

# Inspection of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

Queens Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 1AR

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Inspection dates: 2–3 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous  
inspection

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They feel safe and well cared for. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but know to tell an adult if there are any problems. They are polite and show respect for each other. Older pupils look after younger pupils at lunchtime and include them in their games. Adults have high expectations for how pupils conduct themselves in and around school. Pupils respond well to this. But there are not always high expectations for what pupils can achieve in their lessons. This means that some pupils do not do as well as they could do in their learning.

Pupils appreciate the many clubs that the school offers. They enjoy visiting places such as the local fire station. Pupils told inspectors how they enjoy learning the violin and French. They also say they would like to spend more time learning about other subjects such as physical education.

Children in the early years get off to a great start. As pupils move through the school, lessons are not planned as well as they should be. This means that pupils do not learn the knowledge and skills they need in many subjects, including reading.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The early years curriculum is well thought out. This helps children to develop their language. It also helps children who are new to learning English. There is a focus on developing early reading skills right from the start. Well-selected mathematical resources help children to practise counting and recognise numbers. Teachers are ambitious for children and make sure that they work with any children who are not keeping up with the learning. As a result of this, most children are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have not thought enough about what pupils learn in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Teachers have little guidance about what to teach, how to teach it and when to teach it.

The teaching of phonics is effective in Years 1 and 2, but teachers do not use information about the sounds and words that pupils know to plan reading. This means that the books that pupils read are often too difficult. Pupils often need adult help to take part in the learning. This does not help pupils to become independent or resilient learners.

Leaders are keen to develop reading for pleasure at Holy Cross. Some teachers read books to the pupils, but this is not embedded across the school. Pupils have limited knowledge of books and different authors. There is still much work to do. Teaching is stronger in subjects such as mathematics and science. This is because curriculum leaders have thought about the content and sequence of learning. This helps pupils to build on their understanding. In science, pupils are enthusiastic and inquisitive. They enjoy developing their scientific skills through participating in different experiments. Across different subjects, teachers do not plan learning that is ambitious

for all pupils. This means that some pupils do not have the chance to build on what they can already do. This limits what they can achieve in different subjects.

Leaders identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They put a range of support in place. But some teachers do not plan learning that focuses on these pupils' individual needs. This means that some pupils with SEND struggle to learn what they should.

Governors have undertaken training and sought external advice since the last inspection. They now have a better understanding of the role of the governing body. Governors must work with leaders to ensure that all groups of pupils do well in their learning.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the attendance of pupils. But there are still too many pupils that take time off during the term. This hampers their learning.

The school offers a range of after school clubs and many of the pupils attend these. This provides opportunities for pupils to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Pupils take responsibility for making sure that school rules are kept to. For example, 'walking monitors' make sure that pupils move around the school sensibly at lunchtime. Leaders have recently introduced an 'Out and About' club. This provides opportunities for pupils to visit different places such as woodlands. This helps pupils to learn about the world around them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that appropriate checks are carried out. This ensures that adults are suitable to work with children before they start work at the school. Staff are aware of many of the risks that pupils may face. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. They know who to talk to if they are worried about anything. Staff involve other agencies to support pupils and their families when necessary.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum is not planned and sequenced effectively to ensure that pupils know more and remember more. Leaders must ensure that there is clear guidance for what teachers teach, when they teach it and how they teach it in each subject.
- Learning is not planned sufficiently well to meet the needs of all learners, particularly those that struggle. This is because teachers do not use assessment information precisely enough to ensure that plans are well matched to the needs of the learners. Leaders must check the implementation of the curriculum along

with how teachers use their assessments to inform teaching.

- Not all teachers are sufficiently ambitious for pupils with SEND. Leaders have not ensured that teachers are helping pupils achieve their targets as detailed in pupils' individual plans. Consequently, some pupils are not able to join in with the learning in class. Leaders must ensure that teachers implement these plans and provide training where necessary to support teachers.
- While the school has made some improvements since the last inspection, these have not been sufficiently implemented. Governors must assure themselves that leadership systems are suitably robust and that improvement plans are suitably precise to ensure that the school offers a good quality of education.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136981
<b>Local authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111477
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Marguerite Holliday
<b>Head of School</b>	Karen Salter
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.holycross.swindon.sch.uk">www.holycross.swindon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9–10 May 2017

## Information about this school

- Holy Cross Catholic School is a larger than average-sized primary school. It changed status from a junior school to a primary school in 2014. There are currently no Year 6 pupils in the school.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is much larger than the national average.
- The school has fewer pupils supported by the additional pupil premium funding than the national average.
- A much larger proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language compared to the national average.
- The school has fewer pupils with SEND than the national average.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, curriculum leaders, teachers, support staff

and governors.

- Inspectors took account of 27 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire and 13 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors talked to different members of staff about the safeguarding training they have received.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents relating to safeguarding, including the school’s single central record, behaviour and bullying records.
- Reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education were considered as part of this inspection. This entailed meeting with leaders to discuss these areas of the curriculum, visiting lessons to watch these subjects being taught, talking to teachers to find out how they teach these subjects, looking at pupils’ workbooks and talking to pupils about their learning in these subjects.

### **Inspection team**

Geraldine Tidy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lizzy Meadows	Ofsted Inspector
Marcia Northeast	Ofsted Inspector

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