

# Holy Family Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132830
<b>Local Authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	381475
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sonja Joseph

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>	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Dawson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Bathe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Marlowe Avenue Swindon Wiltshire SN3 2PT
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<b>Fax number</b>	01793 521932
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	10–11 October 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, and groups of pupils and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including development planning, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 103 parents and carers, 12 staff and 100 pupils were analysed.

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

- How much progress are pupils making in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 1?
- How effectively are leaders at all levels, including the governing body, evaluating school performance and helping push forward sustainable improvements?
- To what degree have more rigorous monitoring procedures enabled the school to ensure that provision consistently meets the needs of all pupils?

## Information about the school

This is an above-average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well-above average and a majority are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. There is a privately run pre-school club on site, which is subject to a separate inspection. Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of staff changes, including the creation of a new senior leadership team, and the headteacher and deputy headteacher are both new. The school has achieved a wide range of external accreditations including Healthy Schools status and the International Schools Award at intermediate level.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Holy Family Catholic Primary is a good school. Pupils achieve well; they make good progress in English and mathematics and their attainment is above average. Pupils, staff and the governing body are proud of their school and the education that it offers. It provides a harmonious learning community in which pupils' self-esteem and respect for others are successfully nurtured. Outstanding care, guidance and support, linked to a strong ethos, provide a secure foundation for the school's work. The support that pupils and their parents and carers receive from the family support worker and others is exceptionally effective in removing barriers to learning. In consequence, pupils' behaviour is consistently good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are thoughtful, mature, polite and respectful, and show good attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and are prepared well for the next stage in their education. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel extremely safe, and this is reflected in attendance rates that are above average. Parents and carers express a strong appreciation of the quality of education the school provides. One said, 'I can't imagine a better primary school and it is a happy and great place for learning.'

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with basic skills below those expected for their age. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, standards are above average, owing to teaching that is good overall. Relationships in the classroom are a common strength in lessons. Typically, teachers' strong subject knowledge and a good range of teaching styles enthuse and challenge pupils, and contribute to their good progress. However, teaching is not consistently good throughout the school and progress in Key Stage 1 is not as strong as in Key Stage 2, although it has improved and is continuing to improve. In a minority of lessons, teachers talk for too long so that pupils are not actively engaged and, as a result, the pace of learning slows. There is too much teacher direction and insufficient time is given for pupils to develop their learning independently. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always tell them where their learning has been successful, and why and what they need to improve. The use of the outdoor space in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop all areas of learning is limited. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good and sometimes outstanding progress to keep pace with classmates. This is because of the well-targeted extra support they receive.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. The timetable includes much time devoted to teaching basic skills, and a strong focus on religious

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education provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to consolidate their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, they have limited opportunities to consolidate their key skills across other areas of the curriculum.

The school has a good capacity to improve further. The new headteacher, ably supported by the new deputy headteacher, is building well on the school's many strengths. The quality of what the school provides continues to improve due to the accuracy of the evaluations made by the governing body and other leaders of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Middle leaders share the vision for further improvement and are keen to develop their roles. The school is aware that their monitoring of teaching and learning is not always sufficiently effective in identifying strengths and areas of weakness, and that they have too few opportunities to work together to further develop the curriculum.

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

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress further, particularly in Key Stage 1, by:
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to learn actively and independently
  - ensuring that all assessments of pupils' work show them clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills in a range of different contexts across the curriculum.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of the contribution made by middle leaders to school improvement, by:
  - giving subject leaders more guidance in how to judge the quality of teaching and learning, in a way that is rigorously focused on pupils' progress
  - giving them more opportunities to collaborate with each other to develop the curriculum.
  
- Improve the use made of outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so it supports all areas of learning effectively.

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

**2**

Most pupils enjoy learning and genuinely want to please their teachers. Pupils say they especially enjoy practical activities that challenge them to think and work out problems, particularly if they can work collaboratively with a partner or in a group. In lessons observed during the inspection, pupils' progress was inconsistent but good overall. Older pupils were working above the levels expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language were making good progress because of good resources, an awareness of their individual needs and a good programme of language support. The school's work to accelerate the progress of boys has borne fruit and they now make

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the same progress as girls overall, and particularly in Key Stage 2. Standards in mathematics have risen but they remain slightly below those in English. Opportunities for pupils to reinforce their mathematical skills in real-life situations are not embedded in all years.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities in the school, such as by becoming play leaders, members of the eco committee or school council, and by supporting their peers and younger pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils are responsible, as part of the school chaplaincy team, to provide pastoral support to their peers in the ‘sanctuary’, an area designated for spiritual reflection. Pupils’ spiritual awareness is developed well through the many opportunities for prayer, attendance at mass in the neighbouring church and daily religious education lessons where they learn about the religions, arts and festivals of many cultures. Through their partnerships with other schools and communities outside of their local area, pupils develop first-hand contact with different groups. For example, the school’s recent European awareness day provided pupils with the opportunity to experience the dress, food, language and culture of various countries.

Pupils use computers effectively to promote learning and know well how to recognise dangerous situations related to new technologies. Large numbers of pupils participate in the very good range of sporting and musical activities after school which benefit their health and well-being. Pupils’ good attendance and key academic and collaborative skills mean that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education and for life beyond.

*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>1</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>1</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?

In most lessons, good planning ensures that varied activities meet the needs of pupils well, and good pace and challenge from the teacher stimulate their interest, ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. Teachers and other adults have high expectations of all pupils, and teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils identified as needing extra help. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including new technology to enhance learning. Pupils are encouraged to be active and they are supported to make maximum progress when working independently. This was evident in an English lesson where pupils were supported in the generation of a checklist for success when completing their work. Pupils used this to question their peers 'as we know then what we have learnt'. In the small number of less successful lessons, assessment information is not used sufficiently to tailor activities to the specific needs of individual pupils. Pupils do not always understand what is expected of them and teachers sometimes spend too long explaining so that pupils listen passively rather than being actively involved in their learning, resulting in a slowing of progress and loss of interest among some pupils. Furthermore, marking and feedback do not consistently highlight the next steps for pupils to improve their work.

An exceptionally wide range of educational visits and special projects successfully expand pupils' social and cultural awareness. These often involve all pupils and make enrichment activities integral to what they learn in school. For example, Year 5 pupils took part in a day of team-building activities with a school from a contrasting locality. However, the school is aware that lessons in some subjects do not link effectively to the basic skills learned elsewhere, and so there are missed opportunities to promote these skills to full effect.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that every pupil is known and valued as an individual. This is particularly so for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Excellent partnership working with a range of external agencies is having a positive impact on the personal development and well-being of pupils and the support and advice provided for their families. Staff can point to real successes in helping pupils overcome difficult histories and challenging episodes in their lives. 'The school has made me more confident in giving my opinion and sharing my worries,' commented one pupil. Arrangements for pupils joining the school in the Reception class are effective in enabling them to settle to school routines, and are appreciated by parents and carers. Similarly, arrangements for pupils at the end of Year 6 ensure a smooth move for transition to secondary school. Well-coordinated systems make a positive contribution to above-average rates of attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
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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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have a very clear vision for the future direction of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and their ambitions are shared by staff and parents and carers. The governing body provides strong, well-organised support that is equally sharply focused on improving pupils' achievement. Policies are very carefully reviewed and record keeping is robust. Good safeguarding procedures follow recommended best practice and it is evident that the school emphasises safety to its pupils. New procedures for assessing pupils' progress are reinforcing the well-established systematic monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work. Although school leaders and the governing body acknowledge that the role of the middle leaders is not yet fully effective in driving improvement. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good. This is exemplified in the way in which leaders took action after identifying that boys' attainment in writing was lagging behind that of girls. As a result, the gap is narrowing.

Parents and carers make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning through fund-raising, regular volunteer work and exceptional support for homework. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. It has worked particularly well with local schools and the parish community to support families in vulnerable circumstances. Global awareness is encouraged and curricular initiatives, such as teaching French and links to a school in France, are improving provision.

*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>1</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>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>
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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well into school life. Warm and caring relationships between adults and children ensure that they are happy and feel safe. The school has invested heavily in improving facilities and resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It also provides strong support for teaching and the curriculum through the new leadership team, visits to other Early Years Foundation Stage providers and through local authority advice and support. However, some of the more recent initiatives are yet to have a full impact.

Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory, but not better because staff are not yet fully exploiting the good facilities to raise the overall quality of education. For example, children are not routinely involved in choosing their own learning activities that are too often teacher-led, and the outdoor facilities are underutilised. As a result, children’s progress and achievement are satisfactory. Although a few, especially more-able children, make good progress due to the emphasis given to developing children’s language skills, and opportunities for children to talk about their learning are extending. Teachers are making increasingly good use of the information they collect about children’s small steps in achievement. They are using this information well to make sure planned activities take account of the full range of learning needs. Opportunities for taking learning forward are overlooked when children play independently because the purpose of some activities lacks clarity and opportunities are missed to extend language and literacy skills during these times, including outdoors.

Nevertheless, the new leadership team is using information about children’s progress well to ensure that provision is adapted and improved where necessary. Excellent relationships have been fostered with parents and carers, who say that they feel welcome in the setting. The ongoing improvements in provision reflect the ambition, drive and increasing confidence of leaders and managers.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of the parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire were highly positive in most of their responses. They are particularly pleased with how the school helps their children to lead healthy and safe lives, that teaching is good, that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, and that the leadership and management are good. A small number of individual parents and carers expressed concern about specific aspects of the school's work, including behaviour management. They were investigated throughout the inspection, but both behaviour and its management were judged to be consistently good. Previous issues relating to unacceptable behaviour have now been addressed.

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

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

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	54	44	43	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	65	63	37	36	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	45	44	51	50	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	46	46	45	5	5	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	50	49	49	48	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	45	44	48	47	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	44	51	50	3	3	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)	31	30	59	57	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	38	37	54	52	5	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	36	51	50	12	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	32	54	52	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	40	39	58	56	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	55	53	41	40	5	5	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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 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 Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Swindon SN3 2TP**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and particularly appreciated the helpfulness of those pupils who spoke to us, shared their work, and explained what they were doing during lessons.

Your school is providing you with a good education, and has some important strengths. Your behaviour is good and you enjoy coming to school. It is good to know that you are very happy with the excellent way adults look after you and that you feel so safe in school. You have a good knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and enjoy having lots of responsibilities, such as membership of the school council. You work hard in lessons and reach above average standards by the time you leave school. All the adults who work with you are determined to make sure your school keeps getting better.

To ensure that your progress and attainment continue to improve, I have asked the headteacher and governing body to do the following things.

- Make sure that teaching is equally good throughout the school.
- Ensure that when they mark your work, staff let you know exactly how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve, so that you can make better progress.
- Give you lots of opportunities to join in during lessons and practise your speaking, reading, writing and mathematics skills in all of your other subjects.
- Make better use of the new outdoor resources for children in the Reception class.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and enjoy your learning, and I hope you will do so.

Yours sincerely

Sonja Joseph  
Lead inspector

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