

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Highfield Road, Hemsworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF9 4LJ

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The regular and ineffective use of temporary staff has led to the decline in pupils' progress at key stage 2.
- Weak leadership and management of teaching and learning have led to inconsistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum. Leaders' performance management of staff has been weak.
- Leaders have not provided staff with sufficient direction and support for teaching reading, writing, mathematics, spelling and handwriting. Teachers do not give pupils sufficient guidance and examples to help them succeed.
- The progress made by pupils at the end of key stage 2 has declined. In 2017, Year 6 pupils made inadequate progress in mathematics and writing. The progress made by current pupils in key stage 2 is inadequate.
- Leaders and teachers do not make effective use of assessment information to plan teaching and review pupils' progress. As a result, some pupils fall behind, pupils have gaps in their knowledge, work does not accurately match pupils' needs, and work is often too easy for the most able.
- The school lacks sufficient capacity to bring about rapid improvement due to the absence of senior leaders, the weakness of middle leadership and unstable staffing.
- The academy trust did not act quickly enough to deal with emerging concerns.

The school has the following strengths

- The academy trust acted effectively to appoint the interim consultant headteacher and the trust intervention board.
- The interim consultant headteacher's clear vision, strong drive and decisive action are starting to bring about necessary improvements.
- The trust intervention board brings expert governance for school leadership.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn.
- Children develop well in the early years.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the capacity of leadership and management to bring about improvement by:
 - recruiting a senior leader to ensure that improvements are not solely dependent on the interim consultant headteacher
 - securing the stability and quality of teaching in Year 6
 - ensuring that new middle leaders contribute to rapid improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and the progress and attainment of pupils at the end of key stage 2 by:
 - establishing consistent approaches to teaching the curriculum in reading, writing, mathematics, spelling and handwriting across the school
 - establishing a consistent approach to planning sequences of learning
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge and the precision with which they communicate what pupils should learn about the subject
 - improving the use of learning resources to support pupils' learning
 - establishing a common and consistent school policy for marking and feedback.
- Improve the use and impact of assessment by:
 - making effective use of assessment information to tackle gaps in pupils' knowledge
 - accurately matching tasks to pupils' learning needs
 - making sure that the most able pupils are set challenging tasks
 - intervening effectively to accelerate the progress of pupils who have fallen behind.
- Reduce persistent absence by limiting the frequency that parents take children on term-time holidays.
- In the early years, ensure that the development of boys at least matches the development of boys nationally by the end of Reception.

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

Inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because of the absence of senior leaders, the weakness and instability of middle leadership and the instability of staffing. These have led to weak teaching and poor outcomes at the end of key stage 2.
- Unstable staffing and the ineffective deployment and management of temporary staff have led to the decline in pupils' progress at key stage 2 in recent years. Following the resignation of three of the six teachers, there is now just one permanent class teacher, and staffing remains insecure. Year 6 pupils have made inadequate progress this term because they have had three different teachers. Some parents and carers rightly expressed concern about the effect of unstable staffing on their child's past and present progress.
- Senior leaders have not developed the middle leadership. Middle leaders have lacked the necessary direction, professional development and learning resources to bring about improvements in subjects or key stages. Middle leaders have not implemented action plans to improve English and mathematics at key stages 1 and 2. The two middle leaders have resigned and their replacements will not take up post until next term. There is no senior or middle leader to lead teaching and learning in key stage 2.
- Teachers lack professional development. Leaders have not provided them with adequate direction or support to improve teaching or to ensure that they have the subject knowledge to meet the demands of the new curriculum at key stage 2. Curriculum planning is weak and does not enable pupils to learn what they need to know as they move from one year to the next.
- The inspector recommends that the academy does not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- Assessment systems are weak and provide too little information about pupils' progress or the progress of pupil groups. Leaders and teachers do not have accurate information about the current progress of different pupil groups, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- There is no plan for the current pupil premium funding. Leaders have not reviewed the impact of the previous plan. Leaders did not review the impact of the previous physical education (PE) and sports funding plan. Leaders have drawn up the current PE and sports funding with clearly defined evidence of intended impact.
- At the beginning of this term, there was no school improvement plan in place. Previous years' performance management objectives for staff were vague and lacked measures of impact.
- Leaders have not regularly held meetings with staff to review pupils' progress. As a result, leaders and teachers have taken too little action to intervene and accelerate the progress of pupils falling behind, including the disadvantaged.
- The leadership of early years and of special educational needs (SEN) is effective. The special educational needs coordinator has an accurate assessment of individual needs and evaluates the impact of support well. Support staff use effective strategies to meet the range of needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, the use of

additional funding for SEN is effective.

- Assemblies promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and provide pupils with a statement to live by each week. This reinforces the school's strong sense of community and encourages pupils to embrace shared values for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about different religions and ways of life in the curriculum. However, they have limited opportunities for visits to develop first-hand knowledge of other cultures. Key stage 2 pupils have good opportunities to develop new interests and activities in after-school clubs, for example in sports, art and singing.
- The interim consultant headteacher provides clear direction and strong leadership. Following accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, she has taken swift and effective action to bring about immediate improvements. She has drawn up an initial school improvement plan that is demonstrating clear evidence of impact at the first termly milestone.
- The interim consultant headteacher has raised the expectations of staff and strengthened staff accountability. New performance management arrangements include measurable targets for teachers to improve the progress of different groups. She has clarified staff roles and responsibilities so that they know exactly what she expects of them. Performance management procedures identify explicitly the actions required by middle leaders to fulfil their responsibilities.
- The interim consultant headteacher's decisive actions have brought about rapid improvements to long-standing premises issues. She has had the heating repaired and has refurbished the library and computing room, bringing it back into use by pupils. She has improved classroom learning environments for pupils and created professional spaces for staff to work in.
- The interim consultant headteacher has identified a wide range of staff training needs, and plans are in place to meet them as staffing stabilises. She has brought in learning resources to strengthen the teaching of the curriculum and to provide a secure framework for ensuring that pupils learn what they need to know. Teachers' planning of teaching and the curriculum is beginning to receive support from staff at the interim consultant headteacher's partner school.
- The interim consultant headteacher accurately monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and learning. An appropriate schedule of meetings with class teachers to review the progress of pupils is about to commence.

Governance of the school

- The trust was slow to act on emerging concerns about leadership and management. The trust has not ensured that the interim consultant headteacher has a senior leader in school to help bring about necessary changes as quickly as possible. The trust has not ensured that the school has good-quality, stable teaching in Year 6 to overcome the decline in performance at the end of key stage 2.
- The trust acted effectively in response to the absence of the headteacher by appointing the interim consultant headteacher from a neighbouring trust school. The trust acted decisively to remove the governing body and to replace it with a trust intervention board (TIB). The TIB is composed of a highly committed team of leaders, teachers and governors from the partner school and board directors from the trust. They bring a

strong record of school improvement and an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are acting with strong moral purpose and have started to meet frequently to support improvements and review the impact of actions taken by the interim consultant headteacher.

- The local authority's school improvement adviser, commissioned by the trust, makes a valuable contribution to the planning and evaluation of school improvement. However, the instability of staffing limits the impact of the trust's lead practitioner for teaching and learning.
- Members of the TIB monitor safeguarding procedures regularly and ensure that training and policies are up to date.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff work together well to maintain a positive culture for safeguarding and they provide effective support for vulnerable pupils. Case files demonstrate that staff communicate and work effectively with pupils, parents and other agencies to follow up issues. Records provide an informative and appropriately organised account of safeguarding concerns and actions.
- The manager for safeguarding provides staff with regular safeguarding updates and emails questions to staff to check that they understand key safeguarding terms and procedures. The interim consultant headteacher clarified the safeguarding manager's role and responsibilities and acted diligently to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are secure and up to date. She has reorganised entry and exit procedures to improve traffic safety at the beginning and end of the day.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The lack of stability in staffing and the resultant weaknesses in teaching have led to a decline in key stage 2 outcomes.
- Regular use of temporary teachers has created discontinuity in pupils' learning. Pupils are rightly dissatisfied that they repeat work they have done before and miss out things they need to know. Some pupils in Year 6 are justifiably worried that the school is not preparing them well enough for the next stage of their education.
- Year 6 books show that temporary teachers frequently provide pupils with low-level tasks. Pupils have had limited opportunity to write for different purposes. There is little evidence that they are developing their use of grammatical structures and devices or extending their vocabulary.
- Teachers do not stretch the most able, and the challenge is not always sufficient for the middle ability, especially in mathematics. Work is often too easy, especially in Year 6.
- Teachers are not precise enough in communicating what pupils should achieve in a lesson and they do not provide enough examples and guidance to enable pupils to succeed. For example, in a lesson, the teacher asked the most able group to include conjunctions in their writing. However, by the end of the lesson few had done so.
- Teachers do not have a common approach to teaching spelling and handwriting. As a

result, the quality of spelling and handwriting varies across the school and contributes to low outcomes at the end of key stage 2.

- Some pupils correct their work and make minor improvements, but this is very variable across different classes. The lack of school policy results in an incoherent approach to giving pupils feedback on what and how to improve.
- Teachers do not regularly use assessment information to identify accurately what pupils need to do to improve, or to review the impact of their teaching.
- Some less able pupils have good opportunities to use concrete materials to develop their understanding in mathematics. Teaching assistants support pupils well. At key stage 2, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding and reasoning through practical activities.
- Teachers conduct basic skills sessions in mathematics energetically and pupils enjoy the challenge of working quickly to complete challenging tasks and consolidating their mathematical knowledge.
- The teaching of phonics is effective, especially in the early years.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The discontinuity of teaching staff affects the well-being of some pupils, especially those who have SEN and/or disabilities. This undermines the effectiveness of staff's work to promote pupils' welfare. Support staff provide important continuity of support for vulnerable pupils.
- Staff use their good knowledge of pupils to ensure that they are well cared for. Support staff provide effective additional support for the personal development and welfare needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Staff identify the needs of vulnerable pupils well and provide relevant support tailored to their needs.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that adults will listen well and deal with any concerns.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and talk knowledgeably about how to protect themselves online. Their recent safety week has provided them with useful information about a range of dangers. Pupils make a good contribution to school life by presenting assemblies about combatting bullying, water safety and the danger of fireworks.
- During the inspection, Year 2 performed a play and a dance with confident voices and movement to an appreciative audience of family members.
- Pupils on the school council take their responsibilities seriously. They contributed useful suggestions about how to extend the limited range of activities and resources for pupils to use at playtime.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and at break. They cooperate well with instructions and are orderly when lining up to go swimming or to assembly.
- Few pupils are involved in behaviour incidents and very few are repeat offenders. Staff deal effectively with the rare incidents of homophobic or racial insults.
- Pupils are responding well to the new behaviour management procedures.
- Pupils are cooperative, engage well and are keen to learn. On occasion, their attention wanders when teaching is insufficiently engaging, but they are rarely disruptive.
- In 2017, attendance was close to the 2016 national average. Attendance this term is at the same level.
- Persistent absence is above average due to parents taking children on term-time holidays. The interim consultant headteacher has sent out warnings that in future the school may fine parents for taking children out of school for holidays.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- In 2017, the progress made by pupils at the end of key stage 2 was in the lowest 5% nationally in mathematics and in the lowest 20% in writing. Only one third reached the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics combined, compared to nearly two thirds nationally. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils was weak. Rates of progress at key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have declined over the last three years.
- The previous inspection report asked the school to improve achievement in mathematics and writing. Mathematics and writing remain weaker than reading at key stage 2. Only half of the pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 were at age-related expectations in mathematics and writing at the end of last summer term. Few are working at a greater depth in these subjects.
- At present, Year 6 pupils are working at standards well below those expected for their age. The discontinuity in teaching and learning this term has slowed their academic progress, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities. English and mathematics books of current Year 6 pupils show that they have made inadequate progress this term.
- The great majority of Year 4 pupils were at expected standards for their age at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of the summer term, less than two thirds were at age-related expectations. This represents weak progress.
- Rates of progress have declined over the course of key stage 2 because of frequent discontinuity in teaching and learning over two to three years. In mathematics, this has created gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. One of the main weaknesses in the 2017 key stage 2 tests was pupils' lack of knowledge of fractions, some of which they should have learned in earlier years.
- The most able pupils make insufficient progress at key stage 2. Work is often too easy.
- At key stage 1, in 2017, outcomes were in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at both the expected standard and at greater depth. The local authority verified the accuracy of assessment. The outcomes represent average or

better progress from pupils' starting points at the end of the early years. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils was close to the progress made by all pupils nationally. However, current learning in lessons and in books does not demonstrate consistently secure progress at key stage 1.

- The proportion reaching the required standard in phonics in Year 1 has been above the national average for the last three years.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has maintained the good quality of provision since the previous inspection. Staffing in the early years has remained stable, unlike the rest of the school.
- Children enter Reception at levels of development that are below what is typical for their age. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased in recent years and was average in 2016 and 2017. This represents good progress overall. The majority of children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Staff work effectively to develop children's literacy and mathematical skills. The leader guides other adults well in how pupils should reach the next steps in their literacy and mathematical development. Children develop their literacy and mathematical skills well through enjoyable and engaging activities with an adult and in independent play.
- Adults' strong and nurturing relationships encourage interaction and engage children well in small-group activity. Teachers enable children to apply their phonic knowledge to develop their emerging skills in writing. Staff record these developments accurately.
- The early years leader has rightly prioritised children's physical development because it is below what is typical when children enter Reception. Children get involved in a good range of activities to improve their manipulative skills, for example using tongs to pick up dice in a mathematical game and using scissors to cut along straight lines they have drawn themselves. This contributes to the well-planned set of activities to develop children's pen grip and writing skills.
- The high adult–staff ratio ensures that children have good opportunities to interact with adults in play and in formal group sessions.
- The early years leader has an accurate picture of the priorities for children's development as a result of her well-informed assessment of children's needs. She uses the information sent by nursery providers effectively to inform the assessment of children as they arrive at Sacred Heart. Assessment on entry generally matches the assessments from feeder nursery schools, although the match is less close with independent and private providers. Most parents contribute to the assessment of their children each term.
- The early years leader has recently strengthened her action plan by including measures of children's development and milestones for improvement.
- The curriculum engages children well and helps them to progress well towards the early learning goals. Half-termly themes provide a relevant context and purpose for learning.
- The leader works effectively with the SEN coordinator and makes sure that adults

support children who have SEN and/or disabilities well.

- Safeguarding procedures are effective and fully meet statutory requirements. Staff know how to communicate any safeguarding concerns and they make daily checks to ensure that the premises are safe.
- School leaders did not include the early years in the planning of additional pupil premium funding for disadvantaged children. Nevertheless, in 2017, targeted adult support enabled disadvantaged children to catch up well from their starting points, although only half reached a good level of development.
- Boys' development has improved in recent years but lags behind girls' development. The proportion of boys reaching a good level of development did not reach the national average for boys in 2016. A few boys occasionally lose direction in their play, and adults do not always refocus them quickly.
- The outdoor environment is underdeveloped. For example, children have a chalk track for wheeled toys that staff have to redraw each day. New plans are in place to develop the learning environment.

School details

Unique reference number	138941
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10031100

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Steve Dent
Headteacher	John Knowles
Interim consultant headteacher	Lesley Darren
Telephone number	01977 625354
Website	www.sacredheart.bkcat.co.uk
Email address	admin@sacredheart.bkcat.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The school is a member of the Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust, which is one of five academy trusts within the Diocese of Leeds.
- The trust disbanded the governing body in September 2017 and replaced it with a trust intervention board.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are both currently absent from school. In September 2017, the trust appointed the interim consultant headteacher from a neighbouring trust school. She has been in post for 10 weeks. She also has a

temporary role leading on primary standards across the trust.

- Three of the six teachers, including both middle leaders, resigned this term. The school has one permanent class teacher and a part-time coordinator of SEN. The school has appointed two teachers to take up middle leadership roles for early years and key stage 1 in the spring term.
- The trust has deployed a teaching and learning lead practitioner to the school during this term.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the pupil premium and the PE sport premium on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the pupil premium and the PE sport premium.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in lessons and discussed samples of pupils' work jointly with the interim consultant headteacher. He also observed an assembly.
- The inspector talked to pupils about their learning and their experiences at school.
- Discussions were held with the following: the interim consultant headteacher, the deputy director of the Diocese of Leeds, members of the trust intervention board, the local authority school improvement adviser commissioned by the trust, middle leaders, a group of pupils and a number of parents picking their children up from school.
- The inspector checked the school website and evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, school plans, performance management documents, information about pupils' progress, and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding records.
- The inspection took account of 13 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and five written responses. Inspectors also took account of 19 responses from staff and 74 from pupils to the Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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