

Inspection of Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School

2 Oakleigh Park South, Whetstone, London N20 9JU

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff in school care for pupils well on a day-to-day basis. Classrooms provide a caring, nurturing environment that helps pupils to be successful in their learning. Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to talk to if they have concerns, and they trust adults to manage this effectively.

Leaders have not made sure they fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities. This means that pupils are at increased risk of harm as the systems in place are not sufficiently robust or applied consistently.

Leaders want all pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. In most subjects, this helps pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils behave very well. This is because there are clear, consistent routines and expectations from staff. Bullying is not tolerated. Any incidents that arise are dealt with swiftly.

Pupils are proud of their school and community. They are keen to take on the wide range of responsibilities offered to them. For example, they take part as eco-councillors, 'Mini-Vinnies', sports leaders, peer mentors and house captains. These roles help pupils to develop strength of character.

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

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, do not have a fully accurate view of the school's effectiveness with regard to policy and practice. They do not have clear mechanisms in place to provide sufficient oversight or assurance of leaders' work. This means that governors do not sufficiently challenge leaders or hold them to account to ensure the school meets statutory requirements.

Pupils do study a broad curriculum that matches what is expected nationally. Leaders have identified the key knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn across all subjects. This includes in early years, where there are clear expectations for how the curriculum provides the foundations for what pupils will learn next.

The curriculum has been sequenced to ensure that pupils revisit and practise important ideas so that they are helped to learn and remember more. For example, in mathematics, children in Reception practise their counting. This foundation helps pupils to understand place value and add larger numbers later on. Similarly, in physical education, pupils practise techniques such as dribbling, blocking and 'step-over'. Once they have mastered these in isolation, they combine them when playing a game of football.

In a few subjects, the curriculum is not as well structured, and teachers do not check as carefully what has been learned. As a result, pupils do not always have the

knowledge they need to tackle more challenging concepts. This means they are less well prepared to learn the planned curriculum in these subjects.

A love of reading is evident across the school. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme as soon as children begin their Reception year. Those at risk of falling behind are given additional support to catch up and keep up with their peers. The majority of books used to teach reading are carefully matched to the sounds that pupils know. This helps them to become fluent, independent readers. However, the variety of books on offer for pupils to practise their phonic reading is limited. Leaders are aware of this and have plans in place to provide more decodable books. Pupils across the school are enthusiastic about reading. They enjoy both reading and being read to.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. The majority access the same curriculum as their peers. This is because staff have been trained to make suitable adaptations to support these pupils.

A calm, purposeful atmosphere is evident in all lessons and when pupils are moving around the school. They have a positive attitude towards learning. Routines are well established. This means that pupils know what is expected and they rise to that. Leaders have effective systems for ensuring that pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils' broader development is well considered. The roles of 'Mini-Vinnies' promote the importance of community responsibility. For example, visits to Westminster Cathedral to help the homeless and collecting for the local food bank support pupils to understand the importance of helping others.

Staff, including those beginning their careers, are overwhelmingly positive about the support that they receive from leaders to manage their workload and well-being. They appreciate the training and other opportunities for professional development that are available to them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, do not have a sufficiently accurate understanding of their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Consequently, they have not fulfilled all their statutory safeguarding duties. Leaders have not taken all the necessary steps to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Staff have received appropriate training and understand their responsibility to report any concerns they may have. However, leaders have not consistently sought professional guidance around these concerns in a timely manner. When advice has been provided from other agencies, while leaders engage well, they have often been too slow in following this up. As a result, important information has been missed.

Record-keeping is minimal and information regarding the safety of pupils is not easily accessible. This means that pupils are at increased risk of harm because the systems are

not sufficiently robust and inconsistently applied.

Pupils are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe. For instance, recent work around consent means that pupils know about appropriate touch. They know how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fulfilled their statutory duties relating to safeguarding. This means that pupils are at increased risk of harm. Leaders must ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements. This includes seeking guidance from external agencies through swift referral. Leaders must follow up on any referrals in a timely way and act promptly on the advice provided. Safeguarding records must be well organised, kept up to date and easily accessible.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance do not have sufficient awareness or understanding of their statutory responsibilities. This means that they are not suitably assured that pupils are kept safe. Governors need to establish suitable procedures for holding leaders to account and gaining assurance that safeguarding procedures are suitably robust and applied consistently.
- In a few subjects, teachers do not check carefully enough what pupils have learned and remembered. As a result, some errors and misconceptions are not identified and corrected promptly. In these subjects, leaders should ensure that teachers check what pupils have learned. This will enable them to correct misconceptions swiftly and help pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding.

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	101338
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10200596
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	412
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Geraldine Smallbone
Headteacher	Geraldine Porter
Website	www.sacredheartprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2018

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-size primary school.
- The school offers a breakfast and after-school club.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The current headteacher was appointed in January 2022.
- The current deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2022.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Westminster.
- The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2019.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and members of staff. They also spoke with representatives of the local authority, and met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, physical education and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including leaders' priorities for improvement.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Samantha Ingram, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Karen Jaeggi	Ofsted Inspector
Alice Clay	His Majesty's Inspector

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