

# Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Upper Essex Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L8 6QB

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils’ achievement is not yet consistently good. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average and too few pupils are consistently achieving the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good.
- Teachers’ expectations are not always high enough. Sometimes pupils are asked to do tasks that are too easy and do not help them move on with their learning.
- Reading, writing and mathematics skills do not develop quickly because pupils do not practise these sequentially and systematically and use these skills in other subjects.
- Pupils do not respond well enough to the good guidance provided by their teachers and continue to make mistakes in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- When monitoring the quality of teaching, the school’s leaders do not focus sharply enough on the underachievement of particular groups of pupils. As a result, their evaluation of the quality of teaching has sometimes been overgenerous.
- Attendance is still not as good as it should be for all pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Standards are rising and pupils are now making better progress than in the past.
- The school’s leaders, including governors, know what needs to be done and are determined to make teaching and achievement good.
- The progress of pupils entitled to the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs is sometimes good.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Language Resource Base because teaching is consistently good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are secure, warm and respectful. This helps pupils to be courteous with each other and with the adults in school. Pupils feel safe.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in each class and observed 11 lessons.
- There were only four responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and these were too few to be available to inspectors. The inspectors took account of comments made by parents as they brought children to school and the school’s parental questionnaires.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, examined pupils’ work in their books, and observed pupils’ activities in the playground and in the dining hall.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, the headteacher and other senior leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including minutes of governing body meetings, a summary of the school’s self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, documents showing how the quality of teaching is checked, the school’s information on pupils’ progress, teachers’ plans and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at the views expressed by staff in the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Andrew Morley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terry Bond

Additional Inspector

Karen Bramwell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school which is close to the city centre. It opened in August 2010 from the amalgamation of two previously federated schools as well as the closure of one other school following a rationalisation of school places.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is in line with the average of all primary schools. Home languages include Polish, Chinese and French.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This funding is provided to the school to help certain groups of pupils: those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of a local authority and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There are two specialist units in the school, each catering for up to eight pupils who come from other schools in the local authority. One supports pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. The other, which is not managed by the governing body of this school (and was, therefore, not inspected on this occasion), supports pupils aged four to eight who have behavioural difficulties and have been excluded from mainstream schools.
- The school achieved Healthy School status, the Active School Award in 2010 and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all of it is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring that activities are challenging for all pupils
  - making pupils aware of their responsibility to complete work to the best of their ability
  - ensuring that teaching develops pupils' sustained enthusiasm and eagerness to learn in lessons
  - ensuring marking gives consistent clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve, with the expectation that pupils respond, and checking such responses.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - checking pupils' understanding more regularly in lessons so that tasks can be adapted as necessary to extend and accelerate learning
  - giving pupils more opportunities to practise reading, writing and mathematical skills sequentially and systematically; and use and apply these skills in all of their subjects.
- Work with parents and other agencies to continue to improve attendance rates and reduce the proportion of pupils who have too much time off school.

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that all leaders, including middle leaders, develop their skills and expertise in the monitoring of teaching, with specific emphasis on the impact of teaching on pupils’ learning and achievement
  - ensuring that teachers use information on pupils’ performance effectively and are held to account by school leaders when pupils’ progress and the quality of teaching are not good enough.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The majority of pupils, including middle-attaining pupils and the small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, do not make good progress. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6, in particular, requires improvement.
- From starting points that are well below those typically found, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with skills that are close to average. Pupils leave Year 6 with below-average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery class and they continue to make good progress in the Reception classes because there is a good range and balance of activities. The proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning is increasing and is now close to the national average.
- Between Years 1 and 6, progress is variable between year groups. These variations mean that pupils do not always build well on what they already know and can do. This is particularly the case in key writing and mathematical skills and knowledge.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average. At Key Stage 2, attainment shows a similar picture. However, there are signs that pupils' progress is accelerating.
- In 2013, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was an improvement on previous years, closing the gap on the national average. This group of pupils made better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, with the proportion achieving better than expected progress from Key Stage 1 being above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the required standard in the government's phonics screening check (linking sounds and letters) in Year 1 has increased, and is in line with national performance. However, pupils who attained the required standard in 2012 did not make enough progress across Year 2. Consequently, standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013 were significantly below the national average. Progress in reading across Key Stage 2 in 2013 was inconsistent and by the end of Year 6, reading standards were below the national average.
- The use of pupil premium funding to create smaller teaching groups is having a positive impact on the progress made by eligible pupils. The 2013 results show that the Year 6 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were a term ahead of their classmates in both English and mathematics. These pupils are on track to maintain their positive performance.
- The progress of the most able pupils requires improvement. They often do not make good enough headway from their starting points.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making progress that is similar to, and sometimes better than, that of their classmates. This is especially the case for those supported at school action plus. Pupils who attend the Language Resource Base make good progress.
- While the school aims to provide equal opportunities for all, some groups of pupils make a little more progress from their starting points than others do.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good or better across the school. Although there is an increasing proportion of good teaching, evidence in pupils' work indicates that progress over time is inconsistent.
- Teachers do not check on pupils' understanding regularly enough during lessons and, too often, all pupils start with the same work or explanation. This means that pupils are given work that can be either too easy or is about something they already know well. Consequently, they are not pushed hard enough to make even better progress and the pace of learning slows.

- The quality of writing produced by the pupils is very variable. There are examples when pupils produce good quality pieces of writing of which they are proud. However, there is an inconsistency in teachers' expectations. Teachers do not ensure the systematic learning of key skills, nor ensure that pupils pay enough attention to the importance of good standards in presentation, accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Although pupils are given opportunities to write in their topic work, not enough emphasis is put on reaching a good standard of writing on these occasions.
- The teaching of reading has shown signs of improvement in recent times. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, phonics is taught systematically so that pupils quickly develop confidence to use their phonic skills to help them with their reading. Teachers are now building on this at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Teaching of mathematics requires improvement because teachers set tasks which do not consistently offer a good level of challenge, interest and relevance. For example, pupils are too often asked to complete basic calculation skills in isolation and are not being challenged to use this knowledge to solve practical problems.
- Teachers are working hard in ensuring that pupils are given good guidance as to how to improve their work. However, pupils do not always respond to what their teachers are telling them to do in order to improve the standard of their work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because of good teaching and the range of activities that promote high levels of engagement and imaginative play.
- Teaching assistants are directed well and skilled at asking questions, especially when they are working with individuals or small groups. This provides good classroom support, especially for pupils with special educational needs, and it allows these pupils to play a full part in lessons, ensuring that they have at least as much opportunity for success as others.
- Opportunities in the Language Resource Base, including those provided by specialist staff who support the pupils in learning across the curriculum, are good and ensure that all pupils make good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. It is not good because there is too much variation in pupils' responses in class. In some lessons, pupils do not always work hard and their attention wanders, especially if they have to wait too long for their teacher to give them more work when they have finished their tasks. In other lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to their work and are able to sustain concentration.
- Pupils move around the school well and are very courteous and respectful. They collaborate well in lessons and sometimes help each other with their learning. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and demonstrate this through being members of the school council.
- At break and lunchtimes, pupils play well together and enjoy each other's company. The older pupils perform well in their roles as prefects and are keen to look after the younger children.
- The school's management of behaviour and positive use of encouragement and special events promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported well. Pupils are clear that the staff care and are there to support them.
- Pupils are clear about different types of bullying. They know that name-calling is wrong and say that instances of bullying are rare in the school and know what to do if an incident does occur.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a very good understanding of personal safety and how to stay safe during physical education and when using the Internet. The school works well with a range of outside agencies to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.
- The school's most recent questionnaire indicates that most parents agree that behaviour in the school is improving all the time and that their children are kept safe. The large majority think their children are happy and looked after well. Pupils speak with affection about being a part of Holy Family and they wear their school uniform with great pride.

- The school has worked successfully to raise attendance, which was below average in 2013. By working with families, the school's leaders have improved attendance which, since September, is in line with the national average.

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because actions to improve achievement have not been effective in raising the attainment at the ends of Key Stages 1 and 2. Leaders are not sufficiently focused on pupils' achievement in their work to check the quality of teaching. They do not consistently challenge staff if teaching or achievement is not good enough.
- Since the amalgamation the headteacher, in partnership with senior leaders and middle managers, has worked diligently with the governors to create a positive school. They are passionate about Holy Family and have the commitment required to make the changes needed to improve the school further. The leadership team, including middle leaders, has brought about improvements to some areas and demonstrates the skills and determination to bring about the further improvement required.
- The school's own view of its performance is accurate overall because leaders know their strengths and are resolute in their determination to raise achievement. Their plans for the future identify the right priorities. However, the success criteria for measuring impact are not always precise enough to raise performance quickly, especially for underachieving groups.
- Teachers' performance is closely linked to their pay, the Teachers' Standards and priority areas of the school. Leaders have ensured that training is provided for teachers, focused on both the school's priorities and individual needs.
- The school's system for checking pupils' progress provides leaders with an overview of the progress of different groups. However, the information gained is not always used well enough to ensure that suitable tasks are provided to challenge and allow pupils to achieve their best.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular. However, when grading the quality of teaching, some judgements have been too generous. This is because the emphasis has been on what the teacher is doing in the lesson rather than on the impact on pupils' progress.
- Leaders and middle managers are aware of the slow progress in reading over time. However, as a result of the improved quality of the teaching of phonics, guided reading and the quality of small-group support, the school's current data show acceleration. This school year pupils' progress across the school is better and improved standards are expected in 2014.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and ensure that children are well prepared for starting Key Stage 1 work.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Subject leaders ensure that it is broad, balanced and rich with the topic approach providing good links between subjects. It ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development progress very well and is enriched through a good programme of visits. Opportunities include: photography, art, drama and cookery clubs and a whole range of sporting activities. However, key reading, writing and mathematical skills are not taught sequentially or consistently across the curriculum.
- The school is working in partnership with local schools. For example, the Granby, Dingle and Toxteth Learning Network ensure that staff are involved in a range of opportunities for professional development. The local authority has provided medium to light touch support in recent months in view of the capacity of the school's leaders to drive improvement.
- School leaders are using the additional primary school sport funding to improve opportunities for all pupils. They provide additional weekly physical education lessons led by skilled sports coaches and a whole range of inter-school activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are committed and ambitious in their drive to make this a good school. They have a good understanding of the school's context, how pupils' achievement compares with that in other schools, the quality of teaching, and of the safety of children. They are beginning to hold the leaders to account for the performance of pupils. They understand where stronger

and weaker teaching exists and what the headteacher is doing to tackle weaknesses. They are fully involved in the decisions about the use of pupil premium funding to support eligible pupils and know what the impact of the funding is. They focus sharply on whether gaps are closing for different groups when they make decisions about using pupil premium funding or about teachers' salary increases. They are fully involved in managing the headteacher's performance and have a clear overview of the management of staff performance. Committees carry out statutory responsibilities effectively and they have ensured that procedures for safeguarding meet national requirements.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136062
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	430978

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	265
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pat Melia
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joe Welsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 April 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01517093672
<b>Fax number</b>	01512834905
<b>Email address</b>	holyfamily-ao@holyfamily.liverpool.sch.uk

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