

# Inspection of a good school: Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

Bath Road, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire WF16 9EA

---

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2021

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of the school community. They feel safe and well cared for. Parents praise the joyful and caring atmosphere in school. One parent commented, 'My son runs into school every morning with a massive smile.'

Pupils put the school's seven values, known as 'virtues', into practice in their daily lives. They can explain how the respectful culture in school helps them to make the right choices. Pupils report that bullying is extremely rare. Leaders have high expectations for how well pupils behave and how considerate they are to others. They make sure that pupils are taught how to show kindness in words and deeds.

Additional experiences, such as visits to interesting places, enable pupils to learn about the world beyond school. Pupils feel that the staff know them as individuals. They enjoy the subjects they study. They are keen to learn and want to succeed. However, leaders' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve in some subjects are not high enough. In a number of subjects, pupils' knowledge and capabilities are not as well developed as in others.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have focused on developing the curriculum. The impact of these developments on pupils' knowledge and skills is variable. In some subjects, such as mathematics, these developments have led to improvements in what pupils know and can do. However, this is not the case across all subjects. Pupils do not always gain the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of learning. For example, the history curriculum does not emphasise key ideas that go across time periods, such as 'state' and 'empire'. Pupils cannot explain the significance of historical events. In a number of subjects, approaches to assessment do not give teachers a detailed picture of how pupils' knowledge builds over time.

Some leaders have strong subject expertise. They use this well to provide effective training for teaching staff. For example, the mathematics leader has trained staff in the best methods for teaching shape, number and pattern. Teachers introduce mathematical knowledge and skills in a logical order. Assessments in mathematics check that pupils have secure knowledge in basic concepts. In early years, for instance, adults carefully check that children have mastered numbers one to five before moving on.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has started to work more closely with some subject leaders and with the early years lead. Together they are developing effective ways of assisting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in learning key concepts. For example, in some mathematics classes, teaching assistants used equipment to help bring abstract concepts to life. However, closer links between the SENCo and subject leaders are not fully developed.

Governors rightly see phonics as a priority. They insist that leaders provide targeted pupils with additional phonics help. However, the extra help provided is not always effective. Sometimes, phonics catch-up sessions focus too much on other aspects of reading, such as comprehension. This means that pupils do not get enough practice in applying their phonics knowledge. Books are not always closely enough matched to the sounds that pupils have learned. Governors and leaders recognise that some aspects of phonics need to develop further and have started to plan improvements.

Staff, pupils and parents praise the uplifting atmosphere in the school. Staff feel leaders support them well in their work. For example, they make sure that workload is manageable. Pupils behave very well and follow instructions given by staff. Children in early years have quickly settled into new routines. Pupils commented positively on the extra help that the teaching staff give them. They also value the additional opportunities provided. For example, Year 6 pupils have the chance to become prefects. Prefects make a positive contribution to the school community. They help staff look after children in early years at breaktime.

The personal development programme focuses on teaching pupils how to stay safe, including when online. It teaches pupils the importance of caring for oneself and others. Leaders have taken on board recent government guidance on relationships and sex education. Pupils now learn about respecting their peers and appropriate behaviour. For example, older pupils can talk confidently about the importance of respecting others' personal space.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that staff training, including for subject leaders, developments in phonics provision and the curriculum in humanities, languages and creative subjects may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know each pupil's circumstances well. They raise concerns with the designated safeguarding lead where necessary. Leaders carefully record concerns and actions taken, including referrals to the local authority's welfare services. Governors check to ensure that the school follows up rigorously on concerns.

Leaders and governors recognise that, in 2020, staff missed out on whole-staff safeguarding update training due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There are strong plans in place to rectify this. However, staff have benefited from recent training on peer-on-peer abuse and staying safe online, as well as regular updates on school-specific issues.

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

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

- Some leaders' subject-specific knowledge is not as well developed as others. This means that the curriculum in a number of subjects did not enable pupils to gain strong subject-related knowledge and skills. Senior leaders and governors should ensure that subject leaders have the knowledge and training they need to develop the curriculum in the subjects they lead. They should ensure that the curriculum in each subject enables pupils to know more and remember more.
- In some subjects, teaching staff, including assistants, are not clear enough about what key content should be emphasised and how best to do this. Senior leaders should ensure that staff receive necessary training in teaching methods appropriate for the subject and age group. Subject leaders should make sure that teaching staff are able to implement curriculum plans well.
- In some subjects, assessments are only able to provide a narrow snapshot of pupils' learning at a point in time. They do not enable teachers to build an incremental picture of how pupils' knowledge and skills are developing in the subject. Assessment approaches should be developed to provide teachers with a deeper insight into how pupils' knowledge and understanding is developing in the different dimensions of the subject.
- Leaders have started to develop early reading using recent guidance from the Department for Education. These developments are in their early stages. Early reading needs further development so that additional sessions are more closely focused on acquiring and embedding key phonics knowledge. There should also be greater emphasis on fluency in these sessions, including pupils' accuracy and expression. In addition, books for practising phonics should be more precisely matched to pupils' phonics abilities.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or

lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

## **How can I feedback 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the school and you are 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>	107748
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199728
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms L Gibbons
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Cooper
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.holyspiritprimary.co.uk">www.holyspiritprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided school. It had its last section 48 inspection in 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders, and has taken that into account in her evaluation.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the designated safeguarding lead, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader, three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the diocese. A telephone call was made to the local authority school improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector reviewed documentation relating to the school's curriculum, along with the school's own evaluation and its development plans.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their school experiences. The inspector reviewed 18 responses to the staff survey and 28 responses to the pupil survey. They looked at 16 free-text comments made by parents in Ofsted Parent View, as well as 28 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.
- The single central record was checked. The inspector also reviewed records of safeguarding concerns and referrals. Meetings were held with three members of staff, along with a separate meeting with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, about safeguarding training.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah Hubbard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:  
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021