

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	107111
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	309316
Inspection dates	24–25 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Dodd

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pauline McConnon
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Pilkiw
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2003
School address	Ripley Street Sheffield South Yorkshire S6 2NU
Telephone number	0114 2344362
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Age group	4-11
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Amended Report Addendum

Mrs

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all the pupils at this average sized school are from White British family backgrounds. It draws its pupils from a wide area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. An above average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Space within the school building is very limited. As a result, some activities take place in the church presbytery. The school has achieved the Activemark and Basic Skills accreditations.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has an accurate view of its effectiveness and provides good value for money. The strong sense of belonging to the 'Sacred Heart' family underpins all aspects of school life. In this very warm and caring setting, pupils achieve well and their personal development is good. High on the school's agenda is making sure that pupils enjoy learning, are safe and healthy, and play an active part in the school community. It is no surprise, therefore, that many parents think highly of the school. They appreciate the quality of education on offer and say that their children, 'progress beyond their expectations and become confident achievers'. As a result, pupils are well placed to become responsible young citizens of the future.

Pupils across the school, including those in the Foundation Stage and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average overall. This good progress is because pupils benefit from good quality teaching and learning. Recent changes to teaching practices are improving the quality of teaching and learning even further and, as a result, standards are rising. Skilful analysis, particularly by the assessment coordinator, of the data about pupils' progress ensures teachers are clear about where pupils could do even better. As a result, lesson plans take good account of what pupils can already do. Efforts to help pupils to understand how well they are meeting learning objectives in lessons and by marking their work are not yet fully successful because practice between classes is inconsistent.

Pupils' good personal development is reflected in their good behaviour and attitudes towards their work. An interesting and enriching curriculum contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of all that is on offer. Pupils' good spiritual development ensures that they value, respect and show sensitivity towards others. Although pupils' appreciation of their own culture and of faiths other than their own is good, they have insufficient opportunities to learn about the multi-cultural nature of the society in which they live.

A key factor in the school's success and in improving standards is the headteacher's very good leadership. She makes sure that every pupil achieves well in a caring and supportive environment, and that progress is tracked very carefully. From this, the school has developed a well-focused plan, which accurately pinpoints what needs to improve as a priority. There is a sense of common purpose and shared vision amongst senior staff that is taking the school forward at a good pace. As a result, subject leaders and governors have started to use their improved skills to check the progress and successes of initiatives more closely. Strong partnerships, particularly with the church and the community, contribute further to the school's success. The partnership with the church is especially strong and demonstrated in the way it provides valuable extra space for the school. Although this is a good school that knows itself well, there is no sign of complacency and it strives to do even better. The rising standards and accelerated progress of pupils reflect the good improvement since the previous inspection. The capacity to improve in the future is, therefore, good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children start in Reception, their skills are below those typical for their age, and their communication skills are often weak. Effective management ensures that the quality of teaching and learning is good, and that children enjoy learning in a lively and stimulating setting. A

strong focus on children's personal, social and emotional development and their communication skills ensures that learning in all areas of their work gets off to a good start. Adults provide good support to help children to learn to get along well together, talk about their activities and behave well. As a result, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as well as in their communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. When children transfer to Year 1, their skills in most areas of learning are at the levels expected, although their communication skills remain weaker because they have more catching up to do. Staff keep a watchful eye on how well individual children are doing so that daily activities cater for their learning needs. They have now started to review this information more closely. This is enabling them to identify where or how teaching and the curriculum might be fine-tuned to speed up children's progress even further, especially in their communication skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils know how well they are doing in meeting learning objectives in lessons and are given clear guidance through the marking of their work of exactly what they need to improve next.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of the society in which they live.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The achievement of boys and girls of all ages, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, and standards by Year 6 are above average. Standards have been rising over the last few years. In the 2007 national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were above average in mathematics and science and even higher than this in English. This represents good progress from their starting points, particularly in English. Improvements in standards have been achieved because the school has started to set more challenging learning targets than previously. Coupled with more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, this has resulted in pupils' progress accelerating. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics, representing good progress. Pupils' strong progress in reading and writing helps them to make up for their relatively weaker communication skills at the beginning of Year 1. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because they access a good range of individually tailored support programmes to meet their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral and social development is good. The fact that pupils enjoy school is evident in their good behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils show their growing maturity by reflecting thoughtfully on their own actions and those of others. They know, for example, why it is important to 'forgive, forget and move on'. Attendance is above average and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils develop a good understanding of appropriate ways to behave. They say that, because their achievements and successes are celebrated often, they feel motivated to try their best. Pupils have a good understanding of why it is important to eat sensibly and how to keep their bodies and minds healthy, for example, through peer massage sessions. Older pupils are good role models for younger ones, demonstrating a strong sense of social responsibility and community spirit. This reflects in the enthusiasm with which they take on

responsibilities around school, such as looking after one another as 'playground friends'. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Although pupils have a good appreciation of their own culture and faith traditions, their understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern Britain is limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Interesting lessons, good organisation, positive relationships and carefully tailored questioning typify the good quality of teaching and learning. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards available in some classrooms to enliven pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are attentive, behave well and are keen to learn. Teachers make very good use of information showing what pupils can already do in order to plan work that matches the varying abilities of their pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. Staff are embracing with enthusiasm recent changes to practice, aimed at improving the quality of teaching even further. Clear learning objectives, for example, are shared with pupils at the start of lessons. Teachers do not always use these objectives, however, as a means of helping pupils to assess their own success with meeting them. Although pupils are becoming increasingly aware of how well they are learning, marking of their work does not always help them to know exactly what to do next to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils of all ages to enjoy learning and to achieve well. The school places high priority on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, so that pupils are well prepared for their secondary education. Well-planned educational visits and visitors and a good range of extra-curricular activities encourage and enrich their learning. The particularly good range of sporting activities on offer, for example, reflects the school's achievement of the Activemark award. A variety of additional programmes support pupils with specific additional learning needs and enable them to achieve as well as other pupils. The school has successfully extended opportunities for challenging the thinking of the more able pupils, especially in English and mathematics. The curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education ensures that pupils make good progress in knowing how to keep themselves healthy and safe. The multi-cultural aspects of the curriculum, however, are underdeveloped. Careful timetabling for the use of the information and communication technology suite ensures that all pupils have equal access.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

As a result of the school's caring and nurturing ethos, pupils achieve well. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place. Pupils feel safe because they know that there is always someone on hand who will listen and provide help if needed. Keeping a very close eye on pupils' progress helps staff to pinpoint problems early, and to provide the right kind of support so that pupils do not fall behind. Well-trained classroom assistants and strong partnerships with external agencies ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have the help they need to achieve well. Pupils with social and emotional difficulties benefit from support that is tailored

to their individual needs. For example, the use of the 'multi-sensory' room in the presbytery helps pupils to understand how they can better manage their own feelings and concentrate on their learning. The provision of this room is the result of dedicated and enthusiastic staff working in close partnership with the church. Although the school is increasing opportunities for pupils to become involved in understanding how well they are getting on and what they have to do next to improve, practice is not yet consistent throughout the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

A strong sense of unity underpins the school's good leadership, management and governance. As a result of the headteacher's vision and determination, everyone feels valued and they work together to ensure a happy, caring, inclusive school that is well thought of by parents. Standards are rising year on year because improving the quality of pupils' education is always on the agenda. The assessment coordinator makes a significant contribution to this improvement. Her skilful analysis of data about pupils' progress enables staff to know where pupils could do even better. This helps subject leaders to fine-tune the curriculum and to plan appropriate training for staff. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and also know where it can be better. As a result of recent training, governors and subject leaders are now beginning to play a greater role in school self-evaluation, including checking the success of initiatives for themselves. The school has accurately evaluated its own effectiveness and, with the exception of pupils' limited understanding of multi-cultural Britain, pinpointed the right priorities to focus tightly upon. Success is highly evident in the good improvements made since the previous inspection, particularly in standards in English throughout the school. This supports the judgement that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve in the future.

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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
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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
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Sheffield, S6 2NU

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors to thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. You answered all our questions really thoughtfully. You were all friendly and polite, your behaviour was good and you worked hard in lessons.

I can see why you told me that you enjoy coming to school and why so many of your parents are very pleased with it. All the adults care about you and want you to do well. I particularly enjoyed hearing how proud you are of the awards you receive to celebrate when you have done something well, particularly for being so kind, caring and respectful. It is also good to hear that, if you have any problems or are upset about anything, there is always an adult on hand to help.

Your school is a good school. You do well in your learning and the standards you reach are higher than those found typically by Year 6. The school makes sure that you are well prepared for when you move on to secondary school. All the adults in your school work hard together to make things even better for you. I have asked them to do the following things:

- To make sure all your teachers explain to you even more clearly what you are expected to learn in your lessons and to get you to think more about just how well you are getting on. I have also asked your teachers to make more helpful comments when they mark your work, so that you are clearer about how you can make your work even better.
- To ensure you get even more chances to learn about the different cultures that there are in Britain.

You can help your school to become even better by making sure that you understand what you are expected to learn. You can also help by telling your teachers how well you think you are doing and checking all the time what you still have to do to reach your targets. You should of course, continue to try your very best in everything that you do.