

Sacred Heart Primary Catholic Voluntary Academy

Southcliffe Road, Carlton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG4 1EQ

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

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

- Standards declined following the previous inspection. However, new leaders have improved the quality of teaching and learning. Standards are now rising throughout the school and pupils' progress is improving.
- Leaders have improved the quality of the curriculum in English and mathematics.
- Leaders have provided appropriate training for teachers and teaching assistants. Leaders have established a consistent approach to teaching throughout the school.
- Leaders check regularly on the progress that pupils are making. They identify dips and respond to issues effectively.
- Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's performance and are ambitious to improve further.
- Pupils read with interest and enjoyment. They can describe in detail what they like about the book they are reading and have successful strategies to tackle the more difficult words.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Effective teaching enables pupils to gain early reading skills and use this knowledge when they read and write independently.
- Teachers provide pupils with exciting opportunities to write for a range of purposes. However, they do not insist on the same quality and accuracy of writing in all subjects.
- Teachers ensure pupils can apply their knowledge of mathematics to different problems. However, pupils do not always explain their solutions accurately using correct mathematical vocabulary.
- Pupils and parents praise the warm, family feel of the school. Leaders' concern for the well-being of their pupils is at the heart of the ethos of the school. Leaders ensure that the school is a safe place to be.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They enjoy the opportunities that they have to work with different groups of pupils. They describe with enthusiasm the difference that they make to the world around them.
- Children in the early years settle quickly into school life. Effective communication is established with parents and carers. Staff plan engaging activities which build on what the children already know. Children in early years get off to a flying start.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - pupils are able to deepen their mathematical thinking and explain their work precisely, using the correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology
 - pupils' work is presented consistently and to the same standard in all subjects
 - pupils apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar in all their written work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection there has been significant turbulence within the school, including changes to staffing, governance and senior leadership. During this time standards declined. Following her appointment, the new headteacher and her leadership team have raised expectations for all pupils. This is having a positive impact on improving standards. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve the school further.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff have the knowledge to deliver an exciting and challenging curriculum. Leaders have checked to see that this professional development has been beneficial. There is now a consistent approach to teaching and learning, and outcomes for pupils have steadily improved.
- Leaders have created a culture where staff are keen to learn from each other and from other schools. Leadership roles for different aspects of school life have been developed, including the appointment of subject leaders. Performance management is used effectively so that all staff can access high-quality training and are accountable for the progress that their pupils make.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is used effectively. They identify areas where pupils could make increased progress, and measure the impact of the action that they take. For example, a small writing group was established for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2. Through this teaching, pupils refined the quality of their writing. Pupils' confidence grew, and outcomes improved for this group of pupils.
- Leaders monitor the use of the primary physical education (PE) and sports premium. They check that it is raising levels of participation and engagement. Governors evaluate the quality of provision to ensure that it is good enough. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of competitive sports. They also attend sporting festivals, which provide opportunities for pupils to improve their skills.
- Leaders track the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have provided effective training for teaching assistants who work with pupils with SEND so that pupils' needs can be met skilfully. Leaders evaluate the impact of additional support to check that it is making a difference and that outcomes for pupils are improving. Parents speak highly of the way in which their views are included.
- The school's motto, 'What would Jesus do? Do what Jesus did!', encourages pupils to put into practice the values of the school. Pupils have a very clear understanding of fairness and equality. They say that the school is a welcoming family to pupils of all faiths and none. For some topics, pupils work in mixed-age house groups. For example, as part of the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum pupils work together to decide what charities to support. Pupils value each other's ideas and feel that they make a difference to the world around them.
- The school parliament helps pupils to understand the key principles of voting and

representation. Leaders listen to what the pupils say. Pupils describe how they have been able to share opinions about the kind of clubs that they have and the quality of school meals. They feel that they are helping to improve the school.

- Leaders have ensured that there are opportunities for pupils to learn about life in modern Britain. Pupils are tolerant of each other and welcome the opportunity to learn about a range of faiths. They can explain in detail about what they learned during first-hand experiences such as a visit to the synagogue. Pupils are inherently respectful and explain that they do not judge anyone on their appearance or difference, as 'all of us are human underneath'.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. Governors undertake a range of activities, including visiting the school to gain a greater understanding of how leaders have improved teaching and learning.
- Governors hold leaders to account rigorously. They are aspirational for pupils. They ask challenging questions to ensure that resources are being used effectively. Governors check the impact of the improvements made.
- Leaders in the multi-academy trust provide effective challenge and support for the school. Their evaluation of the school is accurate and has enabled leaders to refine their plans for how they will continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They explain how the school site keeps them safe and that there are always plenty of adults to help them during breaktimes and lunchtimes, if they need it. Staff understand what to do if they have any worries or concerns about a pupil. The school's survey of parental opinions showed that parents felt that their children were safe and well cared for by school staff.
- The school curriculum supports effective teaching about safeguarding. Pupils can explain how e-safety lessons teach them about how to stay safe online. They know not to disclose personal information on the internet. They understand that they should show any worrying messages to an adult.
- There are effective systems in place for ensuring that appropriate checks are made as staff are appointed. These are monitored by the governing body, which has a clear understanding of its responsibilities. Governors make decisions which prioritise the need to keep pupils safe at all times when they are on site. There are effective systems in place at the breakfast club and after-school club to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for during this time.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. Teaching is engaging and planned with precision so that pupils are building on what they already know. Pupils identify sounds well and quickly learn to blend them together to read and spell words. Teachers assess the pupils regularly so that they can check the progress that pupils are making. Regular checks also identify sounds that the pupils have not remembered. Swift intervention ensures that pupils then secure this knowledge. Pupils practise this by reading books which are well matched to the sounds that they already know.
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to infer meaning from pictures and short passages of text. Teachers' questioning deepens pupils' understanding, requiring them to give reasons for their answers. Teachers devise regular reading challenges to encourage pupils to persevere with longer texts. Older pupils can make recommendations to others about authors and genres that they might like. Younger pupils are keen to pursue more books written by a favourite author. Pupils read fluently and with great expression. They recognise when they do not understand a word, and use a range of strategies to deduce the meaning. They are eagerly anticipating the opening of the new library.
- Teachers plan a wide range of activities that encourage pupils to write with a sense of purpose across the curriculum. Younger pupils write vivid descriptions and newspaper reports describing the Great Fire of London. Older pupils can use their scientific knowledge in their writing, for example to describe how scientists worked out the cause of scurvy. However, the quality of presentation is inconsistent between subjects. Not all pupils consistently present their work in a neat and fluent style. Some pupils do not always apply their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar when they are writing.
- Teachers ensure that pupils gain quick recall of number facts. This helps pupils to calculate with increasing efficiency. Younger pupils develop a range of methods to add and subtract and older pupils use their knowledge of times tables to multiply larger numbers. Teachers provide problems so that pupils can apply these methods in real-life situations, such as using money or working out measurements. Teachers use assessment effectively so that the work builds on the mathematical skills that pupils have.
- Teachers are beginning to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical reasoning. For example, pupils used a number line to solve addition and subtraction facts within 50. Then pupils had to match a completed example to the number sentence that it represented. Pupils are becoming more confident in explaining their thinking, and this approach is becoming embedded throughout the school. However, there are occasions when the responses that pupils give are inaccurate or use mathematical language poorly. Teachers do not always insist that pupils' responses are precise.
- Teachers develop pupils' skills and knowledge in a range of subjects and encourage them to make connections between them. For example, pupils used their knowledge of the lifestyle of invaders and settlers to write a vivid account of a journey to Britain by Vikings. They can use their mathematical knowledge to draw graphs and tables to

record information that they have collected in science. Teachers challenge the most able pupils by providing additional questions to extend their thinking, for example through asking them what the impact would be on the human body if there were fewer white blood cells.

- Teachers challenge pupils to increase the control they have over their movements in gymnastics. Pupils rehearse sequences of movements. They have the chance to refine these under the teacher's guidance and using different pieces of apparatus. Pupils work constructively together and offer helpful suggestions about how they might improve their performance further.
- Teachers provide homework which supports learning in a variety of subjects. Pupils whom the inspector spoke with said that they enjoyed the different activities. The school's survey of parental opinions showed that parental support for homework had increased following workshops which explained how learning at home related to learning at school.

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 keen to take on positions of responsibility, such as becoming a school chaplain. They enjoy the opportunity to lead acts of worship independently.
- The school promotes the emotional health and well-being of its pupils. A trained member of staff offers support to pupils with identified needs. All pupils can access support in the designated quiet space, 'The Sanctuary', at lunchtime, if they feel they need someone to talk to.
- Pupils enjoy a variety of visits, including residential experiences which promote outdoor learning and team building. These visits give them time to face new challenges and work together better with others before they move onto secondary school.
- The curriculum promotes healthy eating and physical activity. Pupils enjoy very active break and lunchtimes and enjoy their daily run. They can explain how this is making them fitter.
- Pupils say that incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying, are rare. They have confidence that bullying would be dealt with effectively. The school's internal systems for recording poor behaviour demonstrate that there are few instances of persistent or targeted unkindness. The school's records show that, when they do occur, leaders take them seriously and check that they are properly resolved.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They are courteous and polite to visitors. Pupils are keen to help and support each other. Older pupils instinctively show

care and concern for younger pupils and help them to follow the school's expectations of behaviour.

- Routines in the classroom are well established and pupils begin work quickly. They listen attentively and show respect to the adults who work with them. They care for the classroom and the school environment.
- There is a clear behaviour system in place, which pupils understand. Teachers track poor behaviour and leaders monitor this to identify when additional support is needed.
- Leaders monitor attendance rigorously. Attendance has improved and now few pupils are disadvantaged by missing school. Persistent absence has declined and is now lower than the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Attainment across the school is improving. The proportion of pupils who attain the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 has increased over the last two years to be broadly in line with national averages.
- A large majority of pupils reach the required standard in the phonics screening check.
- The proportion of pupils who attained the expected standards in reading and writing at the end of key stage 2 over the last two years has risen and is now in line with national averages. Attainment in mathematics, although improving, is still lower than the national average.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' workbooks shows that pupils across the school are making strong progress in different subjects. For example, in science pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge of how the heart works by explaining the impact that doing a handstand would have on the circulatory system.
- Additional funding is used effectively to close the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. For example, all disadvantaged pupils have reached the standard required for the phonics screening check for the last four years. The evidence in pupils' book indicates that they use this knowledge well to write entertaining and humorous descriptions independently.
- Scrutiny of the workbooks of pupils with SEND show they are making strong progress from their individual starting points. The school provides tailored support which assists their next steps for learning. The school's own assessment system shows that, in most cases, the gap between their attainment and that of their peers is diminishing.

Pupils make good progress in geography. They have the opportunities to build on the knowledge that they already have. For example, younger pupils locate the countries of the United Kingdom. Older pupils use maps and atlases to locate major global cities and rivers. They can also explain which type of map would be most effective for the geographical feature that they want to find.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. Leaders have improved communication within

the setting. Staff regularly discuss children's progress and their next steps for learning. Parents complete speech bubbles to inform staff of their children's achievements at home and welcome the opportunity to talk with staff at the beginning and end of sessions.

- Leaders have developed different areas of the early years unit to maximise opportunities for learning. For example, staff have improved activities in the outdoor area and ensured that there are a range of tasks each day that engage pupils in exploring mathematical ideas.
- Staff have established effective learning behaviours. Children listen well to staff and to each other. They concentrate well until they have finished their task. Children quickly become independent learners. They explore stories from a range of cultures.
- Staff make careful observations of what children can do during their first weeks in Nursery and Reception. They use this information well to plan activities to meet the children's needs. Staff ask questions which extend children's thinking. For example, as children were sequencing the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, staff asked the children which the picture of Baby Bear was and how they knew. Children could explain which was Daddy Bear's chair and give reasons why.
- Standards in early years are rising, as the Nursery class provides a secure base for the learning in Reception. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development has increased, and is now in line with the national average.
- Leaders liaise closely with teachers in Year 1. Staff have raised their expectations of what children can do, and outcomes have improved. Children are well prepared for transition to Year 1.
- Staff work well with external agencies to ensure that children's additional needs are met. Appropriate training ensures that staff can deliver effective support for pupils. Staff liaise closely with parents, who praise the staff's commitment to the health and well-being of their children.
- Staff use the knowledge that they gain before children start to plan an effective transition for them into the setting. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well to increase attendance and support pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. This is carefully tailored to each child and focuses on the skills and knowledge they will need in Year 1. For example, additional opportunities to revisit sounds and read together provide disadvantaged pupils with a strong start in English.

School details

Unique reference number	138813
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10086767

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Elisabeth Cooper
Headteacher	Karen Taylor
Telephone number	01159 112117
Website	www.sacredheart.notts.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@sacredheart.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2008

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in single-age classes. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.
- The current headteacher took up her position in September 2015. A new leadership structure is in place. Most members of the governing body have taken up their roles recently.
- The school became an academy in October 2012 as part of the Pax Christi Multi-Academy Trust. It became part of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in September 2018. There are currently 21 schools within this multi-academy trust. The trustees have overall responsibility for governance in the school. The trust delegates

some of its functions to the local governing body. The trust provides support for the school.

- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for its pupils.
- The school is a Roman Catholic voluntary academy. It underwent a denominational inspection under section 48 during February 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work from all year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and middle leaders. They also met with four governors and spoke to a representative of the multi academy trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents including the schools' self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, subject action plans, school policies, records about behaviour and safeguarding, attendance reports and records of monitoring visits from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read. They spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspector talked with parents at the beginning of both days and took account of the responses to the school's survey of parental opinions.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anne White	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Chadwick	Ofsted Inspector

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