

# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106461
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	355955
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Herring

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	452
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lynne Sudworth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andrew Poskitt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Springfield Road Wigan Lancashire WN6 7RH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 16 teachers in 24 lessons and held meetings with pupils, staff, governors and a representative from the children's centre. They met parents and carers informally in the playground and in a mathematics workshop. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies and documentation for safeguarding pupils, the school development plan, a report from the School Improvement Partner, teachers' plans, pupils' books and assessments and documentation related to pupils' progress. They looked at 138 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Whether the more-able pupils are achieving as well as they can in literacy and numeracy.
- The extent to which the provision for literacy and numeracy leads to good achievement for all.
- The extent to which the actions of leaders are bringing about improvements.

## Information about the school

Most pupils in this much larger-than-average primary school are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and there are very few pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. All children are entitled to attend the Nursery part-time although parents and carers can pay for additional sessions. The adjacent children's centre is not managed by the governing body; the headteacher, however, has a leadership role within it. The privately run before- and after-school provision available at Sacred Heart is subject to a separate inspection whose report will be available on the Ofsted website. There has been extensive rebuilding in the school since the previous 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: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has several good features, including the effectiveness of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the care, guidance and support it provides for its pupils, the effectiveness of partnerships, the engagement of parents and carers, and community cohesion. Most aspects of pupils' personal development are good. Pupils are polite, well behaved and have a good awareness of the needs of others. Attendance is above average.

Pupils' attainment in Key Stages 1 and 2 has been broadly average historically with fewer pupils than is typical nationally achieving the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are now making quicker progress and attainment is rising. This is due in part to the school's recently introduced mentoring initiative that provides clearer individual guidance for each pupil. This is at an early stage of implementation through the school but in Key Stage 1 it is making a difference. Teaching is inconsistent. It is good in some lessons but in others pupils listen for too long and activities are not engaging enough and so their interest wanes. Teachers do not always plan work that is suitably challenging for the more-able pupils and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in solving problems.

The senior leadership team leads the staff in a common commitment to the pastoral care and well-being of pupils and this successfully permeates all the school's work. The school's data provides detailed information of pupils' academic progress. . Hitherto, this has not been used rigorously enough to drive up standards of attainment but this is now being addressed effectively by the mentoring initiative. The school has rightly focused on improving the environment for pupils and extensive building work was completed at the start of the term. The school's careful self-evaluation, although sometimes too optimistic, has rightly identified the need to quicken progress. Because of the enthusiasm communicated to all by the leaders and managers the introduction of the new initiative has been welcomed by staff, pupils, parents and carers and governors. The good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been sustained and other aspects of this provision have been further improved, demonstrating that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress by July 2011 through:
  - engaging pupils' interest in all lessons and giving them opportunities to explain their thinking
  - making better use of assessments of pupils' learning to challenge the more-able pupils

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- developing a more consistent system for marking to provide clear advice to help pupils to improve
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical skills in investigating and solving problems
  - continuing to monitor rigorously the impact of the school's actions for improvement.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Learning is most effective when lessons are lively and practical, for example, when pupils were asked to follow their own written instructions on how to make a sandwich. When they ran into difficulties they quickly realised their instructions could have been clearer. Learning is slower when tasks are insufficiently challenging to engage pupils' attention and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explain their ideas. Pupils behave consistently well and this makes a good contribution to their learning.

Children's attainment on entry to the school is below what is typical for their age. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are broadly average for their age. Although progress is now speeding up in Key Stage 1, overall progress through the classes is satisfactory as is pupils' achievement and enjoyment in learning. The more-able pupils are not given enough challenge to make the quick rate of progress of which they are capable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress at a similar rate to others academically although they make good progress in terms of their personal development.

Pupils say they feel safe, as any problems are sorted out quickly by their teachers. They have a clear understanding of using the internet safely. They know the value of a healthy diet and exercise and develop a good awareness of factors that can affect their health as they grow up. They make a good contribution to the school community through their many responsibilities, such as school councillors and Bus Stop Buddies; and to the wider community through links with the parish and fund-raising for charity. This was seen when the whole school came together, decked in spots, to join Pudsey to help Children in Need. Pupils' sound basic skills and good attendance provide a satisfactory preparation for the future. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are gaining a good awareness of different faiths and cultures.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

The quality of teaching is variable. The pace of the better lessons is brisk, good use is made of practical resources and pupils are fully involved and eager to learn. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils used blocks to help them to understand tens and unit and they were eager to show their work. Teaching is less effective when pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and have insufficient opportunities to explain their own thinking. Planning does not always take account of pupils' previous learning, so the more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Marking does not always give pupils sufficient guidance to help them to improve. Teaching assistants give good support to those needing extra help in group activities.

The curriculum is planned to take good account of the needs of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities but is less successful in providing for the needs of the more-able pupils. There is a good emphasis on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply and develop mathematical skills in investigating and solving problems. The school organises a good range of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. There is a good number of clubs outside normal lessons, though the range is limited mainly to sporting and musical activities. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education which contributes well to pupils' good personal development.

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Based firmly on its Catholic ethos, the school provides a good level of pastoral care for its pupils. They enjoy coming to school and this encourages good attendance. Initiatives such as the nurture group provide clearly targeted support for groups of potentially vulnerable pupils and they make significant improvement in their attitudes, behaviour and confidence. The school has not yet identified clearly its gifted and talented pupils to enable them to maximise their potential. There are good systems for introducing children to school and for preparing them for the high school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Through its extensive systems of assessment and tracking, senior leaders have rightly identified the need to accelerate pupils' progress. After a good period of consultation with staff and all involved with the school, extensive staff training was put in place. The school is now in the process of introducing a comprehensive scheme to strengthen teaching and to guide the progress of individuals. Observation of teaching and learning in lessons and children's books show that this is beginning to have an impact in Key Stage 1.

Members of the governing body are a regular and supportive presence in school. They are aware of their responsibilities and all the recommended procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and consistently applied. The school is very clear that discrimination will not be tolerated. It has good procedures for identifying and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable but has not yet fully addressed the needs of the most able.

The considerable effort made to involve parents and carers more closely in the work of the school has proved successful in enabling them to support their children's education. For example, the very practical workshops for parents and carers in the Reception Year are helping them to support their children's learning in mathematics. The school makes effective use of partnerships with others, for example, the children's centre, the high school and other local schools. This enhances areas of the curriculum, for example, in supporting the teaching of modern foreign languages in lessons, and eases pupils' transition to the next stage of education.

There is a thorough audit of the school's work in reaching out to others and there are strong links with the local community. The school has built on pupils' awareness of their own heritage by linking with schools both nationally and in other parts of the world, thus widening their horizons. The link with five schools in Pakistan through the Connecting Classrooms initiative has been valuable in this respect.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with a range of skills that overall are below what is typical for their age. They make good progress and achieve well and the majority are working at the expected level for their age by the time they enter Year 1. The school's assessments show an improving trend in attainment recently because of good links with the children's centre and well focused initiatives such as the language and literacy project.

Teachers plan a good range of purposeful, practical activities, which show a good understanding of how young children learn. Letter sounds are taught systematically and well so children are making good progress in reading. Good assessment procedures are used effectively and support children according to their needs from the earliest age. Some outstanding practice was observed in the warm and stimulating learning environment in the Nursery with all areas of learning seamlessly linked. A group of children made cakes with the teacher, being careful to wash their hands first. They followed the recipe in pictures and patiently took turns to stir the mixture, remarking that it felt fluffy and light. They enjoyed counting out the paper cases and were delighted at the thought of being able to eat the cakes afterwards. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes respond well to high expectations of behaviour and independence and so they make good gains in personal and social skills.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed effectively resulting in a good overview of children's learning and an enthusiastic team. The very practical workshops for parents and carers in school are helping them to support their children's learning in mathematics. Staff are suitably trained and all contribute to the success of the stage.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Approximately a third of parents and carers completed a questionnaire, which is slightly below average. Inspection evidence confirms the views of parents and carers, that children enjoy coming to school and that the school helps them to support their children's learning. A very few parents and carers were concerned about their children not making enough progress and that unacceptable behaviour was not dealt with properly. The inspection found progress generally in the school to be satisfactory but that some of the more-able pupils could progress more quickly than at present. During the inspection pupils told inspectors that they felt the school dealt well with unacceptable behaviour.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sacred Heart 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 138 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 452 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	55	58	42	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	67	42	30	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	61	44	60	43	12	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	40	72	52	6	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	64	46	70	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	68	49	60	43	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	38	80	58	1	1	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)	61	44	59	43	1	1	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	43	70	51	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	33	76	55	8	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	38	69	50	6	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	57	41	67	49	7	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	54	55	40	3	2	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



22 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Wigan WN6 7RH**

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and in groups. We think you are polite, friendly and well behaved, which is a credit to you, your parents and carers and your school.

We think Sacred Heart is a satisfactory school. This means that there are some good things about it and some things that could be better. We think the staff take good care of you; you get on well together and carry out your responsibilities efficiently. We were very impressed by how much you are aware of the needs of the others. I know you have raised money for many charities and we could see how much you enjoyed working for Children in Need. Pudsey seemed to enjoy his day in school. You make satisfactory progress in your learning and you are working at the level that can be expected for your age by the time you leave. We think that those of you who find learning a little easier could be given harder work in some lessons. We had a delightful time in the Nursery and Reception classes and the children make good progress. I hope the Nursery children enjoyed eating the cakes they made.

It is part of our job to suggest ways to help the school to improve. The adults are going to help you to attain even higher standards by:

- providing more challenging work for those who can learn quickly
- helping you use your mathematical skills to investigate and solve practical number problems
- letting you know how you can improve when they mark your work
- giving you clear targets so that you know how well you should be doing.

We have also asked school leaders to check closely how well these improvements are working.

Best wishes to you all. I hope you continue to enjoy school and to attend every day.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector

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