

# Holy Family Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 105830       |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Rochdale     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 308964       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 8 May 2008   |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Marie Cordey |

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 category</b>                    | Voluntary aided                                        |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11                                                   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed                                                  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |                                                        |
| School                                    | 193                                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Doreen Boardman                                    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs M Roberts                                          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 7 June 2004                                            |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Great Gates Road<br>Rochdale<br>Lancashire<br>OL11 2DA |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 1706 640480                                            |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 1706 640480                                            |

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|--------------------------|------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the pupils' achievement and standards; the quality of teaching and learning; pupils' personal development and well-being and how well the schools' leadership promotes care and high standards. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, parents' questionnaires, scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. In addition, discussions were held with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as provided in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school set in an area of some social and economic disadvantage. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. More than a quarter of pupils, which is above average, have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Above average numbers of pupils are of Eastern European heritage and are at an early stage of learning English. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark Award for its sports provision.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Holy Family is an outstanding school and provides the highest quality of care and education. It lives up to its aim, 'Promoting excellence in academic and spiritual learning.' Pupils are welcoming, polite and confident. Parents rate the school very highly, a typical comment being, 'My child loves going to school and loves learning.' The headteacher's vision and belief in the pupils underpins their outstanding personal and academic development.

Pupils make outstanding progress to achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6 from low starting points on entry to Nursery. Their standards and achievement have improved steadily over recent years, thanks to rigorous tracking of their progress. Swift, effective action is taken whenever pupils are not performing as well as they should. Pupils are knowledgeable and very much enjoy their challenging lessons. They are skilled mathematicians and scientists who relish investigational work and delight in having a problem to solve. This is because they are taught to analyse how things happen and to use learning to help them work out problems. Raising standards in writing remains a priority for the school, in particular, to reduce further the attainment gap between boys and girls.

Pupils develop into considerate, confident members of society and make an outstanding contribution to their community. They take on a number of responsible roles acting as prefects, playground pals and 'eco' team members. Members of the school council are proud of the difference they have made to school life. Examples of their work vary from improvements such as fences around the school and play equipment, to window blinds, because pupils do not want their learning to be disturbed. They are generous fund-raisers for charitable causes and take care of their local environment through planting flowers, for example. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. It is based on respect and tolerance for each other which reflect how they are treated by adults. Excellent attitudes are summed up in the school's motto, 'Our first duty is to affirm each child and indeed each other.' Pupils attend well, eat healthily in the dining room and exercise regularly. This includes warm up games in lessons which pupils take part in enthusiastically, saying that it helps them to limber up for learning.

Outstanding teaching and learning are based on very high, yet realistic and achievable, expectations for every pupil. The pupils benefit from an outstanding curriculum and the many other activities on offer, such as sport. Lessons are planned well with support staff and matched very closely to the needs of all pupils. Consequently, all pupils, including those who are at an early stage of learning English and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are catered for extremely well and make outstanding progress. More focused preparation of activities to engage and stimulate boys is beginning to lead to improvements in their writing. Excellent provision for information and communication technology is playing a big part in this. There is a concerted approach to informing and including pupils in the assessment of their learning. This ensures that they are very aware of how they are doing in their work and are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.

Central to the school's character is the drive and determination of its leaders. This is spearheaded by a caring and conscientious headteacher who has provided an outstanding example for all the school's leaders to follow. The school promotes a culture where it is not acceptable for anyone to think that pupils may not achieve and develop as well as they possibly can. Any barriers to pupils' learning are seen as opportunities to develop provision and improve pupils'

progress. Excellent leadership and management ensure that pupils are safeguarded and that their care, guidance and support are outstanding. Consequently, pupils have learned very well how to keep themselves safe. Links with outside services such as attendance officers, educational psychologists and local authority partners make an outstanding contribution to pupils' achievement and well-being. Governors are very supportive, but also pride themselves on rigorously challenging the school's performance. Consequently, governance is outstanding. The school provides excellent value for money and challenging targets are used very well to raise standards. Based on an outstanding track record of improvement since the previous inspection and the impact of its very effective self-evaluation, the school has an excellent capacity to improve still further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children in the Foundation Stage are very well provided for and quickly settle into the Nursery and Reception classes. Home visits and drop in sessions before children start school make them feel comfortable and very well prepared for school life. Leadership, teaching and learning are outstanding and children make excellent progress. The committed team of staff plan a wide range of activities to promote learning. Systematic teaching of letter sounds and number recognition improves writing and an emphasis on children's speaking and listening makes them good communicators. Parents expect a positive learning atmosphere because they are made to feel welcome and kept well informed about their child's progress.

A significant number of children attain many of the early learning goals for their age by the time they leave Reception. From very low starting points when they join the Nursery, children become more sociable, independent and confident. Boys initially, in particular, have exceptionally low skills when communicating with others. Although their communication skills remain below those of girls, the school's deliberate focus on the use of computers and big play equipment engages their interest. Their concentration and physical development improves as a result and overall, they make similar outstanding progress to that of girls.

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

- Raise standards in writing, especially for boys.

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## Annex A

## 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? | 1   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection                                                                  | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?                                                         | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage                                                                                                         | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements                                                                                                   | 1   |

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

|                                                                                                               |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?                                  | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles                                                         | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices                                                             | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education                                                                       | 1 |
| The attendance of learners                                                                                    | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners                                                                                     | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|                                                                                                    |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 1 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?                                             | 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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards                                                              | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation                                                                                            | 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                                          | 1   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities                                                  | 1   |
| 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  |



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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Holy Family Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale, Rochdale, OL11 2DA

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to me when I came to inspect your school. I would especially like to thank the pupils who met with me to give their views of the school and the many other pupils who made sure that they had the chance to talk to me. You are all very polite and enthusiastic. You were very keen to show how good the school is and to let me know how much you like being there.

Like you and your parents, I think that yours is an excellent school. You learn very well and improve your standards, especially in mathematics, reading and science. You look forward to lessons and love being involved and given the chance to show how much you have learned. You eat very healthy food and take a very active part in physical education lessons and all the many sporting activities. You are very sociable and very well cared for and, in turn, you look after others so that they feel valued. This is because of the outstanding way that the school looks after you and encourages you to look after others. You think carefully about things and work hard to do your best. It is lovely to see you in lessons and assemblies as you enjoy the well earned praise and appreciation you deserve. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle down very quickly and enjoy coming to school. They make excellent improvements to their work and become much more independent.

I have asked your school to further improve your writing standards, especially for the boys. You can help by working hard with your teachers on this.