



Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 102916
Local Authority Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number 296530
Inspection dates 4–5 December 2006
Reporting inspector Nicola Davies

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Mark's Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Teddington
Age range of pupils	4–11		TW11 9DD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8977 6591
Number on roll (school)	194	Fax number	020 8943 2449
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms S Ward
		Headteacher	Mr M Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2003		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	4–5 December 2006	296530

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a one form entry Catholic primary school which serves the parish of the Sacred Heart. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage but just under a third of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Since the time of the last inspection, Sacred Heart has maintained the good standard of education it provides. Children enter the reception class with generally above average skills, which are well developed in the effective Foundation Stage. This means that by the time they start Year 1 most pupils are working at levels above those found nationally. Consistently good teaching and careful attention to developing pupils' basic skills mean that, by the time they leave, almost all pupils attain at least nationally expected levels and the majority exceed them. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 are consistently and exceptionally high which represents good achievement overall from pupils' starting points. This is the result of the consistently good teaching and the interesting curriculum, combined with the school's strong commitment to ensuring that all learners do, and are helped to do, the best they can.

Under the calm leadership of the effective headteacher, the school has recently improved procedures for monitoring, evaluating and improving its work. Teachers, governors and staff have identified the main issues that will help the school to improve further. For example, the school is improving the way that it tracks pupils' progress and has improved arrangements for staff to investigate and enhance provision in areas for which they are responsible. Although these are beginning to be effective, the school is not yet using information concerning pupils' progress sharply enough to 'fine tune' what it needs to do next to improve further. Similarly, although teachers have high expectations of all pupils, on occasions, the activities which pupils undertake are not well enough matched to the needs of all pupils; for example, those who are most able or those who are experiencing difficulties. However, as one parent commented, 'The teaching staff are a very caring and professional team'. Staff are working well together to learn from each other so as to bring about further improvements. A similar team spirit can be seen in the pupils, who are proud of their school, enjoy their time there and have their own ideas about how to further improve the school for themselves and other pupils.

The school has made many improvements since the last inspection whilst maintaining pupils' good personal development and high academic standards. For example, the school building now provides an improved and more secure environment for learning, including the excellent school library, which pupils tremendously enjoy using. Similarly, changes in the reception class mean that the youngest pupils now have better opportunities to learn outdoors. This successful record of improving the quality of education that it provides, combined with the school's knowledgeable and dedicated staff, supportive parents and well-informed governors, confirms its good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that progress data are used well to inform the school's future plans and priorities
- Ensure that activities are consistently well matched to pupils' next steps.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are very high. Children enter the school with above average knowledge and skills. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and this continues in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, standards are very high in reading, writing and mathematics. Considerable emphasis is placed on speaking and listening as a foundation for reading and writing which helps pupils to achieve well in these areas. In Years 3 to 6 this good progress is maintained so that at the end of Year 6, standards are exceptionally high in mathematics, science and particularly in English. Given pupils' above average starting points, this means achievement is good overall. The school has identified writing as an area for improvement and there is evidence that this is improving further. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils, such as girls and boys, and almost all pupils reach the challenging targets that are set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well being, including their spiritual, social, cultural and moral development, are good. Behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly and enjoy working and helping each other, typified by one pupil's comment that 'In our school, pupils in different year groups get on really well and play together'. Pupils are keenly aware of the need for healthy lifestyles and participate enthusiastically in the range of opportunities they have for physical exercise, both during and after school. Pupils contribute well to the school and to the wider community. For example, in school they act as prefects and safety officers, help younger pupils, and enjoy their responsibilities as school councillors. The school council works hard to further improve playtimes and lunchtimes and is pursuing ideas such as a healthy tuck shop. Further afield, pupils are proud of their very good and long standing partnership with Ayeltige School in Ghana, sharing letters and organising fund-raising activities, through which they have already raised enough money to build five classrooms.

Attendance is above average and pupils enjoy school a good deal. For example, a number of parents reported how fondly ex-pupils recall their days at Sacred Heart. Although pupils' independent use of information and communication technology (ICT) has been limited by the school's unreliable computer equipment, their very good skills in English and mathematics, along with their well-developed social and personal skills means they are well prepared for their secondary schooling.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is consistently good. This is reflected in both the results that pupils achieve and in pupils' good attitudes to learning which means that they all want their work to be the best that they can achieve. Teachers use a variety of methods, including the new interactive whiteboards, to ensure pupils understand their learning and what they need to do. Although teachers generally plan for the range of pupils in their classes, on occasions, activities for pupils are not as well matched as they could be to their needs, for example, to those of more able pupils or those requiring more support. There are good relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils and behaviour is good. Teachers are secure in what they want pupils to achieve and their expectations are high. Pupils say that good quality marking 'helps us do better'. Many pupils are encouraged to take part in setting and reviewing their own targets although in some lessons, opportunities for pupils to share and discuss their learning amongst themselves are missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Pupils' work and displays around the school show a good range of activities which are enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors to school. Good planning and interesting activities support the high standards that pupils achieve in English and mathematics. For example, during 'Craft and Conversation' sessions, teachers and parent volunteers develop younger pupils' speaking and listening skills alongside their practical skills. Pupils enjoy ICT but their progress is only satisfactory because of technical problems with the school computers which the school is currently addressing. Pupils develop an understanding of economic well-being through an enterprise scheme. Pupils enjoy physical education and the school places strong emphasis on this. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, including some which are led by the school's supportive parents. The school enjoys strong links with the parish which contribute well to pupils' enjoyment and achievement. For example, during the inspection pupils enjoyed visiting the church to practise their Christmas play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Parents appreciate the care and concern which staff show for their children during their time at the school and the procedures which are in place to protect pupils and keep them safe. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are generally well supported. Experienced specialist staff identify pupils' needs well and make the most of support available from specialist external agencies. This, along with help from the school's teaching assistants, contributes to the good

progress that such pupils make from their starting points. The school is in the process of reviewing procedures to ensure that pupils with particular needs or difficulties, particularly in the earlier years of schooling, are speedily identified and well supported.

Many teachers use information on the academic progress of pupils well to set targets which pupils understand and try hard to meet. For example, the youngest children have helpful termly individual targets which they share with parents, but targets for pupils in some other classes are not yet well enough matched to individual pupils' next steps.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the school is well focused on promoting learning and the personal development and well-being of learners. This can be seen in the strong commitment of all those involved with the school to ensuring that all learners do, and are helped to do, their best. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and through this process, the school has recognised that it needs to make better use of information about teaching and pupils' progress over time to influence its plans for future development. Teachers with responsibilities for different subjects and areas have recently had welcome opportunities and time to observe colleagues' teaching, which is helping them share good practice and identify areas where the school could do better still. Teaching and other staff work well as a team to ensure that the school runs smoothly and effectively. Governors make a good contribution to many aspects of school life and are effectively involved in helping the school to continue to improve by posing challenging and searching questions.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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	1
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 so much for helping us with our inspection of your school. We enjoyed watching and talking to you in lessons and at break times. Mr Griffiths told me he especially enjoyed watching some of you rehearsing at the church with your teachers, so thank you again.

We are pleased to let you know that we agreed with you, your parents, your teachers and your governors that Sacred Heart is a good school. Part of this is about the high standards that you reach in your work but it is also about the interesting experiences you have at school and the way that you develop into thoughtful and mature young people. We were pleased not only with the way the school encourages you to do your best but also with how you learn to think about and help others. This will give you a good start when you move on to your secondary schools.

Your teachers and all the other adults in the school work well as a team to make sure you are well cared for and educated. Recently they have begun to look closely at what they could do to make Sacred Heart even better. This includes using information about how well you do as you go through the school and looking at each other's lessons to see what they can learn. We have asked them to carry on doing this and also to see whether there are times when some of you might need a bit more challenge or a bit more support in your lessons. Your school also has governors who like to ask your headteacher and your teachers tricky questions, as well as your school council who find out about your ideas and opinions and see what they can do to help. Working together like this means that the school can continue to do what it does well and get even better.

It was lovely to meet so many of you and we wish you every success in the future.

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector