



# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106643  
**LEA** Barnsley  
**Inspection number** 277600  
**Inspection dates** 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Roger Hartley HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Lockwood Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Goldthorpe
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 9JY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 892385
<b>Number on roll</b>	186	<b>Fax number</b>	01709 888168
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr G Goddard
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss M Curran

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277600
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is situated in the large ex-mining village of Goldthorpe, in South Yorkshire. Of the 175 pupils, 39 are in the Nursery class. Almost all of the pupils come from white, British backgrounds and none of the remainder speak English as an additional language. Eleven per cent of pupils are entitled to free meals, and there are 31 pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of the pupils come from long established families in this closely-knit community.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing and governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The inspectors judge that Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is not yet an effective school, although the school disagrees. The children receive a satisfactory start to their education in the Foundation Stage. Elsewhere, however, standards have not been consistently maintained and, overall, are below average. They are also below what they could be, given pupils' capabilities when they begin school. Too many pupils make slow progress in their lessons. The headteacher, appointed two years ago, inherited a considerable legacy of long-standing major weaknesses. She has identified correctly what needed to be done, drawn up an agenda for improvement, and made a determined start in bringing about change, but the work has been hampered by constant staffing difficulties over the past two years.

The teaching is variable, with some effective practice, but also pockets where improvement is required. The curriculum is not yet sufficiently broad or balanced and despite recent initiatives, the work is not sufficiently matched to pupils' learning needs, especially the more able. The pupils' personal development is soundly based. They feel safe and secure, show positive attitudes towards the school and enjoy their lessons.

Nevertheless, the range of improvements needed is extensive and it is the opinion of inspectors that the school does not have the capacity on its own to bring about improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in all subjects, especially English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Accelerate pupils' progress in learning throughout the school by improving the match of work to pupils' needs, especially the more able, and establishing a broad and balanced curriculum which meets requirements.
- Raise the quality of teaching to a consistently good standard through rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation.
- Establish the roles and responsibilities of senior teachers and subject leaders.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Although pupils make a good start at school, their progress is subsequently poor, and pupils do not achieve sufficiently well. When pupils enter the Nursery, levels of attainment are broadly in line with expectations for their age. They make steady progress and most reach their early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

However, progress is not sustained throughout Key Stage 1, and the 2005 national test data declined in reading, writing and mathematics, in spite of more promising results in 2004.

There is a similar picture at the end of Year 6. Despite improvements in English, mathematics and science in 2004, attainment overall remains below national averages and the targets for higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics have not been met, although those for the higher levels in science were exceeded. Consequently, the inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation that, in a number of key respects, standards and progress are inadequate.

The school has been through a very difficult period which has affected standards and achievement throughout the school. Since her appointment, the headteacher has introduced a revised and more cohesive set of curriculum guidance for teachers, and a promising system for tracking pupils' progress and target setting. However, relatively stable teaching has only been achieved in the current term. This follows many changes in the recent past, and a significant amount of ineffective teaching. As a result, the impact of the measures on pupils' learning has been slight and the progress made by pupils, especially the more able, remains slow.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The inspection confirms the school's judgement that provision for pupils' personal development and their well-being is satisfactory.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through the school's strong Christian ethos which is rooted in its links with the parish. The pupils learn the difference between right and wrong, and they consider the consequences of their own actions on others. The curriculum promotes an awareness of other faiths and cultures, and encourages the pupils to reflect on the impact of art, music and literature through inviting storytellers, artists and musicians to work in the school.

Children have positive attitudes towards school and enjoy lessons, although some would prefer more practical work in lessons. All the pupils agree that they receive fair treatment, and develop trusting relationships with adults who work in school. During the inspection, the children's behaviour was almost always good, and steps have been taken to eliminate the few pockets of unacceptable behaviour identified by the school. The work of the learning mentor is having a positive impact both on behaviour and attitudes.

All the children feel they are well cared for and protected in the school. They receive good support from their friends and all the adults in the school. They learn about the hazards of drugs and smoking, receive sex education in Year 6, and are given clear guidance about personal safety. The school has raised the profile of physical activity in the curriculum by enlisting the help of Barnsley soccer and rugby clubs, and establishing links with a local sports college. The school is keen to achieve the Healthy Schools Award and there are healthy choices at lunch and fresh fruit provided for

snacks. The newly formed school council gives pupils a voice in decision making and provides opportunities to learn essential communication skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

The inspection team agrees with the school's evaluation that there are variations in the quality of teaching. The teaching is inconsistent; some of it is enthusiastic and the pupils are motivated to learn, but some misses the mark because the work lacks challenge. The wide range of abilities, especially in the mixed age classes, present particular challenges for the teachers who until recently could not distinguish between knowing what the pupils can and cannot do, so that often the work set has been too difficult or too easy. As a consequence, the more able pupils throughout the school have not been fully stretched.

Nevertheless, there are good features on which to build. In the best examples, teachers involved the pupils in the cut and thrust of the lesson, provided opportunities for first-hand practical experiences, and made good use of resources. However, the school has not yet been able to achieve consistently good teaching due to a combination of indifferent planning, inaccurate checking of pupils' progress, and a constant turnover of staff; over half the teachers have left in each of the last two years.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 4**

The school correctly identifies stable staffing as a prerequisite for the pupils to make progress towards a broad and balanced curriculum. Currently, there are important gaps in what is taught and how it is delivered; for example, the school acknowledges that the provision for ICT is poor and does not appear on over half the class timetables. The curriculum policies and schemes of work have recently been reviewed, but they have yet to have a clear and purposeful effect on the planned work, especially for the more able. There are inconsistencies in how subjects are taught; for example, although the school employs several schemes of work to teach mathematics, there is no agreement about how they should be used. They are not always used to good effect; as a consequence, a teacher may prefer to use one scheme exclusively, while others are more selective, dipping into several according to their needs.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The pupils are well cared for and the school provides a safe environment in which they feel secure. There is a growing range of sporting and cultural activities to supplement the National Curriculum, and the school encourages the pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. The provision for different groups of pupils is variable. The school has recently reviewed its provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

and trained teaching assistants provide a variety of support both in and out of the classroom. The arrangements work well and the pupils make satisfactory progress and enjoy their work. More able pupils fare less well, because the work often fails to challenge them. Group targets have been set based on recent assessment data; the next steps will be to establish individual targets for the pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The inspectors recognise the considerable difficulties experienced by the headteacher who, over the past two years, has been preoccupied with unforeseen staffing difficulties which have fragmented the agenda for improvement. The difficulties have meant that only in the past few months has the headteacher been able to introduce systems to improve tracking pupils' progress, and begin tackling the major weaknesses in the curriculum which had built up before her appointment. The school has received support from the local Education Action Zone and the local authority, but it has not been sufficient to bring about the required improvements. Against this background, the headteacher has given firm leadership; the priorities are clear. The pace of change has been well judged and the staff given good support. However, the impact of the measures on pupils' achievement and progress is not yet consistent and has not ensured that all pupils make adequate progress throughout their time at the school.

The management of change is proving challenging. Many of the initiatives are complex and require careful coordination. The staff are relatively new to the school and currently their individual responsibilities are not sufficiently defined, especially the roles of the senior teachers. This is placing a heavy burden on the headteacher who has not been able to check the teaching and learning with sufficient rigour, establish the specific needs of individual teachers, or to monitor the introduction of the new initiatives.

The governors are taking an increasing part in monitoring the school improvement plan and know the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, they do not have any ways of measuring value for money expended; for example, the impact of computers on the pupils' learning. The school has received some support from consultants, but overall the school does not have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement, without extensive support.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	4	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Mr Johnson and I would like to say how much we enjoyed spending two days in your school. Thank you for being so polite and helping us.

We spent a lot of time finding out how well you are learning by watching you work in some of the lessons and talking to Miss Curran and your teachers. At the end of the inspection we talked to Miss Curran and Miss Kilroy about what we had found out. This is what we said.

We think you are well-behaved, almost all of the time! The boys and girls in the Nursery class work hard, share things and take turns. Older children act responsibly, taking care of books and equipment. You told us that most of you enjoy your lessons and feel that the teachers are interested in you. Nearly all of you work hard, listen to your teachers and try your best to answer their questions.

Even so, we think there are some important things that everyone in school should try to get better, so that you all do your very best. It hasn't been easy for Miss Curran to make changes, because there have been lots of teachers coming and going, and many of you will have had a number of different teachers.

So, we explained that we would like you to do better in your English, mathematics and ICT work; make sure the work the teachers give you is neither too easy nor too hard, but just right; and for Miss Curran and the teachers to keep checking that everyone is doing their best.

Mr Johnson and I know that you will help the teachers make Sacred Heart an even better school than it already is.