

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

Beacon Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 2BG

Inspection dates	18–19 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has focused carefully on the areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection. The other senior leaders provide strong support.
- Leaders have made sure that improving the teaching of mathematics is a top priority. Additional training and support have helped staff to develop their understanding of mathematics.
- The teaching of reading has been effective over time. Older pupils have the skills they need to succeed in their next school.
- Pupils attend school regularly. They understand the high expectations the school has for their behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel safe and secure. Older pupils often support the younger pupils.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take up roles where they have responsibility.
- The school teaches a good range of subjects. There is a very good range of additional artistic and sporting activities available. Many of the pupils participate regularly.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is very strong.
- Children in the Reception Year get off to a good start. They are able to participate in a good range of activities and make good progress.
- The governing body has a good range of skills and experience. The governors have started to hold school leaders to account more effectively.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few elements of pupils' writing skills need to improve further, especially for some of the younger pupils.
- Some pupils do not always try as hard as they might when they find work difficult.
- Not all disadvantaged pupils are yet making as much progress as they could. The systems used by the school to check the progress of these pupils still need further development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of writing further, especially for younger pupils, by:
 - providing additional training and resources for staff in order to ensure greater consistency in the teaching of phonics
 - developing the opportunities for pupils to write longer and more complex work, across different subject areas
 - ensuring that pupils use grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately when writing in different subjects.

- Improve leadership and management further by:
 - continuing to monitor carefully the use of pupil premium funding by ensuring that the school's systems allow leaders to monitor progress over time more effectively
 - provide further training for staff that will enable them to encourage pupils to keep trying when they find work difficult.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has tackled the areas for improvement identified in the last report with determination. She has been supported well by other senior staff. School leaders have remained focused on their task. They understand that much of the school is improving, but they still need to do more in order to make the school as effective as possible.
 - The systems used by leaders to check teaching are well organised and thorough. Staff have benefited from a very good range of additional training and support. Much of this has had a positive effect on the skills and confidence of the teachers, especially in the teaching of mathematics.
 - Senior leaders have developed a culture of high aspiration among staff and pupils. Leaders are ambitious but supportive. The very large majority of staff recognise the positive changes that have taken place and welcome the sense of clear focus and direction brought by the current headteacher.
 - The large majority of parents recognise the recent improvements that have been made in the school. A parent captured the views of many by saying, 'we are very pleased with the progress our child has made. He is happy, enthusiastic and enjoys going to school'. A small number of parents recognise that the school is changing, but still need to be reassured further that things are improving.
 - The school teaches a wide range of subjects. There are good opportunities for pupils to study across different topics and in greater depth. The provision for additional artistic and sporting activities is very strong. The school has a very good track record in local sports activities. Many pupils participate regularly in the additional trips and clubs provided.
 - The opportunities for cultural development are very strong. Pupils have the opportunity to learn musical instruments, sing regularly and study topics that include reference to a wide range of cultures.
 - Pupils have very good opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual, social and moral issues. They often cover these topics in assemblies, religious education lessons and as part of the general themes and activities provided during each school day. These help pupils to understand British values well.
 - The school has developed a detailed system to check on the progress made by all pupils. Information is used carefully to identify any gaps in learning. Regular meetings and reviews take place, which focus on how well pupils are doing and what further support they might require.
 - School leaders have ensured that the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is a strong priority. Regular information is collected about how well this group is doing. Information currently gives leaders good information about progress made over six weeks, but does not always tell them enough about progress over a longer period.
 - The school provides helpful information for parents about how well pupils are doing. The system is relatively new and a few parents do not feel confident yet in how to access or understand the information provided.
- **The governance of the school**
- The governing body has a good range of skilled and experienced members. The governors have responded positively to the need for them to improve noted in the previous inspection report. They have recently started to challenge and support leaders more effectively. They check information about how well the school is doing, including the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and for the development of sports provision. Governors attend training regularly. The governing body has received regular information about the quality of learning in the school. It has ensured that links to pay progression for staff are strong. The Blessed Cyprian Tansi Catholic Academy Trust has received regular information about the school. The trust is currently reorganising itself to ensure that it is able to offer a greater level of support and challenge for school leaders.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks are made to ensure that staff have suitable skills and experience. School leaders ensure that the safety of the school site is a high priority. Regular checks are made on visitors, and staff have a good awareness of how to recognise or report any concerns they have about the welfare of pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Work seen during the inspection shows that lessons typically include activities that challenge pupils to learn. Teaching assistants are carefully involved in planning and make a strong contribution to learning. They often spot when pupils are struggling and provide additional support.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. School leaders have ensured that staff have improved their understanding of mathematics and their confidence in teaching important skills. Staff have benefited from additional training and support. The school has also recruited new staff with specific skills and interests in the teaching of mathematics. This has resulted in pupils making much better progress.
- The teaching of reading has been consistently strong over time. Pupils read a wide range of texts and the majority have developed good strategies for sounding out words. Some younger pupils, however, are still not secure enough in this aspect of their learning because the different approaches used to teach phonics, especially in Years 1 and 2, do not always give them secure skills. In a few cases, they also do not think enough about the meaning of a word, and how they can work this out from the rest of a sentence.
- Teachers often use effective systems to check on pupils' learning. They use this information to check understanding and go over things that are not clear enough. Work is marked regularly and provides pupils with good information about how they can improve.
- Adults and pupils understand the systems for managing behaviour well. These are used with a high level of consistency. This means that poor behaviour is rare, and hardly ever disrupts learning.
- Parents receive a good range of information about how well pupils are doing. This system has been introduced relatively recently. This means that a few parents are still adjusting to this change and are not confident enough yet about what it is telling them.
- The school has identified that the teaching of writing has not improved as much as the teaching of mathematics, and has made this a priority. Staff have started to identify ways that they can encourage pupils to write longer pieces, in a range of styles and across different subjects. There is also an increasing focus on the accuracy of the spelling and punctuation used. There is more to do to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- School leaders aim to work according to the principle of encouraging pupils to 'live, learn, love'. The school provides the pupils with a warm, calm and welcoming atmosphere. Pupils say that they feel happy and confident in lessons and when moving around the school. The large majority of parents recognise, and welcome, this aspect of the school's provision.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying or derogatory language used. Pupils spoken to say that they feel confident that adults would help to sort out any problems they might have. They also feel that any problems they might encounter would be rare.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to take responsibility across many aspects of the school. The school council meets regularly, and makes a good contribution to monitoring and developing the life of the school. Older pupils support younger pupils during lunch- and breaktimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils expect to behave well in lessons. They listen to each other with patience and consideration. They are often willing to make a contribution in lessons, by giving answers to questions or discussing topics with other pupils.
- Pupils take care over their uniform and appearance. They ensure that they have the right equipment. They work in a cooperative way to ensure they get the best out of their learning.
- The attendance of pupils is above average. The school has good systems in place to check on non-attendance. Parents understand the strong message about the importance of being in school, in order to learn.

- On a few occasions, some pupils do not try as hard as they might, especially when they encounter something that is difficult. On these occasions, they will not persist as much as they could, and will sit quietly until the next lesson or a change of activity. Teachers could do more to create a culture where pupils are willing to try as hard as they can, even when something is challenging.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils achieved broadly average results in the 2015 national tests for pupils aged 11. Outcomes fell overall compared with the previous year because mathematics results were weaker.
- Improving mathematics has been a key priority for school leaders. The school's systems to check on progress, and the work seen during the inspection, show that pupils are now doing much better.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception Year. Outcomes in national checks on phonics at the end of Year 1 have been broadly average. The current teaching of phonics is secure, although a lack of consistency is resulting in a few pupils not making as much progress as they might. This means that the writing of some of the younger pupils is also not as secure as it could be.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. They benefit from work that challenges them and they receive a good level of support. The outcomes for this group have not been as strong in mathematics, but are now improving.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability are making good progress. They receive a good level of support in lessons. Teaching assistants are very aware of their needs and provide help and encouragement when needed.
- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects. They are doing well in their understanding of religious education. They often have the chance to make links between ideas by working on topics that include history, geography and science. The opportunities to be involved in artistic and sporting activities are strong, and many participate in extra clubs and events.
- Pupils are developing secure skills in reading and mathematics. The improvement of writing skills is a school priority and evidence in books shows that there has been improvement this year. Older pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not always made as much progress as they should. This has been a school priority and additional sessions before and after the school day have been provided. Current information about the progress of this group, as well as work seen during the inspection, shows that many, but not all, are starting to do better. This is especially the case in mathematics where previously, too many underachieved. The systems for checking on the progress of these pupils still need some further refinement in order to make sure that pupils all achieve as well as they can.

Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a strong start in the Reception Year.
- Arrangements to keep children safe are well planned and organised. The children quickly learn how to behave in a way that is expected of them. They are able to take turns, listen to each other and are starting to develop their skills in cooperation.
- The school provides a good range of resources to support learning. Adults organise well-planned sessions that develop the children's skills and confidence well. Carefully managed activities enable children to explore ideas on their own through indoor and outdoor play.
- Teachers and other staff regularly check on how well children are learning. This information is used effectively to plan follow-up activities. Information is recorded thoroughly, in a range of appropriate ways.
- Parents have good opportunities to see what their children are doing. They say that they are made to feel welcome and are able to make comments about their child's learning and development. Parents feel that their children settle into the Reception Year well.
- Children are prepared well for their next stage of learning in Year 1. They are able to work together well and are developing a secure understanding of important literacy and numeracy skills.
- The leadership of the early years foundation stage is good. Activities are planned well, priorities are clear and relationships are warm and positive. Parents feel confident about the provision.

School details

Unique reference number	138294
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10011755

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Fay
Headteacher	Lisa Atkins
Telephone number	01509 212204
Website	www.sacredheart.leics.sch.uk
Email address	office.school@sacredheart.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority, is below average. These pupils are referred to in this report as disadvantaged.
- Most pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also below average, although it has recently increased.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is also below average.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2014. The deputy headteacher is also relatively new in post.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has received additional support from the South Nottingham Catholic Teaching School Alliance and the Loughborough Learning Alliance. A national leader of education has also provided additional support.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons. One of these was seen jointly with the headteacher.
- A range of meetings were held with staff and pupils. They included the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff with responsibility for subjects or aspects of the school's work. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and attended part of a school council meeting. A meeting was held with the chair of the governing body and three other governors, as well as two directors of the academy trust.
- Informal discussions were held with parents before and after school.
- The inspectors took account of the 59 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 39 pupil questionnaires and 10 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a wide range of documentation. These include checks on performance, analysis of pupils' progress, records of behaviour, information on pupils' attendance, school improvement plans, records of classroom observations, the management of staff performance, safeguarding arrangements, and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspectors also looked at several examples of pupils' work, attended an assembly and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

David Bray, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Philip Unsworth

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. 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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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, further education and skills, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2016

