



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Loughborough

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 120215
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291670
Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Beacon Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Loughborough
Age range of pupils	4–11		LE11 2BG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01509 212204
Number on roll (school)	210	Fax number	01509 219913
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Peter Tickle
		Headteacher	Peter Giorgio
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2003		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 7–8 March 2007	Inspection number 291670
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: 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

Sacred Heart is an average size primary school. Pupils come to the school from a wide range of backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. This is because the headteacher is successful in promoting the school's aims to help pupils grow spiritually and academically. Children make a good start to their education in the Reception class. Members of staff work together well to provide a wide range of interesting activities that support the children's good progress. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are working within or beyond the levels expected for their age. Good teaching and learning continue in Years 1 to 6 and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. In writing, boys do less well than girls because teachers do not consistently expect them to do their best work in English or when writing in other subjects. Throughout the school, teachers provide a clear structure to their lessons so that instruction builds well on what pupils have already learnt.

Good relationships between members of staff and the pupils support the good personal development and well-being. As a result, pupils are keen to come to school and their behaviour is good. A good curriculum with a wide range of activities engages pupils' interest well. Care, guidance and support are good. The strong Catholic family atmosphere supports pupils' pastoral needs well and helps them to be happy and confident. Assessment information is used well in most lessons to plan work that meets pupils' differing needs and to help pupils to improve.

Leadership and management are good because areas to be developed are clearly identified and action taken is successful in improving provision and standards. For example, the headteacher's outstanding procedures for monitoring lessons have improved teaching rapidly. Teachers are eager to take on board suggestions to improve their work, and as a result the rate of pupils' progress has increased. The school recognises that the system for monitoring pupils' progress could be used more rigorously to check that all pupils make good progress.

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. One parent reflects the views of many others by saying, 'I am very proud to be a parent of a child who is attending such a wonderful school.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve boys' writing by providing them with greater challenge across the curriculum.
- Monitor pupils' progress more rigorously to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. Children in the Reception class make good progress and most are working at or beyond the levels expected for their age when they start in Year 1. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards

are above average. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Boys do less well than girls in writing because teachers do not consistently expect them to do their best. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants, enabling them to make good progress towards their individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils learn good values in this happy community. Children in the Reception class settle into routines quickly and are enthusiastic and chatty. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to learn, although boys are less motivated than girls to do well in writing. Most behaviour is good in lessons and at playtimes, although pupils are right in saying that 'play is sometimes a bit rough at lunchtimes'. Pupils' good enjoyment is reflected in their good rates of attendance.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is a particular strength and acts of worship are joyful occasions for pupils, members of staff and visitors. Pupils contribute well to the community. They raise money for charity and show good concern for the welfare and well-being of others. Older pupils respect each other's differing views and beliefs and show sensitivity when helping younger ones on the playground. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and are keen to take part in physical activities.

Pupils accept the many opportunities for taking responsibility well. They are proud to be school councillors and talk enthusiastically about improving the school. The school council is currently working to develop school meals. These activities prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in most lessons because they are taught well. In the Reception class, members of staff work together closely and help children to develop good independence and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Throughout the school, good relationships ensure that pupils are attentive and keen to learn. Pupils trust their teachers and this helps them to tackle their work with confidence and to ask for help when they need it. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to explain new concepts and to hold pupils' attention. Most teaching is successful in meeting different needs, although there are occasions when work lacks challenge or not enough is expected of the pupils. This is most evident in boys' writing. When this happens, pupils' learning slows. The support of teaching assistants has a good effect on learning, especially when they are working with pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Adults provide a good curriculum for children in the Reception class. Exciting activities link areas of learning well, and lead to good levels of motivation. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is broad and balanced, although there are occasions when some pupils who are receiving extra support in literacy and numeracy miss too much of one subject in a week. This limits their access to the full curriculum. There is a sharp focus on developing key skills in literacy and numeracy and this has been largely successful. The school has correctly identified that boys are given too few opportunities for producing good quality purposeful writing in different subjects. Older pupils particularly enjoy French because, as one pupil said, 'It will help us at our next school.'

Enrichment of the curriculum is good. A wide range of visits and visitors help to make learning interesting. There is a well attended after-school club for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Activities such as an anti-bullying week, cycling awareness training and visits from the police help pupils to learn about staying safe and healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents value the good way that pupils are looked after at school. As one parent wrote, 'There is a real feeling of care towards the children and we know that if there is a problem with our child we will be consulted.' Pupils say that they feel safe and secure and know to whom they should speak if they have a worry. The school works well with outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Good procedures for welcoming new children into the Reception class help them to settle quickly.

Academic support is good. The use of assessment information is improving with increasingly accurate use of targets and helpful information to pupils about how well they are doing. Pupils achieve well because their progress is carefully checked during the school year. As a result, pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work. There are occasions when boys are not guided to improve their writing quickly enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good, specific support, helping them to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is sharply focused on improving provision and standards. His monitoring of teaching and learning is exemplary and has resulted in good improvements in teaching across the school. Systems for checking how well the school is doing are good. Self-evaluation is accurate and there is a good understanding of the next steps needed for whole school development. These factors together with the pupils' good progress demonstrate that the school is well placed to improve further. The school has correctly identified that the new systems for tracking pupils' progress are not used fully to identify and support individuals or groups of

pupils making adequate rather than good progress. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and monitor their subjects closely. Governance is good. Governors take an active interest in the work of the school and they provide rigorous challenge.

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.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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 and for sharing your work with us. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to this good school.

Here are some important things about you and your school:

- You make good progress.
- You behave well and are good at helping others.
- Teachers do a good job and help you to learn quickly.
- You have an interesting range of things to do.
- All members of staff are kind and caring and look after you well.
- Your headteacher, other teachers, governors and school council are working together well to make your school even better.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Challenge boys to do better writing in all subjects.
- Use the information collected on how well you are doing to make sure you are all learning quickly.

What you can do to help the school:

- Try your best when writing.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We hope the Year 5's choral performance in the town hall goes well. The singing sounded super!