

# Inspection of The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

Cotterill, Halton Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2NL

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Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending school. They make everyone feel welcome. Pupils work and play together happily. They care for each other and recognise that everyone is special and unique. Pupils know that there are many trusted adults who they can turn to if they are worried or upset.

Pupils know that the school has high expectations for their achievement. Pupils are keen to learn, and they work hard in their lessons. They achieve well and build their knowledge securely over time. Pupils are encouraged to think about their aspirations for the future, for example by taking part in the Children's University programme.

Pupils know how they are expected to behave. Children in the Reception class quickly learn to follow routines. Older pupils understand and follow the school rules. The atmosphere in school is calm and orderly. Playtimes and social times are a positive experience for all.

Pupils benefit from a wide offer of clubs and opportunities that help them to develop their talents and interests. For example, all pupils learn to play the guitar from Year 4 upwards. Pupils take on positions of responsibility with enthusiasm. Members of the eco-team grow fruits and plant gardens for all pupils to enjoy. Pupils who act as subject ambassadors visit different classes to share what is happening in their subject. Pupils contribute to the local community through their charity work.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has taken much care in identifying the knowledge that pupils should learn in each subject in key stages 1 and 2. Learning is ordered carefully to ensure that pupils' knowledge builds lesson by lesson. The school's thoughtful approach to curriculum design has ensured that pupils achieve well against the curriculum goals in all subjects.

In 2023, the school's published data for progress and attainment in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 was significantly below that of other schools nationally. The school identified that pupils were not able to recall important facts such as times tables quickly enough. It has made sure that this aspect of learning receives due attention in the curriculum so that pupils' mathematics knowledge is more secure.

The curriculum in the early years provides a clear overview of what will be taught. However, the school has not identified the small steps of learning that children need to take in order to reach the identified end points in each area of learning. Occasionally, this prevents staff from designing learning that builds well on what children already know.

The school has ensured that staff have had the training to deliver the new curriculums effectively so that pupils build their knowledge over time. However,

pupils are sometimes not given enough opportunity to reflect on what they have learned. At times, this limits pupils from consolidating and broadening their understanding of key concepts.

Staff are well trained to deliver the established phonics programme effectively. From the moment that they start school in the early years, children start to learn about the sounds that letters and groups of letters make. They apply this phonics knowledge with confidence when reading well-matched books. Pupils continue to progress well through the phonics curriculum as they move into key stage 1. Those pupils who find learning to read more challenging are identified quickly and supported to keep up with the phonics programme. As a result, pupils develop into fluent, accurate readers by the end of Year 2.

Teachers check pupils' learning regularly. This assessment information allows teachers to identify any gaps and misconceptions that pupils may have. Teachers reshape future learning to revisit any concepts that pupils have found difficult to grasp.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs, including SEND, from the earliest possible age. The school makes sure that staff know how to adapt their delivery of the curriculum effectively. This means that pupils with SEND progress well through the curriculum.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They pay attention and are enthusiastic learners. Rare instances of low-level disruption are dealt with effectively by teachers so that pupils return quickly to their learning.

The school gives the highest priority to securing good attendance. It works closely with parents and carers to help and support them in getting their children to school. Pupils attend regularly and arrive punctually to school.

Pupils learn about other cultures, customs and religions. They understand that it is important to be tolerant and to show respect for the beliefs of others. Pupils gain an understanding of different types of relationships. They develop a secure knowledge of fundamental British values and understand how these are relevant to themselves as individuals and to the school and the wider community.

The school supports staff's well-being through a range of strategies, including free access to a counselling service. It considers staff's workload carefully before introducing any new initiatives.

Governors know the school well. They have overseen considerable improvements to the design of the curriculum since the last inspection. They have a strong understanding of the school's current strengths and areas for development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The early years curriculum does not identify the small steps of learning that need to be taught in order for children to achieve the end points for each area of learning. This means that children sometimes do not build new learning on what they already know in a coherent way. The school should identify the key knowledge that it wants children to learn in the early years and when they should learn it.
- In some subjects, pupils are not given enough opportunity to reflect on what they have learned. This means that some pupils do not deepen and broaden their learning as much as they could. The school should ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to recap and consolidate their learning.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111321
<b>Local authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10337649
<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>	99
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kathy Keig
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lorraine Connolly
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.holyspirituncorn.co.uk">www.holyspirituncorn.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	5 and 6 July 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic school in the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The last section 48 inspection took place in June 2024. The next inspection will be in five years.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and a wide range of other staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair

of governors.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and their wider school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and while in lessons.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also viewed examples of pupils' work in a range of other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils in Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed key documents, including the school's self-evaluation form, school action plans and monitoring records.

### **Inspection team**

Liz Davidson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Mills

Ofsted Inspector

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