

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Herlwyn Avenue, Ruislip, HA4 6EZ

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- This school is an extremely welcoming place, where pupils' work is celebrated through displays all around the place.
- Senior leaders and governors set the highest expectations, which are central to raising achievement for all pupils in this exceptionally effective school.
- The leadership team works very well together to ensure there are sustained improvements in the high quality teaching linked to pupils' progress.
- Standards are very high in English and mathematics, with many pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, making progress that is well above that expected nationally.
- Marking contributes very strongly to the high rate of progress pupils make in all classes. It is closely linked to pupils' next steps for improvement, through individuals' learning journals and opportunities to respond to marking and correct their work.
- The range of high-quality activities in and beyond the school day has an extremely positive impact on the academic learning, behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, and their behaviour and relationships contribute exceptionally well to their learning.
- Home-school books, weekly drop-in sessions to meet with teachers and the regular sharing of pupils' progress ensure an excellent partnership with parents and carers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes, visiting 24 part lessons and observing most teachers.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other leaders and managers, members of the governing body, officers from the local authority, a representative from the diocese, and pupils.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documents, including the school's website, its self-evaluation and development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, safeguarding arrangements, and work in children's books.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as those of the 87 parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Jennifer Barker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clive Reynolds

Additional Inspector

Marie Cahill

Additional Inspector

Michael Elson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. It has increased in size in recent years, since it was rebuilt in 2008. There are currently three forms of entry across the school, apart from Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, which provides additional resources for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is higher than average, particularly lower down in the school.
- No alternative provision is organised for pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is around the national average, as is the proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that a higher proportion of teaching is outstanding by:
 - sharpening the use of assessment during lessons so that tasks and activities are re-shaped and pupils are engaged in sharing their work
 - increasing the challenge across subjects for those working at the highest levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Standards at the end of Year 6 have been sustained at well above average levels for the past five years. This is particularly so in mathematics, where a number of pupils reach standards that are exceptionally high. A much higher proportion of pupils than the national average, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make rapid progress in English and mathematics.
- Children enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly average for their age, but throughout this time and into Key Stage 1, they make good progress, so that standards, particularly in writing, are above average by the end of Year 2.
- Additional funding through the pupil premium is used well for additional support and, in particular, to ensure eligible pupils have more practice with reading. As a result of this support, and smaller groups for mathematics in Years 3 and 4, pupils eligible for free school meals make better progress and, based on their average points score, attain higher standards than pupils nationally.
- The attainment of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well above average. Well-trained staff deliver a range of carefully planned additional support activities for these pupils, both in and out of lessons, and as a result, they make exceptionally good progress.
- Younger pupils are making rapid progress with their knowledge of phonics (the linking of sounds and letters) and they apply these expertly to work out unknown words for reading. As a result, pupils quickly gain fluency, read with expression and understand text well, and their progress in reading is outstanding.
- The very high outcomes in mathematics are linked to improvements in teaching. Assessment information is used effectively to group pupils, and regularly checked in relation to pupils' progression in written calculation. Opportunities to follow up with home learning and guidance through a parent booklet also contribute well to pupils' success.
- Many pupils attain very high levels in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. However, inspectors agree with those parents who thought that there were not enough opportunities for this group to use these skills, for instance to discuss their wider reading, from an early age, for problem solving in mathematics or extending their writing. As a result, the highest achievers are not always challenged well enough.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- A developmental approach that involves all staff in well-focused training, such as the teaching of phonics, linking writing to stories and role play, as well as consistent approaches to marking, is rapidly improving the quality of teaching, which is outstanding across the school.
- The range of activities and resources in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides pupils with a good start to their education. They make particularly good progress in their personal and social skills, literacy and mathematics.
- Teachers plan very well to ensure that all pupils are challenged and actively involved from the start of lessons. For instance, a starter activity in mathematics developed pupils' mental mathematics by using their calculation skills to solve problems. By writing their answers on small whiteboards, the teacher was able to assess pupils' ability to carry these out. However, the use of these kinds of assessment strategies is not systematic enough during lessons, and teachers do not always re-shape tasks or involve pupils in sharing their work with each other.
- A range of opportunities to use role play and stories, for instance about the rainforest and the Great Fire of London, to develop pupils' vocabulary before writing are ensuring rapid progress from an early age. This also ensures there are opportunities for purposeful writing and good links across subjects.
- The high quality and consistency of marking is strong across the school. Leaders and managers systematically look at pupils' books, check progress and ensure that marking is effective. Pupils are involved in responding to it and practising their skills, linked to their targets and next steps

identified in their learning journals, and the progress seen in books is sustained and rapid.

- Support staff are expert in developing pupils' skills in lessons and work as a team with teachers, developing additional resources and language and vocabulary. In addition, they are very skilled in providing additional support programmes outside the classroom, such as reading and phonics' groups and pre-teaching, for those pupils who are learning English as an additional language, which contributes to their rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils are extremely courteous, orderly, respectful and polite. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school, attend well and have very positive relationships with adults and other pupils.
- Attitudes to learning in lessons are exceptionally positive and pupils listen well to others. They confidently share ideas and contribute very well when discussing their work.
- Parents and pupils are very happy with school, believe that behaviour is good and bullying rare. The school is an extremely safe place to be. All staff are skilled at ensuring that any problems are caught early on, and parents appreciate the weekly sessions for talking to teachers about any concerns.
- Pupils are fully aware of different types of bullying, such as name-calling and racism, and feel very confident that adults will listen to them and sort out any problems quickly. They know how to keep themselves safe and have a very good range of strategies to deal with cyber-bullying, about which they are continually reminded at school.
- The school works well with outside agencies and provides additional support to pupils with challenging behaviour. For instance, a pupil in Year 2 whose behaviour was affecting his progress and integration, is now in Year 5 and fully integrated, feels valued and is making better progress.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The outstanding senior leadership team have not only maintained high standards over a number of years, but are continuing to raise them further. They, together with governors, lead a team of excellent professionals who are enthusiastic, driven and committed to improving outcomes for pupils.
- The local authority provides a light touch approach, but nevertheless the school has bought in additional support which has helped it with a thorough analysis of pupils' progress and key areas for development, for instance writing.
- Leaders and managers at all levels systematically track progress and pick up any pupils at risk of underachievement quickly, putting in additional support if necessary. As a result, no pupils fall behind, discrimination is not tolerated and all pupils, including those with physical disabilities, have equal opportunities to take part in the life of the school.
- Teachers are set high targets and these are linked to salary progression. A wide range of opportunities exist for training both in and outside school, and a focus on phonics this year has had an exceptional impact on pupils' progress in reading, spelling and writing.
- The curriculum is exceptionally well planned, with many cross-curricular opportunities and visits, such as those to historical buildings, which underpin their creative and cultural experiences. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural understanding is outstanding, as seen in their behaviour and opportunities for reflection in lessons. Music is a key part of the life of the school, with opportunities to learn musical instruments, play in the orchestra and sing with the choir at a cathedral and alongside a 'signing' choir from a local special school.
- Parents and carers appreciate the high level of communication with the school through weekly drop-in sessions to talk to teachers, and through the home-school books and regular updates on their children's progress.

■ Partnerships with a range of outside agencies are well developed. The school has good links with other faith schools and pupils have opportunities to share experiences in secondary schools before they transfer. Most importantly, the standards pupils reach in English and mathematics prepare them exceptionally well not only for the next stage of their education, but their lives beyond that as well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governance is exceptionally strong, with governors having an accurate view of the school as they play an active part in the school’s improvement. Governors bring a range of skills to their work and have identified roles and responsibilities linked to subject areas. There is an induction programme for new governors and a high level of training for all. Systematic development planning is based on visits to the school, reports from staff and the work of committees, all linked to the progress of pupils. Staff promotion is linked to successful outcomes for pupils’ performance. Governors have an accurate picture of pupils’ achievements and how these relate to pupils nationally. This includes those pupils who benefit from the pupil premium and the additional provision this provides. Visits to the school are closely focused on school priorities, as set out in the governors’ action plan. All statutory duties, including safeguarding, are met, and there is an exemplary focus on keeping pupils safe, through regular visits to the school and checking on risk assessments.

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	102426
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	402885

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	690
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Corthorne
Headteacher	David Manley
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2008
Telephone number	01895 633240
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