

Holy Spirit Catholic and Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	136124
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	382030
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	Clare Henderson

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	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Feeney
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Melville
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
School address	Gardenside Leasowe CH46 2RP
Telephone number	0151 638 5180
Fax number	N/A
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Introduction

Inspection team

Clare Henderson
Anthony Buckley

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed sixteen lessons taught by nine teachers, listened to individual pupils reading in Years 1, 4 and 6 and scrutinised pupils' work. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to consider when planning the inspection. The inspectors analysed the 95 completed questionnaires received from parents and carers and those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average sized primary school. However, it has increased in size by 30% since the last inspection in February 2010. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small and increasing minority are from minority ethnic groups. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school meets the current floor standard. A higher than average number of pupils join the school during Key Stage 2. The school has gained the Activemark, Healthy School status and the local authority International School's status.

The headteacher works at the school for three days each week, while the deputy headteacher leads and manages the school for two days. The school runs before- and after-school clubs which were considered as part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is extremely welcoming and inclusive. Its main strengths are outstanding leadership from its senior leaders, the school’s outstanding contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the outstanding engagement it has with parents and carers. The school is not outstanding overall because, although reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills are developed and applied well across the curriculum, there are missed opportunities for teachers to extend the range of these skills within all subjects of the curriculum.
- Children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language make at least good progress and achievement is good in Years 1 to 6. When they leave school in Year 6 pupils’ attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average for all groups.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including verbal, physical and racist. They say such behaviour is very rare and is dealt with quickly by staff if it does occur.
- The quality of teaching is good with outstanding practice evident. Teachers and support staff are attentive to pupils’ personal needs and this enables all groups of pupils and particularly those who are new to the school to settle and make at least good progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders and members of the governing body regularly review the school’s performance and have given high priority to improving the quality of teaching and learning. However, all curriculum leaders do not have enough involvement in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning within all the subjects of the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement to outstanding by increasing opportunities for all pupils to extend their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across all subjects of the curriculum.
- Raise the quality of leadership and management to outstanding by fully involving all curriculum leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

In all lessons, pupils have positive attitudes to learning, showing enthusiasm in all their activities. They are attentive and collaborate well in pairs and small groups. For instance, in a Key Stage 2 English lesson, pupils were investigating issues relating to different weather conditions and learned at a rapid pace. They were successfully challenged to use researching, thinking, and communication skills to evaluate their own and the learning of their classmates, praising their efforts and suggesting how work could be improved. However, occasionally in lessons, pupils do not forge ahead with their learning so much because there is not a wide enough range of opportunities for them to extend their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across all the subjects they study.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally low and particularly in their communication, mathematical and social skills. They make good progress because teaching and provision support their learning effectively. Outstanding links with parents and carers enable children to settle happily and to thoroughly enjoy learning. Good progress is maintained in Years 1 to 6 and all groups of pupils make better progress than similar groups nationally. Pupils' handwriting is generally neat and they present their work well. They can write clearly in a variety of styles to express their ideas and feelings, including narrative and poetry. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 a high priority is given to developing pupils' speech and language and understanding of letter names and sounds. Attainment in reading is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6. Pupils have secure mathematical calculation skills. They are becoming more competent at using them to solve real-life number problems.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress and outstanding progress for an increasing minority. This is because of the precise and very effective support they receive. Pupils who are new to the school or speak English as an additional language make rapid progress because of the high quality support the school provides. In their questionnaires, almost all parents and carers agreed that their children were making good progress at the school. Inspection evidence shows this is an accurate view.

Quality of teaching

Comments such as, 'The school has really helped my child with his learning difficulties' and 'I am very happy with his progress and the teaching standard', reflect the unanimous views of parents and carers that the quality of teaching is good. Pupils also say that the teaching

they receive is good. These views are supported by inspection findings. The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage displays outstanding qualities because children become good communicators, readers and writers. For instance, they listen enthralled to a story about a granny's trip to the market and, in response to searching questions, confidently talked and wrote about where they would fly to on a magic carpet. 'I would go to India to see the tigers' exclaimed one child. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 classes is good and occasionally outstanding. This is because most teachers are secure in knowing how well individuals are doing and what are the needs of different groups. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, the pirate theme chosen by the pupils was used very effectively to develop their learning, including their communication, scientific and writing skills as they designed boats that can float and then experimented using differing materials. They employed testing and modifying skills with confidence and consequently learning was rapid and sustained. Teaching is generally conducted at a lively pace with good variety so that pupils are kept interested. For example, in one Key Stage 2 design and technology lesson, pupils' interest was stimulated and held as they designed and subsequently tested the weather vanes they made.

Marking is generally regular and gives clear indications of what pupils need to do to improve their work. Teachers plan activities that are usually appropriately challenging for different groups of learners by age and ability. Teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to the learning individuals and groups of pupils.

In lessons, pupils are encouraged to show respect to one another and to the adults working with them. Teachers enthuse, engage and motivate pupils well and foster their curiosity, imaginations and enthusiasm for learning. For example, pupils develop and apply social and moral issues in their school life and in relation to world issues as they discuss fair trade and sustaining the world's resources

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a friendly and welcoming place in which to learn. Pupils behave well and act responsibly in and around the school. They engage well in lessons and are considerate to the needs of others. As a result, any disruption to learning is minimal. Staff, parents, carers and pupils overwhelmingly say that behaviour is good and has been over time. The exceptionally close working arrangements with outside agencies have enabled very effective support to be given to families who have children with behavioural difficulties. This has resulted in significant improvement in the attitudes of the few pupils who find it difficult to act responsibly at times. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers do not express any concerns about bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare and, again, on the few occasions when it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Pupils say they feel safe at all times in school, a view shared by parents and carers. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe. This is promoted well through the curriculum, for example, by pupils being taught about road safety and how to use the internet safely. Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities willingly, including being a school councillor or play leader. In so doing, they add to the life of the school. This is seen in the work of the school council in raising funds for charities or to purchase equipment for break and lunchtime use. Pupils' enjoyment of school is seen in their above average attendance and their punctuality. The school identified a few pupils who were persistently absent and, through work with families, addressed the issue. This has proved successful and such

absence is now minimal. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the care taken of their children while in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are passionate about providing pupils with a high quality education. Their ambitious vision for further development is shared by all involved in the life of the school. The governing body is supportive of the school and influential in shaping its direction. Good quality professional development has improved the quality of teaching and accelerated the progress made by pupils. Robust monitoring and evaluation procedures provide senior leaders with an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the role is not fully shared by all curriculum subject leaders. The information gained is used effectively to set priorities and plan for further development. The school's good track record since the last inspection gives it a strong capacity for further improvement.

Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and meet requirements. Training for all staff, particularly for child protection, is of good quality. The school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils to be successful and tackles discrimination well. As a result, pupils' outcomes are positive and any unevenness between different groups is minimal. Outstanding engagement with parents and carers ensures they are very involved in their children's learning. The work of the parent liaison leader and the special needs coordinator are exemplary in building the confidence of families and in enabling each pupil to fully access all the school has to offer.

The good curriculum is enhanced by a variety of enrichment activities, including well-attended before-and after-school clubs. Visits to places of educational interest and opportunities to work with a variety of visitors extend pupils' skills and widen their horizons. Topic work has been introduced to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in more meaningful contexts. However, teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to extend these skills across all subjects of the curriculum. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, curriculum planning for the outdoor area in their 'Forest Garden' very effectively builds upon learning that has taken place indoors and provides children with excellent opportunities to develop their investigative and imaginative skills.

The curriculum makes an exceptional contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enhanced by many opportunities for pupils to develop an excellent understanding of the diversity in the religious beliefs of others and to learn about a wide range of cultures different to their own. They do this by using the first-hand experiences of the growing number of pupils and families from other cultures who attend the school and through very strong links established with schools in Poland, India and Bulgaria.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Holy Spirit Catholic and Church of England Primary School,
Leasowe CH46 2RP**

Thank you so much for helping us during our visit. We enjoyed meeting and talking with so many of you. You are right to be proud of your school. It is a good school that takes very good care of you and helps you to achieve well. It was pleasing to hear that you feel safe in school and are confident that the staff will give you help when you need it. We were impressed with your responsible attitude and the way the play leaders and school councillors, in particular, consider the feelings of others well. We read the comments made by your parents and carers. The vast majority were very pleased with all that your teachers do to help you to learn and enjoy school. Please thank them for taking the time to write to us.

Many of you talked about how lessons are fun and interesting and it was good to see how well you worked in many of your lessons, concentrating hard and enjoying all of the different activities the school puts on for you after school. We were very interested to hear you talk about how much you enjoy the topics you study. It is clear that the leaders and managers, together with the governing body and all staff, have worked hard to make the school an enjoyable place for you to learn.

Your headteacher and deputy headteacher and all the school leaders are determined to continue to improve your school so that you all do as well as you possibly can. To do this, we have asked teachers to give you further opportunities to extend your reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills in all your lessons. We have also asked that staff are fully involved in reviewing the quality of the teaching you receive in all the subjects you study.

We hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and to do your best to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson
Lead inspector

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