

Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103421
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355380
Inspection dates	31 January 2011–1 February 2011
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maura Halpin
Headteacher	Marian Mulroy
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 17 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Meetings were held with staff members, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a local authority representative. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including monitoring, evaluation and assessment records, policy documents, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. A wide range of documents and records was scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors took into account the views of 45 parents', 105 pupils' and 18 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Why is attainment in mathematics weaker than other outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1?
- Are there specific groups with poor attendance and how much does this affect their academic performance?
- How have the monitoring and evaluation skills of senior and middle leaders developed in order to support school improvement and what does the governing body need to do further to challenge and hold the school to account?

Information about the school

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is similar in size to most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very high when compared to other schools nationally and a majority of these come from a Pakistani background. A very high proportion speaks English as an additional language and 43 pupils are at the early stages of learning English. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and the proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to other primary schools. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery part-time and full-time in a Reception class. A breakfast club operates under the direction of the governing body. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has been awarded the Sportsmark.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a good school in which pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities achieve well. The quality of education provided at Holy Family is good; teaching and the curriculum are both good and support effective learning. In addition to the academic progress pupils make, their personal development is good. This is supported by the strong Catholic ethos, which underpins the school's daily routines, and good levels of care, guidance and support. As a result pupils feel safe in school, their behaviour is good and they develop well in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth. As one parent wrote, 'Holy Family is not just a school, but a family.'

The school has introduced a number of effective initiatives to raise standards. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with the national average. There has been some improvement in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 and attainment is steadily approaching the national average. However, the same level of improvement is not evident in mathematics, where attainment remains significantly below average. Standards in problem solving, reasoning and number are similarly below those in language at the end of the Reception. Inspection observations show that the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is mostly satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In lessons, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to learn through meaningful activities, and the language of mathematics often confuses some pupils when solving problems.

Improvement has taken place in the Early Years Foundation Stage under new leadership. Overall, children's progress is good, but there is some variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the key stage; it is good in the Reception and satisfactory in Nursery. Assessment is used satisfactorily in the Nursery and well in the Reception Class. It is used effectively to support and challenge the children capable of achieving higher attainment levels, but less well in supporting those who find learning more challenging and children who speak English as an additional language. Some small group teaching in the Nursery is not followed up with learning activities that provide sufficient enrichment to encourage children to develop their language and learn through experiencing for themselves.

The school has improved since its previous inspection, when its overall effectiveness was judged satisfactory. As a result of improved teaching and curriculum, pupils now achieve well. There is a strong drive for continued improvement among the senior leadership team and staff. Through effective self-evaluation, senior leaders are clear about what needs to be improved and the headteacher has a realistic view of where the school is in its development. Consequently, the school has a good capacity to sustain further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the level of attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it is consistently good or better
 - promoting the development and use of the language of mathematics
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to solve problems and to learn through meaningful practical tasks.
- Establish a greater level of consistency of provision across the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - using assessment more effectively to ensure that activities are matched well to children's specific abilities and learning needs
 - develop the curriculum to offer greater opportunities for language development in context
 - plan more small group teaching sessions in the Nursery that are linked to meaningful and enriching learning experiences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment that is well below that typical for children of their age. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Through well-planned and focused support for their specific learning needs, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language soon pick up sufficient English to enable them to progress well in their learning. However, it is clear that some pupils' speaking skills and limited vocabulary limit their ability to express themselves clearly. Even so, pupils are confident and readily enter into dialogue with each other and with adults. This is particularly evident in lessons where pupils are keen to contribute when working collaboratively. Pupils enjoy lessons. They find them interesting and are eager to engage in sessions such as those where they learn the sounds letters represent. When lessons are interesting, pupils are capable of sustaining their levels of concentration over extended periods. At the end of the day, pupils in Year 6 were still enthusiastic to share their computer based story boards which they had produced working in groups, having started the unit of work mid-morning.

Pupils understand what makes a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy and enthusiastically participate in a range of after-school sports clubs. They make healthy choices at lunchtime. Pupils' healthy lifestyles are reflected in the school's Healthy School status and its Sportsmark. They make a satisfactory contribution to school life and to the local community. Pupils from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and from different faiths work, learn and play together harmoniously. They have a well-developed moral code, which is reflected in the good relationships and behaviour. Their satisfactory multicultural understanding is developed through the spiritual life of the school, the curriculum, celebrations of religious festivals and visits to different places of worship. However there are missed opportunities to widen pupils' multicultural awareness further, beyond the faith based approach, and to celebrate a wide range of cultures through displays in the school.

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Although the overall attendance figure is below average, factors beyond the school's control have depressed attendance rates. A large majority of pupils take leave for religious observance and a small number of pupils left Holy Family, but were kept on roll until their next school was known. When these factors are taken out of the data, as well as absence due to adverse and extreme weather conditions through which the school remained open, attendance is average. Consequently, there is no significant impact on pupils' achievement.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' planning is thorough and takes account of pupils' prior attainment so that activities are matched well to individual needs. In Key Stage 2 mathematics lessons, where pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment, teachers plan different activities to match the range of ages and learning needs in their groups. Teaching assistants are fully aware of what is expected of them and fully engage with the pupils they support, making a significant contribution to the good progress in lessons. Teachers make sure that pupils are engaged in learning. It was very rare that teachers talked for too long in lessons seen during the inspection. Introductions were brief but clear and pupils set about their tasks while they still had their initial enthusiasm. Behaviour is managed well. The quality of relationships between adults and pupils means that pupils respond and settle very quickly.

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The curriculum is broad and balanced and there are wide opportunities for promoting pupils' personal and social development. Pupils' cultural development is promoted well. All Year 4 pupils learn to play the violin, with the option of continuing beyond Year 4 if they wish, and Key Stage 2 has weekly French lessons. Teachers successfully use themes to provide imaginative contexts for learning based on developing pupils' skills and gaining their interest. A number of initiatives have been introduced which are becoming effective in developing pupils literacy, numeracy and computer skills. The school is a caring establishment where pupils are, and feel well supported and cared for. Pupils attending the breakfast club are well looked after. They receive a small breakfast and, through careful supervision, are kept safe before school starts.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been successful in building a team of skilled staff that are committed to school improvement. She has achieved this by distributing responsibility across the staff and providing opportunities for professional development so that they can fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Typical of this arrangement is the inclusion of a higher-level teaching assistant on the senior leadership team and designating the school's business manager as an associate governor. The headteacher and senior staff carefully monitor the school's provision and performance in their discrete areas but they also bring their findings together under whole-school issues. This provides a good and valuable overview on which they act decisively. Effective leadership and management of teaching and learning, for example, have resulted in improved teaching.

Governance of the school is satisfactory. The governing body has a few newly appointed members. Under the leadership of their new chair, governors are currently auditing their skills and identifying the policy documents they need to review urgently. A governor has just been appointed to oversee safeguarding and revised, more robust systems have recently been put into place to ensure that the school is able to meet its obligations under child protection. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory but a number of policy documents are out of date, therefore, safeguarding and child protection practice may not reflect closely enough the most up-to-date requirements. The school has a good relationship with the parents and carers of its pupils and they think highly of the school. Parents' and carers' questionnaire returns confirm they feel well-informed.

Equality of opportunity is an important feature of the school's provision. The ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are equally respected and that incidents of harassment are minimised. Regardless of origin, faith or ability pupils are given good opportunities to

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succeed. The school is working hard to reduce any gaps and progress is already being seen specifically between the provision of literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 1, and generally between the provision in the Nursery and in Reception. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. There is an audit of this area of provision, which identifies areas the school needs to focus on. Cohesion within the school community is good and the school is currently extending its international links.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is relatively new into role and has already had an impact on improving provision and raising standards in preparation for children to move into Key Stage 1. Teaching is good in the Reception class and satisfactory in the Nursery. When good, teaching is clearly focused and provides children with a good quality spoken English language model. There is a clear purpose to group activities which promote purposeful play. Children are encouraged to select their own resources and therefore learn independence. Teaching assistant support, when good, provides good role models for language development within contexts relevant to children's lives and experiences, frequently including problem solving to develop numeracy. Satisfactory teaching is characterised by being often too adult-led and children not having enough practical experiences in their learning activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is effective in promoting good learning. There is an appropriate focus on developing children's speaking, listening and early reading skills. However, in the Nursery, there is sometimes a lack of enrichment activities to promote spoken language in context and raise achievement in children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A smaller than average number of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. A few included written responses, but like the vast majority of responses to the questions, these were positive and reflected parents' and carers' satisfaction with the school. A very small minority expressed disagreement that their children are making enough progress and that particular needs are met. The inspection team looked carefully at these two areas and found that progress is generally good and that teachers are careful in planning to meet pupils' individual needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Family Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	69	14	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	64	16	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	42	26	58	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	56	17	38	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	53	18	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	36	27	60	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	42	25	56	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	33	25	56	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	33	24	53	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	49	21	47	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	36	24	53	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	42	23	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	56	18	40	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



2 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B10 0HT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. Your thoughts and opinions about Holy Family School, given to us in conversations and in your questionnaire responses, helped us a great deal when we were making decisions about how good your school really is.

You go to a good school and we feel that you all make good progress in your learning and in your personal development. We were impressed by the way you go about your school day and the way in which you all get on well together. We thought that behaviour in school was good and we sensed you had an eagerness to learn. This helps your teachers teach effective lessons so that you can learn well. Your contribution is important to the school's effectiveness.

We have asked your headteacher, governors and staff to improve two main areas.

Improve standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 by making sure that all teaching is good and giving you more chances to solve problems.

Make sure children in the Nursery have the same kind of exciting things to do and learn that children in the Reception Class enjoy.

We wish you all the best in the future and you can help your teachers improve the school by continuing to do your best and behaving well.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman

Lead inspector

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