

Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Hall Lane, Cronton, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 5DW

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2018

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leadership team has been successful in ensuring that the quality of education at the school has been good during a period of significant change to the staff team.
- Pupils enjoy school and are rarely late. Attendance has been above the national average for the past two years and few pupils are persistently absent.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that their classrooms are vibrant and purposeful.
- Strong and effective teaching ensures that phonics is taught well. The vast majority of pupils pass the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.
- The overall quality of teaching in the early years is good. However, some children do not learn well enough during periods in the day when they are free to choose from the activities provided.
- The curriculum is broad and varied; it promotes personal development effectively. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities at the school, particularly in sport.
- Leaders regularly review the support provided to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils make strong progress because of the tailored support that they receive.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils work hard in lessons and develop very good attitudes to learning.
- Safeguarding systems are thorough and effective. All members of staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Some lower- and middle-ability pupils do not make enough progress in their reading across key stage 2. At times, teachers do not use assessment well enough to identify those who are falling behind.
- Mathematics teaching is improving. Pupils across the school are increasingly adept at making accurate calculations. Teachers provide them with regular opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and skills to investigate and solve problems.
- Governors are knowledgeable and committed to the school. They provide good levels of challenge to school leaders in relation to standards and pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length or for different purposes. This limits the progress that some pupils make, particularly in key stage 2.
- The school's core values are reflected in the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. They are also promoted around the school in attractive and informative displays.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress that lower- and middle-ability pupils make in reading across key stage 2 by ensuring that teachers:
 - use assessment more effectively to identify when and why pupils are falling behind
 - provide effective support and guidance for the pupils who struggle with their reading.
- Improve progress in writing by ensuring that pupils are given more opportunities to write at length and for different purposes and audiences.
- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years by ensuring that staff provide more demanding activities during periods in the day when children are free to choose.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school is no longer outstanding and is now good. Although levels of attainment remain above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, some pupils do not make the progress they are capable of, particularly across key stage 2. School leaders, including governors, have developed detailed plans to improve teaching, learning and assessment.
- There have been significant staffing changes in key stage 2 over the past three years. The new teachers have settled in well and say that they are receiving good levels of support from school leaders. The new teachers are making a good contribution to the school.
- Leaders have had some success in securing improvements to teaching and learning. For example, the quality of work in pupils' mathematics books shows signs that current pupils are making good progress in this subject. Teachers set challenging work and pupils apply themselves well to their learning.
- Subject leaders make regular checks on the quality of work in their areas and are fully aware of the school's priorities. They receive regular opportunities to attend training and also provide good support for staff in their areas of specialism.
- Leaders carry out regular checks on the quality and impact of teaching on pupils' progress. They provide effective feedback to teachers to help them to improve. Leaders also use monitoring information effectively to identify common areas that need to be addressed.
- Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum which provides them with opportunities to study a broad range of subjects. Their learning is supported by regular trips out of school. Older pupils have the opportunity to participate in residential visits. The curriculum helps to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through carefully planned lessons and whole-school assemblies. The school promotes British values well. Staff encourage pupils to value and celebrate diversity. Pupils learn about democracy and the rule of law. They study major world religions and develop a good knowledge of different cultures that exist both within their immediate environment and further afield.
- Funding for pupils with SEND is used effectively to provide help and support. The SEN leader closely monitors the impact of the support provided, making adjustments where necessary. As a result, the needs of these pupils are met, and they make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders make good use of the primary school PE and sport funding. They have appointed sports coaches, who work alongside teachers in PE lessons. The coaches also organise sporting activities at lunchtimes for pupils, as well as a range of extra-curricular clubs and sporting competitions.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and well organised. Governors bring a good range of knowledge and skills to their roles. They provide good levels of challenge and support to school leaders around the issues facing the school.
- Governors are ambitious for the school. They visit regularly to gain an accurate understanding of pupils' experiences of school and how well pupils are learning. Governors also help to ensure that agreed policies and procedures are being implemented.
- They regularly challenge the headteacher on the standards being achieved. Governors have acted with determination to secure improvements after the recent decline in pupils' progress across key stage 2.
- Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding and the PE and sport premium funding are spent effectively. They also help to ensure that the school's safeguarding policies comply with current requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff have had training on safeguarding, at a level appropriate to their role. Staff are fully aware of what they need to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's safety or welfare.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They said that they have confidence in staff to address any concerns that they might have.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, stated that their children feel safe, happy and well looked after at school. The parents who spoke to inspectors during this inspection were confident that the school does all that it can to ensure that pupils are safe and secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have great enthusiasm for the subjects they teach. They have good subject knowledge and use questioning skilfully to challenge pupils and to encourage them to think more deeply. Teachers often structure their lessons so that pupils are given time to discuss their learning and share their ideas with their classmates.
- Teachers regularly reinforce their high expectations regarding pupils' conduct in class. Teachers provide clear guidance regarding the tasks that they set. As a result, pupils apply themselves well during lessons and work with positive attitudes to their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together successfully to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of how phonics works. By the end of key stage 1, almost all children are adept at using phonics to work out unfamiliar words. The majority of pupils develop into successful readers and are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they move into Year 3.

- There has been a recent focus on improving the teaching of reading. The Year 6 pupils who met with one of the inspectors had an excellent knowledge of children’s literature; they read widely and often. However, not enough is being done to support some pupils in key stage 2 who begin to fall behind in their reading. As a result, they do not make strong progress and catch up with their peers.
- The teaching of writing is improving. Inspectors saw some high-quality written work in key stage 1; current pupils are making strong progress. However, in key stage 2, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length or for different purposes in English or in subjects across the curriculum. Many pupils achieved high standards at the end of key stage 2 in writing, but some pupils are capable of making even better progress.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise their calculation skills. They also challenge pupils to apply their knowledge and skills to investigate and solve problems. The work seen in pupils’ books shows that current pupils are making good progress.
- Teaching in the wider curriculum is effective. Inspectors saw evidence of some good-quality work in science, history and geography. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially in sport.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are regularly involved in fundraising, with each class supporting a specific good cause each year. The school has also developed links with local food banks and regularly take contributions to support those in need. Pupils develop a good understanding of the challenges facing those living in the developing world; for example, they have recently supported a water sanitation project.
- Pupils are encouraged to think about different employment options. The school has close links with a major bank and pupils take part in an annual visit to a local car plant. During this inspection, a parent also led an assembly on what it means to be a scientist.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of issues relating to equality. They study issues surrounding gender, such as the suffragette movement. They also participate in ‘Black History Month’ events. Pupils regularly show respect for each other’s ideas and views.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school encourages pupils’ good behaviour through its ‘Good to be Green’ approach. This celebrates and rewards those pupils who behave well and show consideration towards others.
- Pupils behave well in class and during breaktimes and dinner times. They listen carefully to their teachers, work well with each other and try their best.

- Pupils are respectful towards each other and the adults who teach them. They were a pleasure to talk to during this inspection.
- Pupils enjoy school and rarely miss a day. Few pupils are persistently absent and attendance is above the national average.
- Although some parents expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying on Parent View, inspectors saw only good behaviour during this inspection. Pupils from Year 6 who met with one of the inspectors said that behaviour was usually good. They also said that bullying was extremely rare and that members of staff resolve any behaviour issues quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2, was well above the national average between 2016 and 2018. The proportion attaining the higher standard was also above average. However, the progress that pupils made from their high starting points at the end of key stage 1 was not consistently strong during this period.
- Almost all pupils have passed the Year 1 phonics screening test over the past three years. Secure knowledge of phonics helps pupils to develop into competent readers by the end of key stage 1. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was well above the national average in 2018. The proportion judged to be working at greater depth was just above average.
- Standards in reading at the end of key stage 2 were broadly average in 2018. However, this did not represent good progress for some pupils, predominantly those of middle or lower ability. School leaders have raised the profile of reading across the school.
- Current pupils are making good progress in mathematics. The work that inspectors saw in books showed that teachers' expectations are high and that pupils receive good levels of challenge in this subject. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their calculation skills. Pupils' work also showed that they are developing their problem-solving skills well.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing at the end of key stage 2 was above the national average in 2018. Around one third of pupils were judged to be working at greater depth, which was well above the national average. The work that inspectors saw in pupils' books during this inspection was of good quality. However, inspectors saw few examples of pupils writing at length or for different purposes and audiences. This was limiting the progress that some pupils were making in their writing development.
- Pupils learn well in subjects across the wider curriculum. Inspectors saw some high-quality science work. Pupils also have good learning opportunities in geography, PE and art. The quality of this work is celebrated in many attractive displays around the school.
- Pupils with SEND generally make good progress from their various starting points. Leaders ensure that the additional funding that the school receives for these pupils is used effectively. Leaders make regular checks on pupils' progress to ensure that the

support that adults provide is having the desired impact.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are at least in line with those typically found. They make good progress. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development was above the national average in 2018. These children were well prepared for the next stage of their education when they started in Year 1.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of her role and provides good support for the early years team. She ensures that children's progress is tracked accurately and has worked successfully with staff to develop good relationships with parents.
- The teaching of phonics is a particular strength. Children learn the relationship between sounds and letters very effectively. They are able to use and apply this knowledge well, when reading or when involved in early mark-making.
- Parents value the opportunities that they have to contribute to the initial assessments that are made on children. Parents have regular opportunities to find out about how different aspects of their children's learning are taught, such as phonics. They also enjoy the regular 'Stay and Play' sessions. Parents told inspectors that they are kept well informed about the progress that their children are making in their learning.
- Teaching is generally strong and effective. Staff have good subject knowledge and use questioning well when working directly with children. Children listen well and enjoy the challenges that staff provide.
- The indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced. Children have a wide range of activities to engage with during periods when they are free to choose what they do. However, staff sometimes fail to ensure that there is sufficient challenge or purpose in these activities. As a result, for some children, their learning doesn't progress as well as it could during these parts of the school day.
- Children behave well and feel safe in the early years. They cooperate well with each other and with the staff who teach them. They are well looked after, and safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	104454
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10045793

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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Raymond
Headteacher	Janette Cook-Hannah
Telephone number	0151 424 3926
Website	www.holyfamilycronton.co.uk
Email address	janette.cook-hannah@knowsley.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 September 2011

Information about this school

- Holy Family is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups who attend the school is lower than average and only a small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is around the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan is around the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is considerably lower than the national average.
- There is one Reception class. Children attend full time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment in all classes. Some observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' written work in subjects across the curriculum.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plan, attendance information and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who is also the SEN leader. Inspectors also met with three members of staff to discuss subject leadership.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and a representative of the local authority. He also met with a representative from the Liverpool Archdiocese.
- Inspectors observed pupils' conduct during breaks and lunchtimes.
- One inspector met with groups of pupils to listen to them read and discuss behaviour and other aspects of school life. Inspectors also spoke with many other pupils informally.
- All three inspectors met with parents at the start of the second day of this inspection. They also took account of the 62 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mike Tonge	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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