

Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Benfleet

Kents Hill Road, South Benfleet, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5PX

Inspection dates

22–23 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of turbulence and is no longer good. Currently, new staff are ensuring an improving quality in the provision.
- Governors do not hold school leaders to account well enough for the spending of pupil premium money. They do not analyse and check the impact of this funding on the progress that disadvantaged pupils make.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not good enough. Leaders' arrangements for ensuring the progress of these pupils are not sharp and swift enough.
- Leaders and governors have an overgenerous view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Improvement planning is not sharply focused on the progress that groups of pupils make.
- A significant minority of parents have lost confidence in some senior leaders to deal with their concerns well.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics is variable. It is not good enough in lower key stage 2.
- Teachers, in some classes, do not adapt learning so that pupils make progress quickly enough. Some pupils in these classes have to listen to explanations that are either too easy or too hard.
- Teachers in key stage 2 do not consistently plan learning that matches pupils' needs and interests. As a result, some boys do not engage as well as they could in their learning and their progress slows.
- Adults do not routinely insist on pupils using correct spelling and grammar in their work. Too frequently, pupils' mistakes go unchecked.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are happy and safe at school. They are proud of their school. It is a welcoming place in which to learn.
- Children start the early years well. They are provided with a good foundation to school life and make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils benefit from high-quality music and physical education provision.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Younger pupils learn to read well.
- The school provides a strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in key stage 1 is strong. New teachers have provided vibrant and exciting classrooms in which to learn.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that school improvement plans and actions focus on the progress that pupils make
 - ensuring that governors monitor closely the impact of pupil premium funding to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that the special educational needs coordinator is given the necessary support and resources to develop the existing practice and provision to improve the progress that these pupils make
 - improving communication with parents so that more regain confidence in the quality and consistency of leadership.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - adapting plans and providing suitable work that stretches the most able pupils and supports the lower attaining pupils
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics in key stage 2 improves – insisting on the highest quality of spelling and grammar in pupils' work.
- Improve outcomes for pupils, by:
 - providing precise support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities based on their needs
 - accelerating the progress of all pupils in mathematics in lower key stage 2, especially those who are disadvantaged.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of turbulence. The impact of staff turnover, together with a long period of absence of the headteacher, has resulted in considerable disruption for staff and pupils. Consequently, by Year 6 pupils have considerable ground to make up compared with their national peers. In 2016, the most able pupils did not make as much progress from their higher starting points in reading and mathematics as other pupils nationally at the end of key stage 2.
- Self-evaluation is not robust enough. Although school leaders are supported to identify strengths and weaknesses by the local authority, they currently do not set precise and measureable targets to rectify areas of weakness and increase pupils' progress. These imprecise targets are not communicated well enough to the school community, or reviewed regularly enough, which results in a less than systematic approach to school improvement.
- Leadership for the provision of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities requires improvement. Staff who work with these pupils care for their well-being; however, there is little specific training to enable these staff to break down the learning well enough so that pupils make better progress when in class. The special educational needs coordinator does not monitor or track the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with enough rigour.
- Parents have mixed views about the quality of provision for their children. Most parents consider that their children are happy and looked after during the school day. However, a significant minority of parents who responded to the online Parent View free text service or spoke to inspectors shared concerns about how well the school is led and managed and the frequent changes of staff. Inspectors agree that leaders and governors have not communicated well enough with parents so that more of them can have full confidence in the provision their children receive and the leadership of the school.
- There have been a number of changes to the leadership team since the previous inspection and some leaders are new to their role. For example, the deputy headteacher is carrying out a sterling job in regularly reviewing the progress that pupils make. She has set targets that demonstrate high expectations for pupils' achievement for this academic year. Many other middle and subject leaders are new to their role. Even though these leaders have action plans, there is currently little impact from their work.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that the school is a welcoming and inclusive place in which to learn. Pupils know right from wrong and respond to adults well. They show great tolerance to each other and ensure that pupils who find learning more challenging or pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are included equally well and have full access to the curriculum.

- Pupils are taught about other religions as well as the values and ethos of the Catholic faith. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are provided for through regular assemblies and modelled by staff. Pupils are given opportunities to pray throughout the day and the school's Catholic ethos is clearly evident.
- The school's curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities across the national curriculum. Music is an important aspect of the school curriculum. The school choir is particularly accomplished. Displays around the school demonstrate a wide range of pupils' skills. For example there are many displays showing detailed art work, and also effective poems written in different languages. Pupils also enjoy additional visits to enhance their experience and bring topics to life.
- Leaders ensure that the provision for sport and use of the sports premium is effective. The funds are used well through employing additional staff through using the national apprenticeship scheme. Pupils have a good quantity and range of extra-curricular activities such as archery, netball and football.
- Pupils are given plentiful opportunities to learn about fundamental British values. For example, they learn about democracy through the voting of older pupils onto the school council. The pupils spoken to during the inspection demonstrated a tolerance of others who are different to themselves, and a respect of each other's views and opinions.
- The local authority held concerns about the school and has placed an improvement board to work alongside the governing body to hasten the pace of improvement. Local authority early years specialists have worked with staff to successfully enhance the provision outside, which was an area for improvement in the previous inspection report.

Governance of the school

- Some governors do not clearly know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the school's assessment information and what it tells them. As a result, their understanding of how well the school is doing is over reliant on the information they are given by school leaders.
- Governors are provided with a headteacher's report at meetings. Minutes of meetings show that governors ask detailed questions, but are too easily satisfied with answers provided from the headteacher. Minutes show that governors are not focusing well enough on holding the headteacher to account for the progress that pupils make.
- While governors ensure many of their statutory duties well, particularly in the area of finance, they do not hold leaders to account with enough rigour for the impact of the pupil premium funding on the progress that disadvantaged pupils make. Equally, they do not ensure that the school website consistently complies with statutory requirements.
- The local authority has very recently appointed a highly experienced chair of the

governing body to attend meetings and model the practice expected of governing bodies in schools. The governors welcome this additional strength and support. They are dedicated and keen that the school continues to improve and offers pupils a good standard of education.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders carry out appropriate checks when recruiting new staff and keep records in a satisfactory order. Leaders and the newly appointed chair of the governing body are appropriately trained to recruit staff safely.
- Following a safeguarding audit from the local authority, school leaders have reviewed and successfully amended some of their practices. Staff are well trained and know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. School information shows that staff know how to raise concerns in an appropriate way. Staff have received training on the 'Prevent' duty and understand their responsibilities.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and most parents agree. Pupils are taught about issues of bullying and older pupils can confidently explain about staying safe online. Pupils speak maturely when they share their views regarding the subject of bullying. They are confident that staff will deal with any issues, should they arise.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies across the school. The frequent changes of staff mean that a large proportion of teaching staff were new at the beginning of the academic year. Nevertheless, these new teachers have brought energy and effective skills and abilities to the school. Much of the effective teaching over this academic year can be seen in their classes.
- In mathematics, the most able pupils are held back by being asked to complete tasks that are too easy for them or that do not extend their learning quickly enough. For example, in one class in key stage 2 some most-able mathematicians told the inspector that they learned how to convert imperial to metric measurements at home with their parents as part of homework. These most-able pupils were still required to complete similar calculations in class, without opportunity to use, deepen and apply their skills further or in different ways.
- In mathematics, pupils' books show that teachers are inconsistent in providing suitable work and that extends or offers additional support if a pupil has misunderstood. Consequently, groups of pupils are making variable progress in this subject. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made much less progress in mathematics than other pupils nationally from the same starting points.
- Adults do not routinely remind pupils about using precise spelling and correct grammar when they are writing. Consequently, pupils continue to make the same mistakes in their work. Boys, in particular, in 2016 did not make as much progress in grammar, punctuation and spelling as other pupils nationally.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are often supported by additional adults in the classroom. However, evidence found in pupils' books shows that these pupils are expected to complete the same work as others when in class. As a result, pupils are over reliant on the adult to instruct them. Some pupils who have challenging behavioural needs are not provided with strategies to help manage their frustrations when they cannot achieve the expectations set.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and the majority explain the learning well to pupils. For example, in one highly effective physical education lesson for younger pupils, due to the precise explanations and modelling from the teacher, most pupils were enjoying learning and practising forward rolls safely and successfully.
- The impact of learning support assistants is mixed. Where they work with individuals they are often effective. However, teachers do not deploy these staff well enough to impact on the learning of individuals and groups throughout the lesson. Too often, adults focus on keeping pupils quiet rather than learning.
- Displays around the school and in classrooms celebrate the wealth of learning experiences provided. Many classrooms, particularly in key stage 1, are vibrant with useful displays and prompts to help pupils check information, if they need additional support when working.
- Younger pupils use their phonic skills well to help them develop their reading skills. Pupils who read to inspectors did so confidently, answering questions about their reading which demonstrated their understanding. Older pupils maturely expressed their likes and dislikes of different genres with respect for each other's viewpoint.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well cared for and looked after. Adults are very caring for pupils who have additional medical needs. They ensure that these pupils' needs are considered in each activity throughout the school day. In assemblies, adults provide pupils who have hearing difficulties with additional and effective signing support. This highly effective provision ensures that all pupils can access the learning during this time. Pupils are particularly proud of their 'signing singing club'.
- Adults ensure that pupils receive instruction about keeping safe when using the internet. Notes and posters are evident in the computer room and act as constant reminders. Pupils were clear that if bullying were to occur then adults would deal with it effectively.
- Pupils are proud of their school and want to achieve well. The older pupils in Year 6 know the value of education and work hard to make sure that they are well prepared for secondary school. School assessment information shows that pupils make most progress in Year 6 where they start to catch up. Most of these pupils are very focused on achieving as well as they can.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Although pupils want to learn, there is low-level disruption in some classes. This is because pupils often complete the same work irrespective of their skills and abilities. Consequently, some pupils are bored while others are frustrated that they cannot complete the work and give up. Pupils generally make the best of the lessons that are provided and wait patiently and respectfully for additional activities or the next lesson.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are boisterous occasions. Although adults provide a range of indoor activities for pupils, on the playground there is a lack of activities to occupy pupils. Pupils play well together and devise many running and social games. However, this results in a high number of minor accidents each day.
- Pupils are polite, well-mannered and very courteous to adults, especially visitors. They are articulate and understand the school routines exceptionally well.
- Attendance is in line with current national averages overall. However, in 2016 certain groups of pupils such as disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities had high levels of absence. Although the school monitors attendance, a check of the school's registers for this academic year indicates that this has not changed.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The majority of pupils enter Holy Family Catholic Primary School with individual skills and abilities that are broadly age related. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who left key stage 2 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with national averages. The progress that pupils make across key stage 2 varies and pupils have to make accelerated progress in Year 6 to catch up. In-school assessment information shows that this is the case again this academic year.
- The progress that pupils make is tracked carefully by the deputy headteacher. This academic year, improved pupil targets have been set to ensure that the inconsistencies in the progress that pupils make in key stage 2 are addressed.
- In 2016, the most able pupils at the end of key stage 2 did not make as much progress as others nationally with similar starting points in reading and writing. Pupils' books from this academic year show that the current Year 6 most-able pupils are making strong progress in writing.
- Older pupils currently on roll know that they have gaps in their mathematical understanding. Some most-able pupils told an inspector, 'We think are about a year behind and have covered fractions a number of times with lots of teachers, but other areas of mathematics we have not covered at all.'
- From the same starting points, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is lower than others nationally. In 2016, although the numbers were small, disadvantaged pupils left Year 6 behind others nationally in grammar, punctuation and spelling,

science and mathematics.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities did not make as much progress as others nationally from similar starting points in reading, writing or mathematics. A small number of boys still require considerable levels of encouragement to make better progress in writing.
- Achievement at key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 was strong. The proportion of pupils who reached the current national standard was at least in line with that of other pupils nationally. Most pupils made at least expected progress with some making better progress since leaving the Reception class. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that pupils continue to make strong individual progress in key stage 1.
- Pupils acquire their early reading skills well. The proportion of pupils who reached the required standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 was in line with national averages. However, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well. They did not catch up in Year 2.
- In 2016, by the end of key stage 2, pupils left the school achieving below average in science. They did not make good progress in their learning in this subject. At key stage 1, pupils achieved above the expected standard in science.

Early years provision

Good

- This is the first year where school leaders are responsible for the management of the Nursery as well as the Reception class. The vast majority of children started Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities that are in line with their age. Over the last three years the proportion of children who have a good level of development has risen year on year, and is now above the national average.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection were complimentary about the way in which their children had settled into school life. Some children start in their Reception Year, but over a half of the children have already attended the Nursery provision. Children enjoy their learning in a safe and welcoming environment. They build impressive social skills as a result.
- In the previous inspection, school leaders were asked to improve the outdoor area for learning. With additional support from the local authority, this has been successfully achieved. Children are provided with a wide range of good-quality activities to develop their physical skills when outside.
- Adults are skilful in helping children extend their vocabulary and imagination. In one activity, some boys were explaining how they were building a jail so that they could keep the wolf inside, as part of their learning about 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Others were explaining about recycling and how it worked.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. Staff have worked well together through the transition to becoming one early years unit. As a result, this part of the school is a strength and children are given a strong start to their education.
- For the last few years, children's achievement in mathematics at the end of Reception has been lower than the other areas. In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development in number was below the

national average. Inspection evidence confirms that there were fewer opportunities for children to make better progress and develop their early numeracy skills.

School details

Unique reference number	115158
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10003195

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Guy Blakesley
Headteacher	Peter O’Kane
Telephone number	01268 792231
Website	www.holyfamily.essex.sch.uk
Email address	admin@holyfamily.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 October 2011

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average Primary school.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the effectiveness of pupil premium and sports premium on the progress that pupils make, the rationale for rectifying the barriers that disadvantaged pupils have at this school and a current policy for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, on its website.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is lower than that found nationally.
- Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average and those who have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. This included observations of parts of lessons in all classes, (some seen with the headteacher and deputy headteacher), taught by class teachers and teaching assistants.
- Inspectors examined pupils' written work across a wide range of subjects, looked at examples of work on display and investigated the school's latest information about teaching and pupils' achievement in all subjects.
- Some pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read to inspectors and talked to them about their books. Inspectors observed the teaching of reading in small groups and the teaching of phonics.
- Meetings were held with pupils, key leaders and some representatives of the governing body. A phone call was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including plans for future improvement and the school's evaluation of its own performance.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding of pupils and arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were examined. Arrangements for e-safety (keeping children safe online when using electronic media) were explored. Case studies of vulnerable pupils were undertaken.
- The views of 62 parents, who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), were considered, including the responses from the free text service. Inspectors also collected and analysed parental views at the start of the school day.
- The responses from 29 staff questionnaires were analysed.

Inspection team

Kim Hall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sharon Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Patricia MacLachlan	Ofsted Inspector

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