



# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111306  
**Local Authority** Warrington  
**Inspection number** 288918  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Robert Robinson

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Selby Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Warrington
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11		Cheshire WA5 1NS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 636235
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	204	<b>Fax number</b>	01925 230971
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael Watson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Mullan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 5–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17–18 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288918
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average sized primary school where most pupils are of White British ethnic background. A small number are from other ethnic groups. A few pupils are learning English as an additional language. Pupils attending the school come from a wide area. The socio-economic circumstances of these areas are diverse, ranging from advantaged to disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It has improved since its last inspection. It provides adequate value for money and has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve. Standards on entry to the Reception class vary from year to year but are average overall. Boys' standards on entry are much lower than girls. All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress but too few reach higher levels. Standards overall are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are strengths in the way teachers manage pupils. As a result, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. However, there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils to help them to reach the higher levels, especially in teachers' questioning.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are well mannered and polite. They gain a good understanding of their own and others' cultures. Pupils feel safe and trust the adults they deal with. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are harmonious. Pupils' views are sought and acted upon. They know how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy the good range of sporting activities available.

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to help pupils learn. However, too few opportunities are planned for pupils to practise writing in other subjects. A good range of extra-curricular activities, local visits and visitors to school are used well to enrich the curriculum and this contributes to pupils' personal development.

The school provides a safe working environment for its pupils. Staff care for pupils well. Information about pupils' attainment is not used well enough to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils. Targets and how to achieve them are not used well enough to challenge pupils to make faster progress.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, checks on the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough to improve pupils' achievement and standards. The headteacher's vision of a caring, Christian ethos where every child matters is reflected well in the school's daily life.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide further challenge for more able pupils so that they reach higher standards.
- Plan more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in all subjects in order to raise standards in writing.
- Use information about pupils' attainment in order to set challenging targets to improve pupils' progress.
- Make checks on the quality of teaching more rigorous in order to improve pupils' performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards on entry to the Reception class vary from year to year though are average overall. By the end of the Reception year, standards are at expected levels. The attainment of the present group of children is below average and a high proportion of boys have poor communication and language skills.

Standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. In the 2004 and 2005 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards improved compared to the previous two years. The 2006 test results continue to show an improvement. However, too few pupils reach the higher levels in the national tests. For example, no pupil achieved the higher level in writing in the 2005 and 2006 national tests at the end of Year 2. Targets set for the proportion of pupils at the end of Year 6, to reach the level expected for their age, were met in the 2005 and 2006 national tests. They were not met at the higher level in 2006.

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

### **Grade: 2**

All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils care well for one another. Those who move to the school and those who are learning English as an additional language are made to feel welcome and quickly become an integral part of the Sacred Heart family. Behaviour is good and incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils take on more responsibility as they get older. For example, Year 6 pupils made books to read to younger children. The school council takes its responsibilities seriously. Most pupils show positive attitudes towards school. Attendance rates are about average. Pupils have a good understanding about healthy lifestyles but this is not reflected in their day-to-day choices, such as choosing to eat sweets and crisps at playtime.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers manage pupils well and this results in pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to work. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and this is reflected in their good personal development. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They use ICT well to assist pupils' learning. However, teaching is rarely challenging enough for more able pupils. The questions asked and the tasks set by teachers are often too easy for them. Teachers sometimes talk too much, limiting the time available for pupils to discuss their work or to engage in individual tasks. The quality of teachers' marking varies from class to class. Although celebrating good effort, marking rarely suggests how pupils can improve and is not

linked to individual pupils' targets. Teaching assistants provide effective help for lower attainers and for pupils learning English as an additional language.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Strong emphasis is placed on following the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. However, often the strategies are applied too rigidly and opportunities to adapt the curriculum to enthuse pupils to learn at a faster pace are not exploited, particularly for more able pupils. Literacy skills are insufficiently developed in other subjects, although ICT is used well to support learning. Provision in the Reception class is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched well through sporting activities and music, together with a good range of extra-curricular clubs which contribute well to pupils' personal development and achievements.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well cared for and, as a result, feel safe and secure. The good pastoral care results in pupils' sensible behaviour and attitudes to work. All requirements for child protection are in place. Health and safety and risk assessment procedures promote a safe environment. Academic guidance and support are satisfactory. Staff know the pupils well and relationships are good. However, pupils are not given sufficient guidance on how to improve, either through the marking of their work or through the setting of challenging targets for individuals.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

As a result of the effective actions taken by senior management, pupils' standards have improved from well below average to broadly average over the last four years. After the disappointing results in 2003, the leadership and staff together analysed the reasons for the lower than expected performance of pupils. The headteacher stated that it was 'a wake up call' and, as a result of staff development and higher expectations of all, standards improved significantly in 2004 and have continued to do so. Standards in the 2006 national tests at the end of Year 6 were the highest recorded over time. In its self-evaluation the school has rightly identified that its key priority for development 'is to ensure that all children, especially those identified as able, do as well as they can'. Inspectors take the same view as the school in judging achievement to be satisfactory. Currently, pupils' achievement is not high enough for the school's overall effectiveness to be judged as good, despite pupils' good personal development.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are clear about pupils' levels of attainment in each year group. However, this information is not used effectively enough to set clear, challenging targets to improve pupils' learning and achievement. Nor is it used to set teachers targets linked to pupils' progress.

A new management structure has been put in place but has yet to have an impact on pupils' achievement. Managers work closely together as a team and have a key part to play in creating a positive ethos in the school. They work well with other staff and are committed to improving pupils' achievement. Governors are increasingly fulfilling their roles as critical friends and using their expertise to assist the school.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

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

### 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed our visit and we want to share with you what we think about your school.

What is good about your school

- The headteacher, staff and governors know how to make your school better.
- The staff look after you well.
- You are polite and friendly and all get on so well together.
- You behave well.

What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better

- Help those of you who find learning easier to do better and reach higher standards.
- Plan more opportunities for you to speak and write more in all subjects to improve your standards in English.
- Set targets for each of you so that you make faster progress in your work.
- Make teaching even better to help you improve your learning.

We appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We trust that you will work with the headteacher and other staff to help them to improve the school. We wish you well for the future.