

Inspection of a good school: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Selby Street, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1NS

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to this school. From the Reception class to Year 6, pupils enjoy learning because leaders have thought carefully about how to make their learning relevant and engaging. Pupils know that teachers expect them to work hard. They rise to these high expectations. Pupils learn well in all subjects and years.

This is a school where pupils are safe and well cared for. Pupils trust staff to support them when problems arise. They know that staff will listen to their worries. On the very rare occasions when bullying occurs, leaders deal with it effectively.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. In class, they are keen to do well and eager to contribute to discussions. At social times, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils are caring and kind to each other. They are polite and courteous to staff and visitors.

As they move through the school pupils enjoy many opportunities to develop their talents and interests. As a result, they become confident, mature and articulate young people, ready for their next stage of learning. Older pupils develop leadership skills. Many are subject ambassadors. They help subject leaders to improve learning within their subject.

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

Leaders have developed the curriculum over several years. The curriculum is now well-established and highly effective in all subjects. Leaders constantly review its effectiveness. The curriculum is ambitious. Pupils' learning builds steadily from year to year. The Reception Year provides a strong foundation for learning in key stage 1. 'Curriculum roots' provide shared values that underpin the curriculum in all subjects. Consequently, there is

a consistent approach to learning throughout the school. The school has strong subject leaders. They are passionate subject experts who provide effective support for teachers. As a result, teachers possess good subject expertise. They explain new content skilfully. They use imaginative ways to help pupils understand difficult concepts. Pupils told the inspectors that teaching helps them to remember what they have been taught.

Assessment is used well in all subjects and year groups. There is a consistent approach across subjects. For example, pupils complete 'sticky squares' at the end of each learning unit. These help pupils to recall previous learning. They also help teachers to assess how well pupils have remembered what they have been taught. Teachers use assessment information well to identify and address misconceptions and gaps in knowledge. Leaders use the information to adapt the curriculum. Effective use of assessment is a key reason why pupils learn well in all subjects.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will become confident readers. Moreover, they want all pupils to enjoy reading, from an early age. Phonics is taught well from the start of the Reception Year. Staff keep a close eye on pupils' reading progress. They are quick to provide extra help for any pupils who begin to fall behind. Pupils quickly become proficient readers and lovers of reading. Pupils in key stage 2 told the inspector about the books they had read and recommended to their friends. They enjoy their daily story time and the 'poem of the day'.

Leaders and staff provide excellent support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately. Teachers and teaching assistants understand pupils' needs and how to meet them. Pupils and parents are fully involved in planning additional support.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Disruption in lessons is very rare. Pupils speak confidently about, and take responsibility for, their learning. For example, pupils were keen to show the inspector the 'Sacred Heart Herald', a daily newspaper, produced by pupils, recording important national and world events.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' wider development is highly effective. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum shares the strengths found in other subjects. There is a particular focus on helping pupils to maintain good physical and mental health. Pupils appreciate the wide range of after-school activities that staff provide. Pupils show love for others, for example by raising money for charities or by writing to patients in the local hospital. Music plays an important part in the life of the school. The inspector visited an assembly where pupils' singing was joyous.

The school's staff form a committed team in which the needs of pupils always come first. Senior leaders set a fine example. They ensure that staff are cared for, and that their workload is reasonable. Staff are proud to work in the school. Governors are an important part of the school family. They provide strong support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and care for pupils. Staff know that keeping pupils safe is their top priority. Leaders ensure that staff are trained thoroughly. Consequently, staff are alert to the signs that pupils might need extra support. They pass concerns to leaders, who are tenacious in making sure that pupils get the support they need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe as part of the PSHE curriculum. They learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online. Parents are full of praise for the care and support that staff provide for pupils and families.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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.

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	111306
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10240648
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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Degenhart
Headteacher	Colleen Everett
Website	www.sacredheartcp.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic school. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in April 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other school leaders. He held discussions with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. He held a meeting with a representative of the local authority and the archdiocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, he discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in other subjects, with leaders. He considered the school's work to support pupils with SEND.
- The inspector discussed safeguarding with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, and the assistant headteacher. The inspector scrutinised policies and records relating to child protection and examined the safeguarding checks made on staff before they join the school.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar member of staff and talked to them about their reading. He visited an assembly.
- The inspector spoke with several members of staff, including those who have recently joined the teaching profession. He considered the responses from staff to Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire.
- The inspector spoke informally with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. He observed the school at these times. He considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the day and considered the responses, including written responses, to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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