

Inspection of a good school: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Merry Hill Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 1SU

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 March 2023

Outcome

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Sacred Heart is a welcoming and nurturing place to learn. Pupils develop strong relationships with staff and peers. They feel safe because they know that adults will listen to them and deal with any concerns quickly.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They look forward to learning. Pupils like how teachers make learning interesting. They develop their skills of listening, engaging and resilience. Pupils study a well-rounded curriculum. They achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. Older pupils model good behaviour for younger pupils and they act as buddies. Pupils learn how to be a good friend. Bullying rarely happens. Pupils know that staff will deal with bullying swiftly if it does happen.

Pupils represent the school in competitions. They have a wide range of clubs that help them to develop their interests. Pupils are proud to have responsibilities such as eco warriors, digital leaders and house captains.

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

Leaders have set out a curriculum that helps pupils to develop their knowledge and skills over time. This begins in the early years. In most subjects, leaders have set out the content they want pupils to learn, including vocabulary. Leaders want pupils to fulfil their potential.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to teach curriculum subjects. Subject leaders know their subject well and they share this information with staff. Leaders have identified that some pupils struggle to remember important subject knowledge. Leaders have implemented new processes to identify gaps in knowledge and they are being filled

quickly. Teachers use a range of ways to check pupils' understanding. Staff use these checks to adapt their teaching to help pupils build successfully on what they have learned previously.

In a few subjects, leaders are developing the curriculum content. In these subjects, pupils have gaps in knowledge and are not as ready for future learning. This is because leaders have not set out the precise knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn.

In the early years, adults carefully plan activities that help children to practise what they have already learned. Staff use effective questioning to check what children know and can do before moving them on in their learning. Children in Reception develop independence and learn routines that prepare them for learning in Year 1.

Children in Reception begin learning phonics from the start. Leaders focus on giving pupils the skills they need to become confident fluent readers. Targeted support is in place for pupils who find reading tricky. All pupils enjoy reading and they know reading routines well. Pupils across the school enjoy visiting the library. They select interesting books that match their reading stage. This helps to develop their love of reading.

Leaders ensure that the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a priority. Many pupils with SEND get the support they need to access learning. Adults support pupils with targeted support. However, some pupils with complex needs do not get the support they need quickly due to support plans not reflecting pupils' needs. Staff do not always get the information they need to support pupils as effectively as they could. This means that some pupils with SEND are not achieving as well as they could.

Pupils behave well and staff are quick to reinforce expectations. Children from Reception know what it means to be a good learner, for example by listening carefully and trying hard. Pupils concentrate and listen attentively.

Leaders ensure that pupils participate in community events such as fundraising events, extra-curricular clubs and theme weeks. Pupils enjoy the range of local trips and school journeys for Years 5 and 6. Pupils learn about British values and what it means to be a well-rounded individual and contribute to their community.

Governors know the school well. They work with leaders to develop school priorities. They hold leaders to account. Staff are proud to be part of the school community. They are well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are well trained to spot and report concerns early. Keeping pupils safe is a priority. Leaders act with haste when dealing with concerns. Leaders make good use of external services and seek advice and support when needed. Leaders ensure that pupils

and families get the support they need to keep pupils safe. Leaders carry out the necessary checks on staff to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online and how to maintain healthy relationships. Pupils speak to staff when worried or upset. They trust staff to deal with their concerns quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A few subject leaders have not set out clearly how pupils' understanding of knowledge and skills will develop across the curriculum. This means that, in some subjects, pupils are not prepared for future learning as well as they should be. Leaders need to ensure that teachers know the exact content they want pupils to learn and when.
- Some pupils with SEND are not having their needs met as effectively as they could be. This is because support plans do not accurately reflect pupils' needs. Staff do not have the right information to support pupils' complex needs well. Leaders should share information with staff to ensure all pupils with SEND get the support and provision needed to achieve well.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

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	117488
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10255065
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vivienne Morgan
Headteacher	Linda Payne
Website	www.sacredheart682.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new executive headteacher and head of school have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- This is a Roman Catholic primary school. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in November 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school, assistant headteacher, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector spoke to staff to discuss workload, well-being and safeguarding.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, 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 also looked at other curriculum plans including for art, PSHE, physical education and science.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their learning, safety and behaviour. The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector took account of the 94 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the 48 free-text comments. The inspector also took account of the 19 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 69 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Nerrissa Bear, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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