



# Sacred Heart Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 135029  
**Local Authority** Sandwell  
**Inspection number** 294256  
**Inspection date** 25 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Roger Sadler

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Victoria Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Tipton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11		DY4 8SW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 5571511
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	130	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 5571668
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ghulan Rasool
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn Cooper
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school was opened as a community primary school in September 2005 after 80 years as a Catholic primary school. Pupils are taught in four classes, with the youngest children in a 'mornings only' Nursery. The vast majority of pupils are from families with Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds and do not speak English as their main language at home. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. The school is situated in an area of considerable economic disadvantage.

## 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 with some outstanding features. Outstanding leadership and management have ensured that teaching is good and steadily improving so that all pupils achieve well and make good progress. Children start Nursery and Reception with knowledge and skill levels well below what is nationally expected, with low skills in English. By the end of the Foundation Stage, although most pupils attain well below national expectations, good provision ensures that they progress well and are becoming confident in their understanding of English. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well but standards remain about a year behind national averages by the age of seven. Teaching is good overall and outstanding in Years 5 and 6. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and help pupils make good progress. In all but the top class, pupils sometimes do not evaluate their own and others' work sufficiently, because teachers miss chances to establish clearly what a good piece of work should look like. Care, guidance and support are outstanding and teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. The school assesses and checks the progress and personal development of each pupil meticulously. Assessment information is used carefully to help each pupil achieve well. Pupils at risk of underachieving are identified early and special programmes are provided to help them catch up and do their best. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' growing confidence and skills in English and outstanding teaching help them to make rapid progress and achieve average standards. Although Year 6 test results were below average in 2006, many pupils in that year group found learning hard. 2005 test results were in line with national averages and school assessment information and inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 5 and 6 pupils are on track to attain national expectations in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum is good, as it meets the needs of all pupils and helps them achieve well.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They thrive in an atmosphere of care and consideration that adults consistently show towards them. Although pupils enjoy school, attendance levels are well below average owing to extended visits abroad by a few pupils, and this slows the progress of those involved. Pupils are courteous, concentrate well and work hard. Their behaviour is good and they show consideration for others' safety and feelings. The school's increasing emphasis on exercise and healthy eating is helping pupils adopt healthy lifestyles.

Governors, staff and pupils are effectively involved in making important decisions about the school and parents are carefully consulted. All parents who responded through the Ofsted questionnaire are fully supportive of the school. Excellent leadership and management give the school outstanding capacity to continue to improve further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Help pupils understand how to assess and improve specific aspects of their work in line with the best practice in Years 5 and 6.

- Improve attendance and reduce the effect on the learning of the few pupils who take extended absence during term time.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress and attain standards in line with the national average by the age of 11.

Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception and good provision helps them develop confidence in understanding English by the time they enter Year 1. However, most remain well below national expectations in all areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, pupils progress well but leave Year 2 around a year behind the national average. The school ensures that those who are behind are given very good support, often by teaching assistants, and this helps them continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4. By Year 5, pupils are becoming much more skilled and confident in their reading and writing and this helps them make faster progress in all subjects. The school has set ambitious targets in English and mathematics for pupils currently in Years 5 and 6. Because of outstanding teaching, most pupils are on track to attain national expectations and an average proportion of pupils to attain the higher levels. The school has recognised that investigative work and problem solving is a weaker aspect of mathematics, and the staff as a whole are working well to improve this. Writing standards are improving as teachers ensure that pupils are given good chances to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects. Because teachers hold high expectations, pupils present their work well.

The school accurately assesses learning difficulties and carefully tailors teaching and the use of teaching assistants to ensure that the needs of pupils are met. This helps those pupils who find learning hard to make good progress and achieve well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Every child clearly matters in this school. Pupils are very happy, and one spoke for them all saying, 'I like school because the teachers are fair and I have friends'. Consequently, they work hard and behave well. Even though pupils clearly enjoy school, attendance is well below average owing to some families taking children on extended visits abroad during term time. This disrupts the learning and slows the progress of the pupils concerned. The school ensures pupils understand how to be healthy. Fruit and water are available and pupils are keen to participate in physical activities, including sports, aerobics and karate. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that bullying is very rare. They are confident that any concerns are swiftly dealt with. The school has strong links with the local high school for sports and information and communication technology. These links help pupils move to the next stage of their education confidently. Their good personal development and confidence in English and mathematics prepare them well for the world of work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social

and cultural development is good. They learn to respect other faiths and cultures, and participate in local arts events. Pupils particularly love attending performances at the theatre. The school councillors are proud of their fundraising efforts for charity and to provide equipment 'to make the playground better'. Pupils willingly tidy the classrooms and the playground and are keen to participate in the current recycling project, so making valuable contributions to their community.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have confident subject knowledge and use this well to ensure that direct teaching to the whole class is clear and interesting. Staff use interactive whiteboards confidently in their teaching and this often adds interest and clarity to lessons. Teachers work in close cooperation with teaching assistants. They plan lessons well and ensure that all pupils' needs are met and that work is very carefully tailored to meet the learning needs of each individual. Pupils with learning difficulties enjoy lessons and make good progress because staff provide consistently good support for their learning. Higher attaining pupils enjoy the challenge of undertaking more difficult work and are enjoying the school's increasing emphasis on investigative and problem-solving work. Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are outstanding and help pupils make rapid progress to reach national standards by the age of eleven. Expectations are high and opportunities to develop language skills, by working in pairs, are frequently provided. In most classes chances are sometimes missed to give pupils clear guidance on how to assess their own and others' work. This is not the case in Years 5 and 6, where pupils show an impressive awareness of where and how they need to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is effectively adapted to the different needs of all learners, so all pupils progress well. Knowledgeable and skilled teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English. As the majority of pupils enter school with very limited knowledge of English, the school appropriately places strong emphasis on ensuring pupils learn to speak, listen, read and write in English so that, by the time they leave Year 6, they are at or above national standards. The staff make learning interesting and enjoyable and pupils develop key skills such as literacy and information and communication technology in other subjects. Reception children, for example, learned to write letters and make models linked to the visit of 'the animal man' who brought live animals into school. The school provides a rich range of experiences through working with professional sportsmen and musicians. Pupils enjoy and benefit from an annual residential visit.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a welcoming, happy environment where pupils and their parents feel safe and secure. One pupil said, 'The school makes me feel at home'. Staff work closely with all families and know their pupils very well so they are very well supported and guided. Pupils' personal development is carefully monitored and the monitoring of academic progress is meticulous and results in the provision of carefully tailored extra programmes to make sure that they do their best. Arrangements to ensure pupils are safeguarded meet current requirements. Strong partnerships with outside support agencies benefit pupils and their families. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those still learning English are supported outstandingly well by staff, who show high levels of respect and concern for their pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and assistant head provide outstanding leadership and management, resulting in rising standards and good progress and achievement. The headteacher has the full support of staff, parents and governors and has very successfully worked to improve the confidence and skills of teachers and teaching assistants. Checking is thorough and systematic and through careful evaluation the school has an accurate, challenging and detailed picture of what needs to be done to bring about further improvements in provision and standards. A shared determination to provide the best for pupils, along with outstanding leadership and management, means that the school has outstanding capacity to continue to adapt and improve in the light of new circumstances. Governors carry out their roles effectively and enthusiastically.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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 making Kathleen McArthur and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that you like your school so much. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. We think your school is very well run and is giving you a good education. Adults provide good teaching and care for you well so that you make good progress. You are being well prepared for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond. You show good understanding of the importance of eating the right food and exercising regularly. The work you do is interesting and your behaviour is good. You know right from wrong, show consideration for others and are friendly and helpful to each other. I was impressed by how older pupils take responsibility for helping others within the school. Those of you who find learning hard make good progress because the school gives good attention to helping you learn.

There are two things that we have asked your school to work on.

- Help those of you in most classes to understand how to assess and improve particular aspects of your work as well as those of you in Years 5 and 6.
- Work to improve levels of attendance and help those of you who are absent during term time keep up with their school work.

With very best wishes for the future,