

Inspection of a good school: Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Marlowe Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 2PT

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 December 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 the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school, attend well and are safe. Pupils learn about the school's new values alongside its Catholic ethos. Pupils say the school is 'one big family' and it is a happy place. Staff nurture pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils say that when bullying happens, staff deal with it well.

Serving others is a central feature of school life. Pupils undertake much charity work. For example, pupils provide food parcels for the 'Harbour Project'. This helps pupils learn about the challenges that those seeking asylum or refugee status face.

Many pupils are being supported to catch up with reading, including pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils study a range of subjects. However, in the past some subject plans did not include all the necessary content. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Staff's expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should vary. Sometimes, pupils are attentive, but this is not consistent.

Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to shine as individuals. For example, pupils can join the chaplaincy team, 'mini police' or 'eco warriors'. There are clubs to enjoy. Staff champion pupils' musical interests. In early years, children take part in the 'make a noise festival'.

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

Leaders are astute and capable. They are focusing on the right areas. They work openly with governors. For example, governors know about leaders' current work to improve the curriculum further and to raise staff expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. Leaders are working determinedly to bring about improvements and they are. However, they are only part way through this work.

Leaders prioritise early language development and reading. Pupils who speak English as an additional language get extra support. Children in Reception are keeping up with the phonics programme. Reading books match the sounds pupils know. Currently, the phonics curriculum extends into all Year 3 and 4 classes. Older pupils get targeted support too. As a result, most teaching uses assessments of gaps in pupils' knowledge to plan catch up sequences of work. However, some teaching is not adapted well enough to give pupils the precise support they need. Too few pupils read with accuracy and fluency.

Leaders are tackling previously identified weaknesses in mathematics head on. This is paying off. Additional sessions are increasing pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts and recall of number facts. This is helping pupils to catch up. More recently, pupils are remembering more and doing better. In Nursery, staff make sure there is lots of singing, counting and exploring numbers.

Pupils do not learn enough in some subjects. Considerable work is already taking place to heighten subject leaders' knowledge and skills. For example, in physical education (PE), training is increasing staff's subject knowledge. New teaching plans are helping to minimise staff workload. As a result, staff are dedicating more time to increasing pupils' physical fitness and sportsmanship. Older pupils are embracing new things in PE, like dance, which they did not do before. Some subjects are further developed than others. Consequently, when staff deliver new content, they are needing to help pupils catch up with previously missed subject content, for example in science.

Leaders of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) work diligently to identify pupils' needs from Nursery to Year 6. They are laying clear foundations to ensure that teaching meets pupils' learning needs well. Leaders are training staff in the school's agreed approaches. However, there remain inconsistencies. This means that some pupils do not get the precise teaching they need.

Leaders are introducing a new behaviour policy. They are training staff to ensure that they apply consistent expectations across the school. However, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning have dipped. Some pupils behave carelessly, including in the lunch hall and in PE lessons. When reminded, pupils know how to correct themselves. However, staff are not consistently helping pupils to maintain the high expectations that leaders expect. Staff support some pupils well to regulate their emotions. Nonetheless, there are occasions when pupils' interrupt learning. Some pupils have to be reminded to concentrate more or not to call out. This slows pupils' learning.

In discussion with leaders, we agreed that the content and sequencing of the curriculum, and pupils' behaviour and attitudes may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. Leaders and governors ensure that staff recruitment checks are in line with current legislation. Leaders are tenacious in

keeping staff up to date with safeguarding guidance. Staff are vigilant and apply their training well. Staff identify and report concerns promptly when pupils may be at risk. Record keeping is comprehensive. Leaders provide strong support for families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The wider curriculum is not implemented well enough. Some teaching sequences do not enable pupils to learn well. Pupils have gaps in knowledge across the curriculum and need to catch up. Leaders need to ensure that subject plans include all the necessary subject content pupils need to know. Leaders need to ensure that pupils gain the knowledge they should, so that they are well prepared for their next stage.
- Staff do not have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct in lessons and at social times. Low-level disruption is tolerated at times. This hinders pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure that staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct, so that all pupils are able to learn well without interruptions.
- Some teaching does not use all the information staff have about what pupils already know to adapt sequences of teaching. Gaps in pupils' knowledge persist, including for pupils with SEND. Leaders need to ensure that teaching builds carefully on what pupils already know.

Background

When we have judged 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 predecessor school of the same name to be good on 10 October 2011.

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 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

Unique reference number	138636
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10199755
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	346
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Szeliga
Headteachers	Karen Bathe Nadia Mossop
Website	www.holyfamily.swindon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Nursery takes children from aged two.
- There are two co-headteachers at the school. One works three days a week. The other co-head is the deputy headteacher for three days and co-head for the remaining two days.
- There have been many staff changes since the previous Ofsted inspection.
- The school is designated as having religious character and received a section 48 inspection in June 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.

- The inspector held discussions with the co-headteachers, trustees, the director of education for Clifton Diocese and the school's external adviser.
- The inspector also talked to other school staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. 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 considered samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- The inspector also talked to the music and science subject leaders to review their roles and responsibilities and their current work. The inspector also looked at pupils' work in science and other subjects. She also met with the chaplaincy team and staff responsible who lead on pupils' wider development.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey alongside responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses from parents.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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