

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Springfield Road, Wigan, WN6 7RH,

Inspection dates 2 – 3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Recent improvements in teaching and leadership and management have not had sufficient time to improve achievement across all areas of the school.
- The quality of teaching over time has not been consistently good or better and does not fully extend the learning of all pupils.
- Marking and feedback to pupils on their work is not consistently good or better across all classes and subjects, so that not all pupils know how to improve their learning.
- Some pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to work independently of adult support.
- The part played by subject coordinators in monitoring teaching within their areas and contributing to school development planning is limited.
- The recently revised curriculum has not been sufficiently monitored to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners.
- New ways of working and raised expectations introduced over the last year have not yet been fully established across the school owing to the newness in post of many staff.

The school has the following strengths

- The school has responded well to the recent dip in the attainment of pupils, and achievement is being raised across the school.
- Children's learning and progress in their personal development is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Recent good and sometimes outstanding teaching across the school has accelerated pupils' progress and begun to overcome past underachievement.
- Attendance is well above average and behaviour is good.
- The governing body knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and has robustly challenged its performance since the previous inspection. It has required improvements to be made in the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, parents, representatives of the governing body and those from the local authority, and the school’s senior and middle managers and teachers.
- Inspectors took account of 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school’s own surveys of pupils’ and parents’ views of the school in planning the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a wide range of documents, including pupil performance data, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

Nigel Cromey-Hawke, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Terence Bond	Additional inspector
Maureen Hints	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a well above-average-sized school, with a well above-average number of girls in comparison to boys.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with very few whose first language is not English.
- There is an on-site children's centre, as well as a before-and after-school and holiday club, both of which are reported on separately.
- The school has many awards, including Healthy School status, the Activemark and the Leading Parent Partnership award.
- The school has undergone significant staffing change since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement to be at least good, by:
 - ensuring that in all lessons there is sufficient pace and challenge, so that all pupils, especially the more-able, make the best progress in their learning
 - sharing the good practice in marking and feedback found in some classes in English and mathematics across all year groups and subjects in the school, so that all pupils know how to improve their learning
 - developing pupils' ability to work independently of adult support.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of subject leaders, especially in monitoring the quality of provision within their areas of responsibility and within development planning
 - monitoring and evaluating with greater consistency the impact of the recently revised curriculum, to ensure that it fully meets the needs of pupils
 - ensuring that the raised expectations and new ways of working recently introduced are fully embedded amongst new staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with basic skills that are low in comparison to those expected of children of their age. They settle quickly into the welcoming and safe environment provided and clearly enjoy their learning because of the good teaching and level of support they receive. They make good progress, especially in their literacy and numeracy skills, and in their personal development, leaving, having reached national expectations for their age across all areas of learning.
- The progress made by pupils across the rest of the school has varied widely since the previous inspection, and there is evidence of past underachievement in some year groups owing to weaker teaching and a lack of continuity in staffing. Attainment at the end of Year 6 fell from broadly average three years ago to low levels in 2011. It recovered to match national averages in English and mathematics in national tests at the end of the last academic year, as a result of a programme to improve teaching and raise expectations.
- Attainment in reading followed a similar pattern but has been significantly improved over the last year, and in Year 2 is now average and in Year 6 slightly above average.
- Year 6 made better than expected progress in their final year and many pupils across other year groups are now making accelerated progress and catching up on lost ground. Most groups of pupils are now working at expected levels for their age, although the drive to improve the quality of learning has not yet been effective across all classes. Attainment in mathematics in Year 5 particularly remains below average, but is currently the subject of closely focused additional support.
- Over time, the progress being made by pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, and those who are disabled or have special educational needs matches expectations. Many of these pupils are currently making accelerated progress because of the effective use of the additional governmental funding for this purpose. Past weaker performance by boys in relation to girls has been targeted and the gap is being closed by targeted teaching and revised learning activities, often led by teaching assistants.
- Over time, achievement is inconsistent and still requires improvement, although raised expectations and more consistent staffing are bringing about rapid changes for the better.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time requires improvement, but much current teaching is good, notably in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in upper Key Stage 2. There is a small amount of teaching that is outstanding in Year 6. This reflects the success of the recent drive by senior staff and members of the governing body to improve the performance of the school.
- In the majority of lessons seen during the inspection, information on pupils' prior learning is used to good effect to target pupils' needs.
- The use of information and communication technology is a strength of the school and often results in additional resources being available for teaching that help make the best lessons interesting and relevant.
- Teaching supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Outstanding learning was witnessed, for example, in one Year 6 literacy lesson that used drama to very good effect to extend pupils' understanding of racism and other citizenship values.
- The teaching of reading is good, with well structured daily sessions on letters and sounds and guided reading activities that give pupils the tools to move their learning forward. Opportunities for extended writing are being developed across all subject areas through the recently revised curriculum, and music, in particular, is being used to support pupils' creative writing skills.

- Significant changes in teaching staff have been made over the last year, including the appointment of many newly qualified teachers. New procedures for establishing individual pupil learning targets and more frequent tracking of pupils' progress have been introduced since the previous inspection. These are helping to improve pupils' learning.
- Staff are highly committed to the raised expectations of the school, although the quality of teaching varies in effectiveness across the school. Some lessons lack the necessary pace and challenge, and questioning by teachers is not always used effectively to fully extend pupils' learning, especially that of the more-able pupils. Good practice in marking and feedback to pupils on their work is evident in some English and mathematics classes but this is inconsistent across the school and in some cases pupils are not given sufficient guidance on how to improve their learning.
- The school has used staff development over the last year to encourage the development of independent learning by pupils within lessons. This is used to varying effect across the school, however, with some groups of pupils struggling as a result of insufficient monitoring by adults and lack of structure for the tasks they are required to complete.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- There is a very warm, welcoming and positive atmosphere within the school, where all pupils are made to feel valued. This contributes to pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good relationships between pupils and adults. Behaviour over time is good.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and punctual to school and to lessons. Attendance has been consistently above average for many years and exclusions extremely rare.
- Behaviour within the best lessons and around the school is often very good, although there is evidence of minor low-level disruption in some lessons when the pace of learning slows. This is managed well, however, with clear rewards and consequences being operated by staff.
- The school ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, and their awareness of internet safety, in particular, is good.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities within the school, as monitors of various kinds and through the active school council.
- Pupils work hard to support many charities, reflecting the caring culture of the school. They achieved national recognition on iTunes for their 'Joining Jack' song, composed during a Year 6 literacy session and performed by the school choir.
- Although only a few parents used Parent View to make their opinions known, a small number of these expressed concern over levels of bullying in the school. Inspection evidence, school records and surveys of both parents' and pupils' views and discussions with groups of pupils show that bullying is low level. When it is encountered pupils feel confident that it is dealt with effectively and quickly.
- Pupils interviewed during the inspection were clearly supportive of the more stable staffing within the school and the recent improvements in the quality of teaching.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The senior staff of the school have worked hard to recover from the recent dip in pupils' performance. Staff morale is good and teachers are fully supportive of the drive for improvement. Teaching has improved, new staff appointed and achievement is improving, although new ways of working and expectations are not yet consistently in place amongst all staff.
- Effective support from the local authority and the local consortium of schools has been used to improve the performance of the school and government funding has been used effectively to close gaps in the performance of groups of pupils. Performance management and staff training

have been used to raise expectations of learning.

- A comprehensive cycle of self-evaluation and lesson monitoring by senior staff is in place, followed by well targeted professional development. There are well focused whole school plans for driving further improvement, in which the middle leaders play a significant part. Owing to the newness in post of many staff, and some remaining temporary appointments, the monitoring role of subject leaders and their involvement in planning for further change is currently underdeveloped.
 - The curriculum has been extensively revised and is beginning to provide a more varied and richer range of learning experiences for pupils. There is a good programme of visits and visitors to the school, specialist music teaching from the local authority and a wide range of sporting activities, reflected in the school's awards. The operation and impact of the curriculum is not yet being evaluated, however, resulting in wide differences in the quality of planning, especially over how the learning of the more-able pupils will be extended.
 - Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and often benefit from close working with the children's centre. Together they provide a wide range of extended services to families. Parents interviewed by inspectors were highly appreciative of this provision, especially those with children in the Nursery and Reception classes and the Nurture setting. They also valued the communication over their children's learning and well-being from the family support worker.
 - Central within the values of the school is the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is good, reflecting the faith ethos of the school.
 - **The governance of the school**
 - the governing body has robustly challenged the school's performance and required improvements to be made in the quality of teaching
 - it closely monitors developments, has a good understanding of the current situation within the school and knows that there is the need for further improvements and what these should be.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106461
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	405038

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne Sudworth
Headteacher	Andrew Poskitt
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2010
Telephone number	01942 231478
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