

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5359
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

18 March 2014

Mr Joe Hellett
The Headteacher
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Hastings
Old London Road
Hastings
TN35 5NA

Dear Mr Hellett

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Hastings

Following my visit to your school on 18 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because the Chief Inspector was concerned about behaviour at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors gathered a range of evidence including:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- scrutiny of documentary evidence
- discussions with leaders and staff.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time behaviour and safety are good.

Context

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is slightly smaller than the average, one form entry primary school. The number on roll is currently 223. A slightly higher than average proportion of pupils in the school is from minority ethnic groups and a similar proportion speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is average. A slightly smaller than average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good and has improved over the last two years, since the appointment of the current headteacher. Pupils are mindful of the need to behave well and are eager to please. They try hard to be sensible and mature to impress their teachers and visitors. Pupils appreciate the awards they receive for good work and behaving well, but are also intrinsically motivated because of the praise they receive for their good behaviour.

Pupils work purposefully on tasks and enjoy participating in lessons. Nearly all pupils respond promptly to instructions from teachers and other staff. Few reminders to follow instructions are needed. Pupils are usually diligent and studious, concentrating well on producing their best work. This is especially evident in the older year groups. Nearly all pupils work equally productively alone, in pairs or in groups. During lessons, pupils are supportive of each other and boys and girls work well together.

Most pupils, including those in the Reception class, are well trained in managing transitions between activities and fetching resources and equipment they need, without relying on adults or interrupting the flow of the lesson. In the Reception class or when involved in free play activities, pupils enjoy taking turns, sharing equipment and helping each other. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils told me how they support classmates who speak English as an additional language, by involving them in their conversations, work and play. They said, 'If someone said something naughty, they might copy it, so we don't.' Displays around the school and in classrooms endorse the school's high expectations of behaviour, including class prayers and texts taken from the religious calendar. Moments of personal reflection and calm are threaded through the school day. Pupils wear their uniform smartly and are proud of their school. Their books are well kept and neat.

Behaviour in lessons is not yet outstanding because a very small number of pupils drift away from concentrating, especially when teachers do not explain tasks or concepts clearly enough or when efficient classroom routines are not firmly established.

Pupils' conduct around the school is good. Pupils clearly respect the school environment and are friendly and courteous towards staff and visitors. Lunchtime staff ensure that pupils speak politely and say 'please' and 'thank you' for their meals in the hall. Pupils sit down at tables for lunch and are encouraged to have good

table manners and eat together socially. There are age-appropriate reminders about how to behave and ideas for games and social activities displayed around the playgrounds. Pupils are provided with equipment to use at lunchtime and supervisory staff help them to organise games and activities. Teachers and lunchtime supervisors intervene in a timely fashion if games become too boisterous or if pupils perceive any unfairness. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 do not have enough guidance with games and activities for break times, considering the small size of the playground; as a result, their play can occasionally become too rough. Helpful routines, such as lining up at the end of lunchtime and break times, ensure that pupils are in the right frame of mind to settle down to lessons promptly.

Pupils are generally kind to each other. They told me about the 'playground friends' scheme and that it is the responsibility of all pupils, particularly those in Year 6, to look out for any pupils who are upset, left out or lonely. Pupils made particular mention of the school's recent work on friendship and anti-bullying. All pupils agree that behaviour is good in the school, although they confessed that sometimes a few pupils are not as attentive as they should be with cover or supply teachers.

Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. School leaders are rightly proud that they have not had to exclude any pupils. The school's guidelines for managing behaviour are used consistently. Teachers are watchful for any inattention from pupils and take swift and effective action to ensure good behaviour. The school makes good use of outside support from agencies, such as the educational psychology service, to help pupils whose behaviour is sometimes challenging. School leaders and governors monitor behaviour carefully. Detailed behaviour logs are maintained meticulously and checked frequently by senior leaders. There is comprehensive evidence to show that any incidents of behaviour causing concern are followed up by senior leaders, including communications with parents. However, school leaders have not systematically analysed their records of incidents to identify any repeated types or patterns of poor behaviour.

Improving attendance is a key priority for the school and recent figures show a pleasing improvement, compared with previous years. Punctuality has improved and there are fewer pupils who are persistently late to school.

Pupils enjoy attending school, are happy and feel safe. Staff ensure that there is good supervision of the entrance and exit to the school, which is on a busy road. Parents spoken to during the monitoring inspection were extremely pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school. One parent commented that children's habits of good behaviour in school 'spilled over' into the home. She said that the school teaches 'kindness and respect'. Another told me how he had seen, at first hand, effective and timely management of potentially poor behaviour, so that any conflicts were 'nipped in the bud'. One parent said that there had been problems with friendships and children 'falling out' in the past, but these were now dealt with extremely effectively.

Priorities for further improvement

- Make more systematic use of the school's behaviour logs in order to identify and tackle any problems or patterns of persistent misbehaviour.
- Provide pupils in Key Stage 1 with more guidance about games and activities during break times.
- Ensure that pupils display equally high standards of behaviour across all classes and with different staff.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for East Sussex, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and the Secretary of State for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce
Her Majesty's Inspector