

# Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 106499             |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Wigan              |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 377413             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 10–11 October 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Kathleen McArthur  |

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> | 178  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Josephine Carter   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Carrie Morrow  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 5 February 2007  |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Lodge Lane<br>Hindsford<br>Atherton<br>Manchester<br>M46 9BN |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, taught by eight teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding procedures, a range of documentation including school and national data on pupils' progress, development plans, local authority reports and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and the 66 returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- The effectiveness of strategies to raise attainment and boost progress for pupils in Key Stage 1.
- The impact of actions to improve the quality of pupils' writing.
- Whether the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress in their learning.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels contribute to school self-evaluation and improvement.

## Information about the school

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from minority-ethnic groups. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language, and none are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. 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 lower than that usually found. There has been significant staffing disruption since the previous inspection, and the school currently has an acting deputy headteacher.

The school holds Arts Mark Gold and Quality Mark awards.

**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

This good school is a harmonious community where pupils learn and play happily together as stated in their TEAM motto, 'Together Everyone Achieves More'. 'Teachers are always around us' and 'I love it at school' were typical comments from pupils showing they feel well cared for, supported and guided, enjoy school and feel safe. Good behaviour and enthusiasm for all the school offers greatly supports learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength and gives children a happy, good start in all areas of learning. Responses in the questionnaires returned by parents and carers were very positive, with written comments praising the friendly, open approach of staff and the headteacher.

Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Achievement is good and standards of attainment are above average by the time pupils leave. However, focused actions to raise standards in writing are at an early stage of impact. All groups of pupils make good progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Disrupted teaching in Key Stage 1 slowed progress and standards dipped from above average to broadly average in 2011. The legacy of disruption, although reducing rapidly, remains. Teaching is good overall but there is a minority that is only satisfactory. Strategies to remedy this, including staff development and rigorous progress monitoring, are proving effective in increasing the proportion of good teaching.

Assessment systems provide staff with good-quality progress information. Thorough marking and feedback arrangements to pupils feature strongly. Pupils' responses in their questionnaires all agreed that teachers show them how to improve their work. A range of activities and popular clubs enrich the curriculum and provide experiences beyond the classroom: Spanish lessons, sports and drama, performing at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and local visits. Pupils have a good knowledge of health issues, are caring and considerate towards each other and always ensure that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included in their activities and games. They make a good contribution to the school and community beyond.

Senior leaders have firmly embedded a clear vision for improvement and there is a strong team spirit. Leaders, managers and governors know their school well and evaluate performance and outcomes accurately and rigorously, resulting in well-focused development plans. Issues from the previous inspection have been tackled

successfully: more pupils attain higher levels, a rigorous tracking system is firmly established and information and communication technology is used widely as a learning tool. There is good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Ensure pupils make consistently good progress through the school by:
  - embedding strategies to raise the quality of writing, including wider opportunities for writing for different audiences and purposes in a range of subjects
  - providing pupils with more practical, investigative learning opportunities
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently at least good by sharing the expertise, skills and best practice already found in the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

|   |
|---|
| 2 |
|---|

Enjoyment of learning was evident in all lessons, discussions with pupils and in the responses in questionnaires from pupils and their parents and carers. Pupils work hard, tackle new tasks eagerly and cooperate willingly with staff and their classmates, which aids learning and progress. Handwriting and the presentation of work are undertaken with care.

Lesson observations, the work in pupils' books, school and national data show that all groups of pupils progress well during their time in school. Rigorous actions have overcome the dip in attainment in Key Stage 1 and pupils currently in Year 2 are securely on track to reach their targets. However, the legacy of disruption remains so progress, although good overall, is still a little variable through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-organised support and progress well. Good reading skills support pupils' learning in all subjects. Specialist teaching and small groups in mathematics in Key Stage 2 resulted in over half the pupils attaining the higher level, Level 5, in 2011. However, few pupils at either key stage attain higher levels in writing. Improvements in writing due to well planned, appropriate and focused strategies can be seen in pupils' work in both key stages, but these are not fully embedded.

Pupils have strong moral values and behave well, although some pupils think behaviour could be even better. The golden and pink ticket rewards are eagerly sought; pupils say staff are fair and trust them to help if problems arise, so bullying is not seen as an issue. Pupils say, 'Running about at playtime gives us energy and keeps us fit.' They enjoy the healthy snacks and know how to care for their own safety, for example, when using the internet. They show concern and respect for others and reflect on issues and consider choices they will make in their lives. Cultural development is a strong feature of the school's good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with many additional arts and sports activities. Above average attendance, keen attitudes and strong personal and academic skills ensure pupils are well prepared for the future.

*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> |

**How effective is the provision?**

'We are always challenged' and 'We are given different methods of working things out' are typical comments from pupils about their lessons. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are well organised and resourced and use varied teaching styles with tasks well matched to pupils' different abilities. Consequently, pupils progress well. Teaching is less effective where activities are not planned well, lack challenge and do not give pupils opportunities for practical investigations so they make satisfactory rather than good progress. Informative assessment systems track progress rigorously so additional help can be swiftly directed where needed. Thorough marking with clear success criteria and feedback in 'child friendly' language ensures pupils know exactly how to improve their work.

The curriculum is well planned and organised, with appropriate priority on literacy and numeracy and suitable adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing skills for different purposes and different audiences in subjects across the curriculum are limited. Arts, music, science and physical education broaden and enrich pupils' experience and cultural development effectively, often through specialist teaching, for example, instrumental tuition, sports and mathematics. Pupils speak excitedly about visits that bring lessons to life, for example to Manchester Museum. The good personal and social education programme ensures pupils know how to keep themselves safe, healthy and make informed life choices. After-school clubs are varied and popular.

The school environment is bright, welcoming and well maintained. Good-quality care arrangements support pupils' well-being. Teaching assistants provide skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils who are

<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

potentially vulnerable because of their circumstances are well supported. External professional agencies are sensitively directed to benefit these pupils and their families. Good induction and transition arrangements ensure pupils move confidently between different stages of their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>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?

Ambitious aspirations and a clear vision for ongoing improvement are shared by leaders, managers, governors and staff. The headteacher undertakes a heavy teaching commitment and her scope to delegate to middle leaders is limited by the number of part-time staff. Despite this, concerted actions and strategies based on senior leaders' searching analysis of assessment and performance data have successfully raised attainment and rates of progress. Performance management strategies, based on very focused and structured monitoring of teaching and learning, are effective in raising the quality of teaching. However, the school recognises that there is more to be done to share and implement good practice to improve teaching further. The well led and supportive governing body places high priority on safeguarding. Governors are aware of what the school does well and areas for improvement, and contribute a range of skills to support the school while holding leaders and managers to account. The school gives good value for money.

Pupils benefit from the positive relationships between home and school. Newsletters, the annual parent and carer handbook and termly study-support meetings help parents and carers support their children's learning at home. Partnerships bring additional activities the school alone cannot provide. Professional development activities with local schools and links with the parish support pupils' good achievement and broaden their experience. Good equal opportunities arrangements ensure all groups of pupils progress well and participate fully in the life of the school. Rigorous actions are ensuring that the legacy of variable progress is rapidly being overcome.

Good safeguarding arrangements meet all current requirements, ensuring pupils and users of the building and site are always safe. Robust child-protection procedures include staff training and clear management responsibilities. The school's community cohesion action plan shows good knowledge of the context in which it works. Pupils understand and respect different world religions but have less awareness of different cultures and lifestyles found nationally.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>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

Children’s skills are typical for their age when they start school, although language skills have declined slightly in recent years. The warm welcoming atmosphere and strong relationships with parents and carers ensure children quickly and happily settle in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Boys and girls and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities all make good progress through the Reception class. By the time they leave, most are working above the expected levels.

Good teaching provides an exciting range of interesting activities that children love to explore and investigate both indoors and outside in the fresh air. These are carefully balanced between those led by adults and those the children initiate themselves. Skilfully planned activities capture children’s different interests, for example, an activity to encourage boys to write also appealed to girls and they happily worked together and created a story about the model garage which they wrote on paper shaped like a lorry. Confidence, independence and personal skills develop well. When they arrive each morning, children quickly self-register on the interactive whiteboard, eager to tackle the interesting activities that await them. Secure high-quality relationships between staff and children result in good behaviour and care and consideration for others so that children happily share equipment and take turns.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leaders ensure requirements are fully met and progress is carefully and thoroughly monitored. Welfare arrangements are fully implemented. The dedicated staff team is strongly committed and successfully ensure children are happy and progressing well in all areas of their learning and individual personal development. Leaders have good plans to further enhance and extend the outdoor learning area.

*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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2        |



## **Views of parents and carers**

Almost all the questionnaires returned by parents and carers expressed very positive views about the school. All feel that children enjoy school, are kept safe and helped to be healthy, make enough progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. All agree that teaching is good and they are happy with their child's experience at the school.

A few feel unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively, that they are not given enough help to support learning at home, that their child's individual needs are not met and their suggestions and concerns are not taken into account. Inspectors discussed these views with school leaders. They observed behaviour in lessons and around the school, held discussions with staff and pupils and scrutinised behavioural records. Their findings on all these issues are contained in the report.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sacred Heart RC 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 178 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 47             | 71 | 19    | 29 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 49             | 74 | 17    | 26 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 36             | 55 | 26    | 39 | 1        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 43             | 65 | 22    | 33 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 41             | 62 | 24    | 36 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 44             | 67 | 21    | 32 | 1        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 43             | 65 | 22    | 33 | 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) | 37             | 56 | 26    | 39 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 43             | 65 | 20    | 30 | 2        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 36             | 55 | 27    | 41 | 1        | 2 | 1                 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 36             | 55 | 28    | 42 | 0        | 0 | 1                 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 49             | 74 | 14    | 21 | 0        | 0 | 1                 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 48             | 73 | 17    | 26 | 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      | 43  | 47   | 10           | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 46   | 42           | 6          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 36   | 41           | 9          |
| Sixth forms          | 15  | 42   | 41           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 30  | 48   | 19           | 3          |
| Pupil referral units | 14  | 50   | 31           | 5          |
| All schools          | 10  | 44   | 39           | 6          |

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.**



12 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Sacred Heart RC Primary School, Manchester, M46 9BN**

The inspection team would like to thank you for welcoming us and talking to us. We met smiling, well behaved, polite and friendly pupils. You told us that you enjoy school, and so did your parents and carers. We were very impressed by the displays of art work and you must be proud to have gained the Arts Mark Gold award. We also really enjoyed hearing you sing, especially the four-part rounds in the ghost song! This is what we found.

Sacred Heart is a good school with good leaders, managers and governors. They take good care of you and we know you feel safe in school. You get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. You work hard and reach standards above those expected for your age, although you do better in mathematics than in writing. The curriculum provides lots of different experiences: learning Spanish, sports and visits out of school, for example to Drumcroon Arts Centre.

Teaching is good in most lessons but not always, and this can affect your progress in learning. So we have asked the leaders and managers to:

- make sure teaching is always good or even better
- make sure you always progress well by helping you with your writing and providing more activities that require you investigate and explore.

They have already started to tackle these things and you can help them by always working hard and continuing to enjoy everything you do at Sacred Heart School.

We send you our very best wishes

Yours sincerely

Kathleen McArthur  
Lead inspector

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