

# Sacred Heart Catholic School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113470
<b>Local Authority</b>	Torbay
<b>Inspection number</b>	357359
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Laurie Lewin

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>	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Frances Ward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Cecil Road Paignton TQ3 2SH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Teaching and learning were observed in 20 lessons and eight teachers were seen. The inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents and carers, and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information and safeguarding policies; they also scrutinised samples of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from 59 parents and carers, 90 pupils and 17 staff.

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

- How effective are the support groups set up by the school to improve pupils' progress?
- Are all groups of pupils making sufficient progress in mathematics
- How well do teachers use assessment information to inform their lesson planning and to set targets for pupils?
- Do pupils have a clear awareness of the targets set to help them improve their work?
- How effectively do subject leaders carry out their roles?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. It serves the local area, with some pupils coming from outside the immediate catchment area. The proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school other than at the usual times of admission and transfer is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, with a high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs. In some year groups the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Nearly all of the pupils are White British, with a very small number coming from other ethnic backgrounds. The school has eight classes, one of which is for Reception-aged children and one of which is for Nursery-age children. The school is accredited with the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Since the previous inspection there has been a dip in performance, resulting in low attainment at the end of Year 6. This dip has been reversed and the school is improving rapidly. Over the last year, in particular, improvements made to the teaching and learning has had a strong impact on accelerating the progress that pupils make and the standards that they attain. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they are taught well and make good progress. This good teaching and good progress is also reflected throughout the school, with teachers planning activities in lessons that match well with pupils' interests and abilities. As a result, attainment is rising rapidly, with examples of above-average attainment in Years 4 and 5. The combination of good progress and rapid improvement in attainment in most areas indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although attainment is improving, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum. Also, pupils do not have enough chances to talk about their ideas before writing them down and to write independently for different purposes.

Staff are good at encouraging all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to become confident and enthusiastic learners. Staff have worked well to broaden the curriculum to incorporate a rich range of 'hands-on' practical activities, for example with opportunities to work in the school's new 'outdoor classroom area'. This boosts pupils' enjoyment and ensures they develop an enthusiastic approach to learning. As part of the drive to gain the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark, the school involves pupils in a wide range of sports, and ensures they gain a full understanding about eating healthily and staying fit. Pupils work well through their school council to help improve school facilities and, through their wide-ranging involvement in supporting local events, the pupils make a good level of contribution to the immediate and wider community. Through the good range of responsibilities, which they carry out sensibly, a wide range of charity fund-raising involvement and the school's emphasis on helping them develop respect for one another's feeling, pupils develop strong spiritual, moral and social awareness and a very sensitive awareness of both local and global issues. However, their understanding of the variety of cultures represented in the United Kingdom is limited.

Staff know pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs. As a result, pupils feel safe and well supported and their behaviour is good. Through excellent systems, such as the 'Thrive Initiative', pupils with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties are given strong support to help them keep on track with their learning. Typically, pupils spoken to commented, 'Adults in the school always help you... they're really good at helping children who sometimes feel a little bit sad or angry.'

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The headteacher, well supported by the deputy, does an excellent job of leading the staff. Since arriving last September, she has galvanised the staff into working as a strong team who work enthusiastically in driving forward school action plans for improvement. In particular, the greatly improved use of assessment information and increased emphasis on the frequent monitoring and review of pupils' progress have led to more precise lesson planning and better teaching. The good relationships with parents and carers and strong links with partner organisations, such as other local schools, are used well to boost pupils' learning. The governing body has a clear overview of the school's effectiveness. Governors liaise closely with staff and support them well in advancing action plans. They ensure all statutory responsibilities are met. However, while all policies and guidance documents are in place for safeguarding, these lack full detail and clarity. The school's accurate self-evaluation, clear plans for future development, strong teamwork and the good rate of improvement in recent times mean that it has a good capacity to keep improving.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve attainment in writing by July 2012 through ensuring pupils:
  - have regular and frequent opportunities to write independently for different purposes and different audiences
  - are given a full range of opportunities to talk about their ideas before writing them down.
- Improve attainment in mathematics by July 2012 through ensuring pupils have regular and frequent opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving activities across the curriculum.
- By July 2012, develop pupils' understanding of other cultures by improving provision for them to learn about and engage with people from different backgrounds.

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

**3**

When they start school, children's ranges of skills and knowledge are below the expected levels for their age. Their speaking and listening, writing and social skills are often well below the expected levels. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attain average levels by the time they start Year 1 in all areas of learning except writing, where attainment is below average. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school, and attainment is rising rapidly in most year groups. Work in pupils' books and in lessons seen verified that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. There is clear evidence of above-average attainment in some classes, with, for example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 showing a confident approach to articulating their ideas clearly, as in a Year 5 science lesson where pupils discussed the concept of photosynthesis and showed a solid understanding of what this process involves. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is below average because, despite the good progress they currently make and the good work of staff in supporting them, pupils lack confidence in discussing their ideas and not all have a consistently positive approach towards their learning. Additionally, a significant number have joined the school in recent times with relatively low levels of prior attainment. Across

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the rest of the school, pupils show strongly positive attitudes. They are enthusiastic and enjoy all activities provided. Despite improvements made, pupils do not always talk about their ideas sufficiently before writing them down and do not always write fluently for specific purposes and audiences. In mathematics, pupils' ability to apply their mathematical skills in practical and problem-solving situations across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Across the school, pupils attain sound basic skills to help them progress in the future. For example, pupils gain secure calculation and reading skills, use information and communication technology confidently to support their work and, through project work such as growing produce in the school garden, gain a sound basic understanding about how small businesses operate.

Through personal, social and health education lessons and projects within the curriculum, pupils develop a good knowledge of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They carry out responsibilities well, such as working as 'playground buddies', and thereby learn to look after and support each other well. Pupils spoken to said they feel safe and appreciate the work done by staff to improve behaviour across the school. Pupils have lots of opportunities to voice their opinions and work closely with staff in developing actions to improve school facilities, for example the work done this year to create the outdoor classroom. Parents and carers are confident that their children are safe.

*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>	4
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>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

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## How effective is the provision?

Teachers use a good range of strategies to help pupils learn in different ways. For example, in a good Year 5 science lesson, use of an electronic microscope, discussion work and a good range of practical work outside fully engaged pupils' interest. Teachers make learning fun for the pupils. For instance, Year 2 pupils worked hard with their writing because they enjoyed the interesting work they covered in connection with frogs and frogspawn. In all lessons, teachers make good use of assessment information to help them plan work that matches the needs of all individuals. Pupils have clear targets and work hard to achieve these. The school has worked well this year to strengthen its provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good quality intervention both during lessons and when pupils are withdrawn to work in small groups is showing a strong impact on helping the individuals concerned to make good progress. Teaching assistants work well with teachers in planning and carrying out this support work.

The curriculum is enlivened by a wide range of interesting topics. Pupils enjoy and benefit from the good practical opportunities, such as making artefacts in their Egyptian project work. The good range of trips, visitors, links with other partner organisations and extra-curricular activities also provide good enrichment for pupils' learning. Good provision is made for extra-curricular activities that cater specifically for gifted and talented pupils.

Very occasionally, where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, activities are not matched precisely enough to the needs of the more-able pupils or the lesson content is not as interesting for pupils as it should be.

Staff have a detailed knowledge of the pastoral and academic needs of all individuals in their care. They are quick to react and put the necessary extra support in place if they see any individuals encountering problems. They work well together to ensure there is a happy and caring atmosphere so that all pupils feel secure. Where needed, good use is made of external agencies to support pupils' needs. Staff are extremely vigilant in all matters concerned with ensuring pupils are kept safe at all times. The school has worked very well to improve pupils' attendance.

*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, staff and governors work closely together to ensure that provision and pupils' achievement are constantly improved. They have done a good job of improving pupils' attainment and progress and correcting the dip in achievement which occurred

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since the previous inspection. The establishment of good quality intervention and support groups across the school, rigorous analysis of all assessment information and improved teaching have been at the heart of this successful improvement drive. In particular, staff make good use of all assessment information to set clear targets for all of the pupils. They have a thorough knowledge about the performance of all individuals and are very alert to identifying any pupils in danger of slipping behind and applying the extra support as required. The close monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that all individuals are helped to be successful and that no discrimination occurs. Subject leaders have an accurate overview of pupils' attainment and progress and devise good quality plans to aid further improvement.

Parents and carers are kept fully informed about their children's progress. Their views are regularly surveyed and acted on where appropriate. The establishment of the homeschool 'learning logs' is a successful method the school uses to maintain a good level of involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning.

The level of involvement of the governing body has improved since the last inspection. Members of the governing body provide good support for the headteacher and staff as well as holding them to account to ensure that all new initiatives are effective and efficient. Some areas of documentation regarding safeguarding are not as clear and detailed as they should be, and too few individuals have currently received training in relation to safer recruitment practices. Nonetheless, site security is rigorous and all staff have had the necessary training in safeguarding procedures. While the school is active in the local community and has clear plans to show how it will promote community cohesion, its evaluation of the impact of its work is not sufficiently detailed. The school rightly identifies that it has not yet developed sufficient links with organisations locally or further afield that would help promote pupils' awareness of how people from other cultural backgrounds lead their lives.

*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>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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Nursery and Reception classrooms are lively and attractive areas, with a good range of interesting resources and activities laid out to engage children's interest and promote an enthusiastic approach to learning. A good emphasis is placed on providing lively activities that children enjoy. For example, a physical education lesson seen involved Nursery children having lots of fun pretending to be different kinds of beans such as 'jumping beans', 'chilli beans' and 'jelly beans' and gaining some good exercise through this role play. Staff work together as a strong team and provide good care, guidance and support for all individuals. As a result, children behave well and are happy and confident learners. Through careful planning of the curriculum, teachers provide children with a good variety of activities. There is a good balance maintained between activities where children can explore and investigate independently, and activities where they are carefully led and supported by staff. For example, in one Reception class lesson seen, children developed their language skills well as they carried out role-play work, sorting shapes with help from their friends and creating interesting drawing and colouring designs independently. At the same time, staff worked closely with groups and individuals to talk about and expand ideas within their work. Through this carefully balanced approach staff help children make good progress in all areas of learning and do especially good work in boosting children's speech and language skills. Children acquire sound basic skills in reading and numeracy to help them progress in the future. However, their work in writing is not as good as in other areas of learning by the time they start Year 1.

Generally, teachers use assessment information well to inform their lesson planning so that activities closely match the ability levels of the children. They constantly assess how well children are progressing. However, while teachers do some good work teaching children their letter sounds, occasionally the more-able children are not as well challenged as they should be by the work provided in this area.

The classrooms have good access to a well-laid-out outdoor area where the children work and play happily and safely. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, with accurate self-evaluation and good plans in place to keep provision improving at a good pace.

*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

The rate of return of questionnaires was below average. Most parents and carers who responded indicated that they are happy with their children's experiences at school. In

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particular, most agreed that their children enjoy school, feel completely safe, make the necessary progress, gain a strong awareness about leading a healthy lifestyle and are well prepared for the future. Most also agreed that the school is well led and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. The proportion of negative responses was low.

A few parents and carers are not completely happy with their children's experience at the school and did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour, that teaching is good or that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors looked at these areas and found that almost all pupils enjoyed their time at the school and that good systems are in place to encourage good behaviour. Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was good. Inspectors found that teaching is good and that good systems are in place to check and respond to the views of parents and carers.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sacred Heart Catholic 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 246 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	59	22	37	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	64	19	32	0	0	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	54	23	39	3	5	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	47	26	44	3	5	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	35	59	17	29	6	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	44	27	46	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	44	31	53	1	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)	32	54	25	42	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	56	22	37	3	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	41	22	37	7	12	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	39	28	47	5	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	30	51	25	42	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	54	20	34	4	7	2	3

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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic School, Paignton TQ3 2SH**

Thank you for making us feel welcome at your school. We have judged that yours is a satisfactory school. Through talking to you and through the questionnaires you completed, we know that there are many things that you like about your school.

Here are some of the judgements made by the inspectors:

- You make a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- We can see that you enjoy school and the well-planned curriculum makes sure you get lots of interesting activities to take part in.
- You have a good understanding about how to keep yourselves fit and healthy.
- By the time you reach the end of Year 6, your achievement is satisfactory.
- Good teaching helps you to progress well in your lessons.
- Your behaviour is good and you have good attitudes towards learning.
- You all have a good understanding about how to stay safe. The adults in the school do a good job of taking care of you.
- The headteacher, staff and governing body have done well to improve your school and they work hard to make sure it keeps improving.

This is what we have asked the school to do now:

- Improve your writing by ensuring you have frequent opportunities to write independently for different purposes and audiences and by ensuring you get plenty of chances to talk about your ideas before you write them down.
- Improve your mathematics work by giving you frequent opportunities to use and apply your mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Help you to become more aware about how people from other cultural backgrounds live.

All of you can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin

Lead inspector

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