

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Hall Lane, Liverpool, Merseyside, L7 8TQ

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Inspirational leadership from the headteacher and assistant headteachers has been pivotal in bringing about the improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- Highly effective governors share this work and ensure all pupils make at least good progress.
- Pupils' achievement is good. By the time they leave in Year 6, all pupils achieve standards that are, and have been in most years since the last inspection, above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years because of the close attention adults give to meeting their learning needs.
- The quality of teaching is good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Teachers successfully enable pupils to live out the belief that: 'dreams and ambitions can come true'.
- High quality staff support those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English or who join during the school year. Consequently, these pupils settle quickly and make good progress.
- Mutual respect is the hallmark of pupils' outstanding behaviour. Pupils love school and their above average rates of attendance are testament to this.
- The vibrant curriculum provides exceptionally well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils are highly effective young citizens of modern Britain.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and happy in school. Parents agree with this view. This is because full attention is paid to pupils' well-being, particularly by the most effective work of the learning mentor.
- High aspirations, a shared belief that: 'it takes a full team to score many goals' and improvements to pupils' learning means that this school is well placed to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils, particularly the most able, do not achieve as well as they could in writing and mathematics because they do not extend and improve these skills in other subjects.
- Middle leaders have not ensured the curriculum provides enough opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Children in the early years do not have enough experiences to develop their skills of curiosity, investigation and concentration in the outdoor area.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, a representative of the local authority and members of the governing body as well as groups of pupils.
- The inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1, 4 and 6 read, and spoke informally to pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors took account of the 18 responses received at the time of the inspection from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the views of the parents that the inspectors spoke to and those expressed through the school's own parental survey.
- The inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Downing

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium funding is additional funding for those pupils eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school, other than at the start of the school year, is above average.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs breakfast and after school clubs.
- The early years provision is available part-time and for some children full-time.
- Five teachers have joined the school since 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and accelerate progress, particularly for the most able, in writing and mathematics by ensuring pupils use and improve their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Ensure middle leaders check that pupils have enough opportunities to extend their writing and mathematics skills across the curriculum.
- Create more experiences for children in the early years to extend the skills of curiosity, investigation and concentration in the outdoor area.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and governors have moved this school forward very effectively since the last inspection. Staff changes have been managed extremely successfully by the headteacher. This ensured that the rate of improvement was sustained during a time of change. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, particularly in reading, has improved. Success can also be seen in pupils' attendance, behaviour and the measures taken to ensure pupils are safe.
- Leadership is not outstanding overall because, although middle leaders are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, they do not ensure pupils have enough opportunities to extend their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.. Managers do not check that the early years outdoor area is used well enough to develop children's' curiosity, investigation and concentration skills. .
- All staff have worked closely together to achieve success and resolve the issues identified at the last inspection. Performance management is well managed through effective reviews of the work of the teachers and pay awards are dependent upon teachers' performance in relation to pupils' progress.
- Rapid identification and allocation of the right level of support for pupils' individual needs are key strengths. Examples of this are the highly nurturing 'sunshine room' or pupils working closely with the learning mentor to tackle, for instance, anger management.
- Because of such effective support, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well catered for and, as a result, make at least good, and, for some, outstanding progress in their learning. This confirms that the school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and to tackling any discrimination.
- Pupils find the curriculum topics they study, such as about life and actions of the First World War, very exciting and informative. For example, they set up a museum, to share their learning with one another and with their parents. This provided them with opportunities to reflect on, write about and discuss the feelings, attitudes and actions of a time different from today. On a daily basis pupils interact with other pupils from several cultures and religions. They show mutual respect for each other and an enjoyment in learning about different beliefs and traditions. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and interwoven creatively into all lessons and assembly times. The subjects taught are enhanced well by many extra-curricular opportunities, for instance, breakfast club, playing an instrument or belonging to many other clubs.
- The school's physical education (PE) and sports premium fund is well managed. School leaders have used this funding effectively to provide more opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of sports, for instance, cricket and gymnastics. Specialist coaches have been employed to work alongside teachers which then helps staff to extend their own skills. This ensures that pupils are taught effectively. Pupils participate in sporting events involving other schools. As a consequence of the additional activities pupils are developing healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority has provided good support particularly in managing staffing changes and uses the expertise of some senior leaders to support other schools. They believe the leaders have the ability to carry on making improvements.
- Strong links exist with parents who feel their children are very well cared for in this school. Partnerships with the parish, archdiocese and other schools are very effective and have enabled the school to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement well since the last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well and is fully involved in the life of the school. Governors continually look at ways to improve their skills and have undertaken a wide range of training to increase their levels of expertise. Governors examine pupils' performance information, challenge senior leaders through rigorous questioning and, as a result, know how the school compares with other schools nationally and what is needed to improve pupils' achievement further.
 - Governors have a very clear understanding of the quality of teaching in the school because they have put in place arrangements that establish clear links between teachers' performance in the classroom and decisions about their pay. This process enables them to reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance effectively. Governors have a strong grasp of how the pupil premium and PE and schools sports premium funds are being used, and the difference this funding is making. They ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements and constantly check pupil and staff well-being.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Parents and staff fully agree.
- Pupils' attendance rates are above average and reflect how much pupils enjoy and are committed to their school. Their behaviour observed by the inspectors in lessons was outstanding. Pupils are extremely keen to learn and work well with partners or when researching new information for themselves. This has a strong influence on their good achievement. School records show that behaviour is typically outstanding in classes, around the school and over time.
- Pupils say behaviour in lessons, in the school building and in the playground is excellent. Those groups of pupils inspectors spoke to in formal meetings, or informally, say that they feel extremely safe and happy in school.
- The school has clear expectations of behaviour which pupils willingly follow. Inspectors were very impressed with how respectfully pupils listen to and get along with each other and all adults.
- Tracking pupils' behaviour is carried out by the learning mentor and detailed behaviour records are fully in place. There is a wealth of rewards such as cinema trips to enjoy, for example, for those pupils who have particularly good attendance records.
- Pupils show a real love of learning in the way they arrive early for the breakfast club with more than a hundred pupils attending on some days. Furthermore, they arrive before 8 a.m. to join support groups to help them address any learning they may not have fully grasped in previous lessons.
- Pupils really enjoy the vast range of roles and responsibilities they are given. For instance, school councillors confidently explain how their election follows the democratic process of voting or describe what qualities you need to display and duties to undertake when appointed as a Junior Lord Mayor for Liverpool. These roles help them to learn to act responsibly and prepare them well for their future lives.
- They strongly believe adults value and listen to their ideas and suggestions to make the school better. For instance, they were instrumental in setting up the 'Sacred Heart Television Centre': in partnership with teachers, they share information from the local and international news in order to extend their own and their classmates' knowledge and understanding of the world. This extends their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully.
- Pupils say bullying and racism are rare and feel confident that all adults, especially the learning mentor, would deal immediately with any prejudice issue if one arose. The school's records confirm this. Pupils have an excellent understanding of different forms of bullying, including that involving the internet and other social media sites.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say, and their parents agree, that they feel extremely safe and well supported at school. There is a very strong focus on ensuring pupils are safe. Staff check the site is secure and visitors are vetted before they gain access to school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe explaining to inspectors they would use the whisper button on the computer to alert adults to any concern they might have. Similarly, the catchy phrase: 'I will treat my user name and password like a toothbrush and won't share it' helps them to remember how to keep safe.
- The pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they thoroughly enjoy all that the school has to offer. They are very keen to say how much they benefit from the exciting range of before and after school clubs such as sports and music, or playing chess in class or in competitions against other schools. This contributes extremely well to their physical development, resilience and personal well-being.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has continued to improve since the last inspection. As a result, all pupils make at least good progress over time. Teachers foster a real love and enjoyment in learning. They want the best for pupils and have high aspirations.
- Teachers model high expectations for the quality of handwriting and use of punctuation. The teaching of reading is excellent. As a result, reading, both for pleasure and to find out information, is high on pupils' agenda of what they enjoy most.
- Skilled learning support assistants working with teachers pinpoint any gaps pupils may show in their learning. They provide the right level of support to enable pupils to make at least good progress. This is

particularly effective for those pupils who join the school other than at the start of the school year, those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs.

- Pupils know their targets and, most of the time, marking helps pupils to improve their work further. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. They have high expectations of what they want pupils to learn and of how they expect them to behave in lessons.
- Pupils willingly embrace their teachers' efforts to help them succeed. Classrooms are calm and there is a hard-working atmosphere. Pupils work happily together. When undertaking mathematical challenges in their daily calculation time, they use prior knowledge and skills well to discuss methods and solutions with their classmates. Such work makes them really think hard as well as extending their enjoyment of mathematics.
- Specialist teachers, for example in PE, music and Spanish, enhance staff knowledge and confidence and help pupils to succeed well in these lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic and excited learners who are keen to find out new information. They use computers confidently to research their topic work.
- Teachers plan carefully for the most able pupils in each year group and generally present probing questions and activities that make them think deeply. However, pupils, particularly the most able, do not have enough opportunities to extend their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects in order to achieve as well as they might.
- Reading is taught well. Children develop a comprehensive knowledge of letters and their sounds in the early years and Key Stage 1. This is no mean feat considering many have very limited understanding of the English language when they begin the school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop wider reading skills through the good quality library books available. Pupils are keen to say, 'a reader today is a leader tomorrow'.
- Opportunities for drama such as re-enacting scenes from the First World War bring learning to life in a meaningful and exciting way. This helps pupils to reflect on different times and consider how the experiences of the past influence the future.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. The standards reached by pupils over time are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Since the last inspection, standards have steadily risen in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and were average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014. This is as a result of the ongoing and accurate checks senior leaders and teachers make on pupils' progress and the excellent support for pupils who join during the school year who often speak English as an additional language.
- Over time, pupils' progress accelerates well through Year 3 to Year 6. Although standards overall have been rising they dipped to below average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 in Year 6. There was a small number of pupils in this year group and a larger number than usual with lower ability. Although test results were below the national average pupils had made good progress from their individual starting points when they left Key Stage 1 when their attainment was well below average.
- School records show that the pupils currently in Year 1 to Year 6 make good and, for some, outstanding progress as the quality of the teaching they receive has improved. Records show that pupils currently in Year 6 are already on track to achieve at least average and, for a significant proportion, above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The most able pupils make good progress. However, their progress is not outstanding because these pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. They do not have enough opportunities to extend their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects across curriculum.
- Pupils, many of whom speak English as an additional language, make good progress in phonics (sounds that letters make) including in the early years. Results of the national phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils have improved over the last two years and were close to the national average in 2014.
- The high emphasis on reading to extend pupils' comprehension, spelling and punctuation skills in a wide range of subjects is greatly enjoyed by pupils. This has accelerated their reading skills well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress similar to other pupils. Learning support staff give them close and often individual attention based on an accurate knowledge and understanding of their needs.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding well to ensure the good progress of disadvantaged pupils and close gaps between the standards they reach and those of others in their year groups. This is achieved through high quality support in small and often individual groups to develop reading, writing and mathematical skills.

- There was a one term difference between the Year 6 test results of disadvantaged pupils and others in reading and mathematics and two terms in writing in 2014. Their results were below the national average for other pupils in reading and mathematics by three terms and in writing by two terms. Any gaps this year between disadvantaged pupils and others in all year groups are closing rapidly.

The early years provision

is good

- The overall quality of the early years provision is good. When children begin in the Nursery or when they join the Reception class, a high proportion, though not all, are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. Furthermore, a high proportion of children have weaknesses in their speech and communication skills.
- Children learn to follow the early years routines because adults have, for instance, visual prompts to guide the children who cannot understand English. The adults are extremely caring and attentive, inviting parents to stay until their children settle.
- Highly skilled teachers are provided to use sign language for children with speech delay. Staff also arrange translation and support for children who do not speak English. . This helps children to feel welcomed and secure. As the year progresses, staff establish strong links with families through on-going meetings in the Nursery and Reception classes to discuss what children will be learning in reading.
- Children are extremely safe and cared for well. They rapidly learn to share and to get along with each other. During the inspection, for instance, they were observed including others in their play as they acted out the story called *The Owl Babies* when the owls had lost their mother. Skilful questioning from adults extends children's spoken language and their consideration of the feelings of others well.
- Learning is securely based around children's interests. All the adults, through searching questions, build on these interests to extend children's speaking, listening and mathematical skills, as well as their overall confidence effectively.
- Adults have a clear knowledge of each child's needs. They skilfully and effectively record the children's progress electronically, building a full profile of how well the children are learning and to identify where the next steps are needed to improve learning further.
- Children's physical and social skills and their health and well-being are developed well through a good range of activities. Activities such as learning to use the climbing equipment outdoors and sharing the stories they have acted out and recorded on hand-held computers contribute well to this development.
- Children show good progress in developing their confidence as they willingly explore letters and sounds, begin to read and practise their writing skills.
- The early years leader provides good leadership and management. She has responded positively to advice given to improve outcomes for the children. A strong team has been forged with a clear vision for the future.
- The recently improved indoor area is impacting favourably on children's progress in their learning. However, opportunities are missed outdoors to accelerate children's curiosity, investigative and concentration skills.
- The proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of Reception was closer to average proportions in 2014 than it was in 2013. This indicates that children, in spite of the high proportion with speech and language delays, are prepared well for entry into Year 1.

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	104641
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	448264

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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann O'Connell
Headteacher	Charles Daniels
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2009
Telephone number	0151 7091782
Fax number	0151 7095646
Email address	sacred-ao@sacredheart.liverpool.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

