly and form letters correctly.

- Lessons are well planned to make sure pupils build on previous learning and can use what they already know in different situations. Teachers use good questioning to assess what pupils know and to challenge them further. Work is generally well-planned at different levels to make sure there is enough challenge for different groups of pupils. However, assessment information is not always used well enough to maintain high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able pupils in the upper Key Stage 2 classes. As a result, although they make at least expected progress, some pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Reading is taught well and pupils have opportunities to read widely; they also read for enjoyment and have access to both fiction and non-fiction books. As a result pupils are confident readers who are well prepared for their next stage in education.
- Pupils' books show that they have opportunities to use their writing skills in subjects other than English, for example in history. There are also good examples of pupils' writing for different purposes on displays around the school.
- Books are well-presented and neat, containing a good amount of work; they are regularly marked and teachers' comments help pupils to know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. This recent focus on marking and feedback is assisting pupils to move on more rapidly in their learning and pupils say this approach is helpful.
- Progress in mathematics books is clear to see. In mathematics lessons pupils are challenged to apply what they have learned as well as practise their skills. The most-able older pupils are now given opportunities to tackle work at higher levels so that they receive more challenge.
- Teaching assistants contribute to pupils' learning, but the quality of support sometimes varies; it is most effective where there is good communication with the teacher about pupils' progress in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their conduct is exemplary; they are courteous and polite. Pupils of all ages respond very well to the high expectations of the school.
- They have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons, showing they are eager to learn and want to do well. They take a pride in their work and were keen to share their learning with inspectors. One child was proud of her work that had been displayed in a corridor, saying she had worked hard 'to make sure it's my best'.
- Discussions with pupils indicate that behaviour is typically very good and lessons are never disrupted by poor behaviour. Observations of pupils in the playground showed that they play together well, sharing equipment and using it sensibly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and have confidence in staff to sort out any problems that may arise. They say bullying is very rare and that any incidents would be dealt with quickly and effectively. There have been occasional incidents of poor behaviour which have been well managed.
- Pupils have good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including e-safety; they understand that the school has procedures in place which are there to keep them safe.
- Attendance is above average and has improved since the last academic year. Persistent absence is low. There are sound procedures in place to monitor and follow up absences.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good rather than outstanding because, until recently, school records have not been kept in a way that enabled the school to be sure that incidents or concerns could be followed up and monitored easily.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders, including governors, have high expectations for the school. The acting headteacher has focused his attention on ensuring that what the school offers pupils is at least of a good quality and maintains the strong ethos of the school. An interim improvement plan was quickly put in place on his arrival, focusing on the most immediate issues for the school.
 - Systems to secure good quality teaching are effective; the quality of teaching has been monitored and the recent focus on marking and feedback has led to improvements. Feedback from lesson observations helps teachers to improve and points for development are followed up in later visits to classrooms.
 - The progress of all groups of pupils is carefully monitored. However, the information gained from monitoring is not always used to adjust the targets set for the standards pupils should reach by the time they leave the school. As a result, the information provided to teachers does not support the maintenance of consistently high expectations or lead to consistently good progress for all pupils in all subjects.
 - Middle leaders are not yet effective in leading improvements, such as further refinements in teaching strategies, which help pupils achieve well. They are not sufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation of their area of responsibility and therefore cannot plan effectively for improvement.
 - The performance of teachers is monitored and teachers know what is expected of them. The progress of pupils in their class is used as a measure of their effectiveness. Training needs have been identified to ensure teachers can carry out their work to at least a good standard.
 - The school uses funding well to support pupils' learning. This includes specific money such as the sports funding which provides additional sporting opportunities for pupils of all ages. Pupils are now able to enjoy sporting activities which are both competitive and social contributing well to their health and well-being.
 - There is evidence around the school of a broad curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. More recently, a growing number of visits and visitors to the school have provided opportunities for pupils to engage with the wider community, for example the 'Manchester airport world of work day'.
 - The local authority has provided light touch support for the school since the arrival of the acting headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors have high aspirations for the school. They have an accurate view of standards and the quality of teaching; they provide challenge for school leaders, particularly in the area of finances, and understand the key areas for improvement.
 - Governors carry out their duties to ensure that the quality of teaching and the performance of all staff is evaluated regularly and financial incentives are used appropriately.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the context of the school and actively promote the strong ethos which is a particular strength.
 - Governors are aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and have ensured the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105536
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	439515

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Nixon
Headteacher	John Gretton
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2009
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