

Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109266
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	377897
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Merchant

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eugene Campbell
Headteacher	Dawn Breeze
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 November 2008
School address	Amberley Road Bristol BS34 6BY
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Merchant

Additional Inspector

Joyce Cox

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twenty lessons or parts of lessons were observed, amounting to eleven hours in total. Five of the lessons were jointly observed by members of the school's leadership team. All eight classroom teachers present at the time of the inspection were observed teaching. Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, staff, members of the governing body and different groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of the school's work, policy documents and pupils' work. They analysed 42 questionnaires sent in by parents and carers, 78 questionnaires completed by pupils and 13 completed by staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there is a much higher than average proportion from Traveller communities. Higher than average numbers of pupils join or leave other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average while the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school meets the current floor standard, which are the minimum standards expected by the government. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. The school also has a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body and was part of this inspection.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Pupils make good progress thanks to consistently good teaching and their good attitudes to learning. The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection and shows that young people can achieve well, irrespective of circumstance. The school is not outstanding because there is not yet enough outstanding teaching. Additionally, initiatives to improve writing and number skills are not always applied consistently enough across all year groups.
- Pupils achieve well and from low starting points. Their attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average and rising. By the age of six, nearly all pupils are confident readers because of a relentless focus on teaching sounds and letters.
- Teachers display very good subject knowledge, give clear explanations and expect much of their pupils. Questioning is used well in the better lessons but is not probing enough in others and in some lessons pupils are given insufficient time to work independently. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in many lessons and aspects of the curriculum.
- Good relationships at all levels have helped to establish a cohesive, purposeful and happy community where pupils feel safe, behaviour is good and all are able to learn and thrive in an atmosphere of respect and dignity. Pupils are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high.
- The school’s success has undoubtedly been brought about by the clear-sighted, principled, and approachable headteacher with strong support from her highly skilled leadership team. Together, they drive improvement resolutely and with the best interests of the pupils in mind, raising the quality of teaching with conspicuous success through rigorous quality assurance linked to focused professional development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class
 - enabling every teacher to make effective use of probing questions.
- Accelerate pupils' progress across all year groups by ensuring that effective techniques to teach writing and mathematics are employed consistently in all classes.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are well below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in all the areas of learning because teaching is consistently good. The strong focus on children learning the sounds that letters and combinations of letters make (phonics) means they are well prepared for reading and they gain a real enthusiasm for stories and books. They leave the Reception class working at just below their age-related expectations.

In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of phonics continues to be of high priority and consequently attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate that they have acquired good strategies to tackle unfamiliar words in their reading books and have gained a good level of independence in their reading. This pattern continues throughout the school so that by the end of Year 6, reading is of a high standard, with a large proportion of pupils reaching above-average levels. Teachers encourage pupils to experiment with vocabulary and imagery so that they develop confidence when tackling new words.

A very large majority of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires rightly felt that their children were making good progress at the school, and that their needs are very well met. Inspectors found that the quality of learning in all lessons observed was good, and sometimes outstanding. Pupils' number skills, in particular, have improved markedly since the previous inspection, and most are confident in solving number problems. Plans to teach writing more effectively, such as through raising awareness of the differences between formal and informal language, are now becoming embedded. Where these initiatives are applied diligently, as in Years 2 and 6, many pupils make outstanding gains in writing and mathematics. However, some inconsistencies in application across some other classes prevent progress from being better than good.

Pupils are keen to do their best, work purposefully and collaborate willingly during lessons, readily taking on roles within teams and supporting each other's learning. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils' ability to discuss maturely and reflect thoughtfully upon ethical dilemmas. In an outstanding Year 6 literacy lesson for example, pupils spoke with feeling about 'Should animals be kept in zoos?' They

worked eagerly in teams to debate the issue and listened respectfully to each other. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievement and enjoyment of school life, engaging pupils in learning and providing them with the skills and confidence to take the next steps in their education.

The school consistently adds value to the performance of all groups of pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. Teaching assistants and teachers communicate well to ensure that each pupil receives well-targeted support. There is very little difference in the progress made by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from diverse backgrounds, because staff are very conscious of pupils' individual needs and they work successfully to close any gaps. The large number of pupils of Traveller heritage are achieving well as a result of the very effective partnerships built up by the school with them and their families.

Quality of teaching

The great majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire think that the teaching is good in the school. Inspectors agree. Lessons are well paced, relevant and enjoyable, providing many opportunities for achievements to be shared, celebrated and built upon. Teaching is characterised by high expectations, not just in terms of achievement, but in the amount, complexity and challenge of learning activities. For instance, in an exciting Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils learnt at a blistering pace because of the teacher's high expectations of what she wanted them to learn. All groups of pupils made fast progress and really enjoyed working in groups to devise different ways of developing their stories. In the best lessons, skilled questioning is used to extend thinking, check understanding and encourage pupils to develop their speaking skills. However, this is not always the case and sometimes questioning is not sufficiently searching and teachers over-direct the tasks pupils undertake.

Teaching ensures that there is integration of literacy and communication skills across the curriculum through the development of oracy and constant reference to key vocabulary to secure good quality extended writing. Teachers mark books and set targets for improvement thoughtfully and carefully.

Teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Learning support assistants are highly skilled and deployed well. They liaise closely with the teacher, give just the right amount of support and encourage pupils to be more independent. Teachers make effective use of opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In topic work, for example, pupils discussed the ethical issues involved in fighting poverty in developing countries.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The great majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that overall the behaviour in the school was good although a few expressed concerns that their children's lessons were sometimes disrupted by poor behaviour. The school's own records show that behaviour in lessons has been consistently good over a period of time. The school has a very effective behaviour

management system and teachers consistently demand high standards of conduct. As a result, behaviour in lessons is a strong factor in the pupils' learning. They are attentive, engage very positively with the teaching and show ambition and great enjoyment of their learning. Some pupils enter the school mid-way through the school year having experienced a lack of success in other schools. These pupils speak powerfully of the support they have received from staff at the school. School leaders have good links with the Traveller community, and these pupils are very well supported.

The breakfast club exemplifies the warm, stimulating, high-quality care given to pupils. Pupils say that behaviour is good and that bullying is extremely rare. They clearly understand that there are different types of bullying, for example cyber-bullying, name-calling and bullying based on sex or gender, and are confident that any bullying would be dealt with effectively. Pupils say that they feel very safe and have a good awareness of the dangers of social network sites on the internet. Inspectors found that pupils were safe in school, a view confirmed by parents and carers.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is widely acclaimed by staff, parents, carers and governors as having been hugely instrumental in improving the school. She leads the way in driving ambition, and has established a shared sense of purpose to raise the aspirations of pupils and teachers alike. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and pupils' progress continues to accelerate. Leaders check the school's performance rigorously and there is an effective and strong focus on improving teachers' skills. They are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where people need more advice and guidance. Consequently, the satisfactory outcomes and teaching identified at the last inspection have been greatly improved. Members of the senior leadership team and the subject leaders fulfil their responsibilities well.

Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work and considerable emphasis is placed on ensuring that all pupils feel equally valued while maintaining a sense of their individuality and cultural identity. Outcomes for all groups of pupils, given their different starting points and backgrounds, are broadly similar, indicating that the school's commitment to equal opportunities is fully translated into practice. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the pastoral support for pupils of Traveller heritage makes a material impact also on community cohesion.

The governing body holds the school to account for its work well and has been influential in helping senior managers secure effective school improvement. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school's work. For instance, checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough and meet current requirements. School leaders have ensured that the exciting and well-planned curriculum is well thought out so that pupils from all backgrounds can enjoy learning and achieve well and it successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are taught to be thoughtful and reflective and consider the needs of others. Leaders have worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the

views of others and that a set of common, shared values is embedded in every child.

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	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



25 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Bristol, BS34 6BY

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had! We enjoyed meeting and talking with you. Holy Family is a good school and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the good things we found out about it.

- You make good progress as you move through the school and, by the time you leave at the end of Year 6 you reach standards in all your subjects that are similar to those in most other schools. This is because your teachers teach you very well and you also work very hard.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants take very good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work.
- Your behaviour is good and you look after each other well. You enjoy working in groups and you like to help your classmates when they find things difficult.
- Your headteacher, the governing body and all the other staff know in detail how to make sure that your school continues to improve.

To help the school improve further, we have asked those who lead and manage the school to do two things.

- Make sure that more of you make even faster progress in your learning by ensuring that all the things the school does to improve your writing and mathematics are done equally well in all classes.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by making sure that teachers ask probing questions and make sure that you are able to learn more things on your own.

I am sure that you will help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant
Lead inspector

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