

# Sacred Heart Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109640
<b>Local Authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	356593
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nina Bee

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	406
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Collon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joan Cullen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Langford Drive Luton LU2 9AJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Nineteen parts of lessons were observed and 16 teachers. The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at policies, evidence of internal and external monitoring, teachers' planning, academic performance data and safeguarding documentation (systems to protect children and keep them safe). Discussions were held with staff, governors, a representative from the local authority and groups of pupils. Responses to questionnaires from 149 parents and carers were analysed, along with 49 from pupils and 26 from staff.

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

- What is the quality of teaching, and how accurate is the school's own judgement that it is good, particularly for all pupil groups?
- How successfully do teachers use assessment information to allow pupils to improve and move onto the next steps in learning?
- How effective have senior leaders and governors been in improving pupils' attainment and achievement through their monitoring and evaluating systems?

## Information about the school

Sacred Heart is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils live in the parish and an increasing number travel from the surrounding areas. Approximately half of the pupils come from White British heritage. Just under a quarter are from other White backgrounds, and these are mainly from Polish families. The remainder come from a range of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. A few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Fewer pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities than in most schools. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school has recently received the Investors in Families Award.

The childcare provision on site opened in 2009 and is managed by the governing body. It is open five days a week during term time. The Hearty Breakfast Club runs daily from 7.30 - 8.50 am and the After School Club is open from 3.30 - 5.45 pm every day. There is provision for 27 pupils at any one time but 135 pupils are on roll.

**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

Sacred Heart provides a good education for its pupils, who work hard and are well cared for. They develop good relationships with each other and their teachers. Staff have high expectations for pupils to achieve well, personally and academically. Opportunities for pupils to think about moral issues are provided in assemblies and during other times when prayers are said. Pupils spoke positively of The Prayer Garden which they helped to develop. Older pupils spoke sensitively about this being a place to sit quietly and think. Behaviour is good, especially during lessons, when it is sometimes outstanding. Discussions with pupils and responses to questionnaires, from both pupils and their parents and carers, indicated that a few pupils do not always behave as well as they should. Parents and carers are positive and supportive of the work of the school and are confident that staff care for and look after their children well.

Children in Reception get off to a good start. As a result of good teaching and pupils' good attitudes to learning, all pupil groups achieve well in Years 1 to 6. Attainment for the current Year 6 is above average. Higher-attaining pupils are effectively challenged and more pupils than usual are on course to reach higher levels. The curriculum offers good provision for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use the good facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) to develop their ICT skills in other subjects. Occasionally, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive activities which match their needs and learning styles, and their learning is slower. The monitoring of work in their books by senior leaders is not as effective as it is in other subject areas.

Ambition and a drive for improvement are well embedded in all the school does. Since the previous inspection, achievement, teaching, learning and the use of assessment have all improved and are now good. School leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is also now more accurate and staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Given these successes and the energy and commitment of a well-led staff, the school has good capacity to improve further.

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

- Make more use of the good facilities in the ICT suite and classroom areas to ensure that pupils use ICT effectively across all areas of the curriculum.
- Ensure that pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities always receive good provision by:
  - checking that activities are accurately planned to address their individual needs and learning styles

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- developing the monitoring role of the special educational needs coordinator and other senior leaders so that pupils' work is regularly checked to ensure that their progress is consistently good across all subject areas.

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

**2**

Pupils' achievement is good in relation to their starting points, which are below average. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. School records show that most pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to reach or exceed the levels expected of them in science. Pupils enjoy learning and attendance is above average. Pupils' learning and progress are good overall for all groups of pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language achieve well because teachers have a clear idea of the levels of English they have acquired and support them appropriately. Good support from bilingual teaching assistants particularly helps Polish pupils, who speak little English, to make good progress.

Teachers use resources well. As a Year 2 class learned about different authors they watched a video attentively and later showed good understanding of it during a discussion. Learning was good for all abilities because different groups were effectively supported. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Learning is not so rapid when, at times, they receive activities that are not accurately matched to their learning needs. Teachers use interactive whiteboards confidently to develop and reinforce learning. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use computers to support their learning and develop basic computer skills during lessons.

Pupils feel safe and spoke knowledgeably about potential dangers they may come across. Pupils in Year 6 spoke sensibly about the dangers of smoking. Pupils also show a good awareness of the need to look after themselves particularly in relation to eating healthily and taking regular exercise. They are sensitive to the needs of others and talk proudly of the buddy system in school. Others speak about the science 'Seed Club' where older pupils in Year 6 work with pupils in Year 2. Pupils know there are people in the local community and wider world that are not as fortunate as they are and are keen to raise funds to help.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that is offered at the Healthy Breakfast and After-School Clubs. A wide range of educational activities are offered, such as gardening and developing art and music skills. Pupils also make good use of good opportunities to complete homework tasks in the After School club.

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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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<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>2</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?

Teaching is predominantly good with the occasional lesson outstanding. Assessment information is used well to support learning. Teachers have become more adept at using their detailed knowledge of pupils to identify the progress they are making. When teachers mark pupils' work they generally give constructive and informative comments which show them what they need to do to improve. Good intervention strategies have been established to support pupils who are not on course to reach their targets. The good support which pupils receive from teaching assistants contributes well to their learning.

The curriculum encourages good progress. Through the school's well-established creative curriculum partnership, pupils make interesting educational visits out and exciting visitors are invited into school. Many pupils spoke of the enjoyable work they recently completed with a visiting Manga artist. The curriculum is well organised and offers imaginative activities which are well adapted to meet the needs of different groups and their learning requirements. English and mathematics are effectively integrated across the curriculum. The ICT curriculum is not as strong because pupils have too few opportunities to use computers.

Pupils' personal and social needs are well catered for. Staff, including family workers, support pupils and their families well. Pre-school children were seen having an exciting time during a well-attended Play and Stay session. The Hearty Breakfast and After School Club is well attended and appreciated by pupils and parents and carers. Transition

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arrangements are well established and pupils in Year 6 say they feel well prepared to transfer to secondary education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

### **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher leads with a clear sense of direction and is ambitious for continuous improvement to take place. She receives good support from the senior team and the governing body. They rightly identified that teaching, learning and the use of assessment needed to be improved, and appointed an assistant headteacher to oversee this area. Monitoring of pupils' progress is thorough with good intervention systems in place. Consistent application of these has brought about improvements in all areas. The governing body is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas which need developing and is in a good position to support and challenge senior staff when necessary. They focus effectively on pupils' health and safety. Clear procedures and documentation have been established for safeguarding and at the time of the inspection were secure.

The school is a cohesive community where all staff and pupils get along well together. Equal opportunities are promoted well and any discrimination is tackled effectively. Pupils' individual personal and academic needs are addressed effectively because pupils are well known by all staff. Community cohesion is promoted well and good links are established with the local community and are developing further with the wider world. These partnerships, along with the creative curriculum partnership the school has established, play a large role in developing pupils' learning and well-being.

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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>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The children in Reception classes make good progress. Teaching is effective and good planning allows children to learn through exploration and play as they take part in child-initiated activities and those where an adult leads the group. Activities, inside and out, are well resourced and promote learning effectively in all areas of learning. Children were seen enthusiastically working together outside as they explored a large block of ice. They spoke sensibly about how they could break up the ice. After pouring water over it they listened and watched as they saw and heard cracks developing. Learning was good as the teacher interacted with individual children and encouraged them to use scientific vocabulary such as 'melting' and 'cracking' as she expertly reinforced and developed their understanding. Others worked happily and enthusiastically together on computers in the classroom. Children are taught to write letters properly in handwriting sessions and many begin to form letters and words when they write independently. Teachers' marking does not always reinforce the importance of writing letters properly. Leadership and management are good. Adults keep informative files to show how children are making progress in each area. Children are well cared for and looked after. Behaviour is good and children get on well with each other and develop good relationships with each other and everyone who helps them.



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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

All parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel that their children enjoy school, and that the staff keep them safe. Almost all feel that teaching is good and that they are helped effectively to support their children's learning. The vast majority feel that the staff encourage their children to develop a healthy lifestyle and prepare them well for the future. A few parents and carers feel that unacceptable behaviour is not always dealt with effectively. No anti-social behaviour was observed during the inspection and pupils' behaviour was good. A very small minority of parents and carers feel that they are not well informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence shows that parents and carers are given regular updates about their children's progress. Overall, parents are generally happy with the experience their children receive at Sacred Heart.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sacred Heart 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 149 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 406 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	95	64	52	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	101	68	45	30	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	70	47	64	43	11	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	42	80	54	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	75	50	71	48	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	79	53	67	45	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	87	58	59	40	3	2	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)	74	50	70	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	68	46	77	52	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	40	78	52	10	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	35	88	59	5	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	79	53	64	43	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	62	55	37	2	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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"><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.**



24 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sacred Heart Primary School, Luton LU2 9AJ**

Thank you for being so helpful when we recently came to visit you. We particularly enjoyed talking with you, visiting your classes and seeing the interesting activities that are planned for you to do. Sacred Heart is a good school which is well led and managed.

These are some of the things we found out about your school.

The children in the Reception classes get off to a good start and learn well.

Behaviour is good and you are kind and helpful towards each other.

In classes you learn well because teaching is good.

You are well looked after and cared for. We know you feel safe in school because you told us so.

You learn a lot about how important it is to eat healthily and take regular exercise.

You are lucky to work with such interesting visitors, such as the artist who taught you about Manga art.

By the time you leave, you reach standards that are higher than in most schools and you make good progress. .

We know you enjoy coming to school because most of you attend well.

We have asked the school to do a few things to improve your education.

Firstly, to make sure teachers always plan activities that are not too easy or too hard, especially for the pupils who find learning in some lessons difficult. Secondly, to make sure the senior staff look regularly through your work to check that you always learn well in lessons.

Use the computers more in the ICT suite and the classroom areas so that you all have lots of chances to use your computer skills in all the different subjects.

You too can help by continuing to always do your best.

Yours sincerely

Nina Bee

Lead inspector

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