

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101050
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	323398
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Pritiben Patel

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	307
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Gibbon
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Kiernan/Mr Anthony Gibbons
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Roehampton Lane Roehampton London SW15 5NX

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2009
Inspection number	323398

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Age group 3-11

Inspection dates 30 June -1 July 2009

Inspection number 323398

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sacred Heart is a large primary school. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and of pupils who speak English as an additional language, are above average. Twenty-four different languages are spoken, the main ones being English and Polish, and 44 pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English. More pupils than usual have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such as speech, language and communication, or behavioural and social, needs. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above the national average. More pupils than usual join or leave the school other than at the expected times. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has attained Healthy School Status and the Activemark for sports. Sacred Heart is currently led by two co-headteachers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary is a good school because key aspects of the school's work are good, such as the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and pupils' progress. The vast majority of parents are happy with the positive changes made so far by the new leadership team. Comments such as 'I feel that Sacred Heart has come on a long way' were typical.

The Catholic ethos of the school has a good impact on pupils' personal development and well-being. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils participate in weekly mass, and learn about different cultures, for example during multicultural day, where pupils dress in national costume and eat food from around the world. Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes and enjoy school. Their adoption of safe practices is good. Pupils know about internet safety and work safely, for example when they made switches using various materials in a Year 4 science lesson. Adoption of healthy lifestyles is good. Pupils drink water throughout the day, eat healthy lunches and participate in physical activities, such as netball, tae kwon do and football. The school has been awarded Healthy School Status and the Activemark in recognition of this positive work.

Pupils make a good contribution to school life. For example, the school motto, 'Only my best is good enough', was suggested by a Year 4 pupil and is now used throughout the school by pupils and staff alike. Pupils also have an input into the school improvement plan and participate as school council members. Attendance is satisfactory. Senior leaders are working hard to improve attendance and punctuality by calling parents on the first day of absence, awarding trophies, as well as by using incentives such as letting the children look after chickens if they arrive at school on time. This is beginning to have a positive impact.

There have been some significant staff changes at senior leadership level in recent years, which have led to some instability within the school. This has resulted in the appointment of two co-headteachers. The two new leaders have swiftly improved key aspects of the school. They have worked hard to establish a cohesive staff who share the same ethos and vision, by improving staff morale. Staff at all levels work well together and are very supportive of one another. Key initiatives put in place by these leaders are helping to raise standards and achievement. For example, the whole-school tracking system is beginning to be used to identify those pupils who are not making the expected progress, so that support can be provided at an early stage. The quality of teaching and learning is improving because of systematic observations with a focus on pupils' learning. The rapid progress senior leaders have made in a short time demonstrates there is good capacity for further improvement. They have developed good links with external agencies, such as sports associations, local schools and universities, to improve provision for pupils.

Pupils begin school with below-average starting points and attain average standards by the time they leave in Year 6. There have been variations in standards in some years but standards have improved in 2009 for pupils at the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics, to match the national picture. This was partly due to a focus on the teaching of mental mathematics, teacher training and improved resources. Pupils' attainment of average standards, along with their satisfactory attendance, means they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their schooling. The school has identified that standards for more able pupils are not in line with the national picture, and have put plans in place to address this.

Pupils make good progress, particularly those that have been with the school from an early age, because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their ideas, resources are interesting and used well to engage pupils, and planning is detailed. However, more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in all lessons and, as a result, they are not attaining the higher levels.

The curriculum is good and has a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment. Pupils greatly enjoy the external visits that are arranged for them, to the beach, to museums and to Covent Garden. Music is a strong feature of the school. For example, Year 4 pupils play the trumpet and Year 3 pupils the recorder, while pupils from Years 5 and 6 sing in the choir. Focus weeks, such as for science, reading and the environment, help to make learning meaningful. A current priority is to develop links between different subjects so that pupils can transfer skills learnt in one subject to another.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. There are inconsistencies in teachers' marking which, while up to date, does not consistently inform pupils about what they need to do next to improve their work. As a result, not all pupils are clear about their next steps for learning. Pastoral support is a strength. The high proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive good support, which helps them to make good progress in line with their peers. Safeguarding procedures are securely in place.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with abilities below national expectations for their age. This is because of the considerable number of children who join the school speaking little or no English. By the time they leave the Reception class, they have made good progress, particularly in problem solving, reasoning, and number, creative and physical development, and in aspects of personal and social development. Children are able to concentrate well on activities they are involved in. For example, one boy created a Lego model car with considerable skill, while two girls created animal shapes for a display. There has been a focus on improving writing this year which has led to improvement in literacy development.

Adult-led activities support the children well and they clearly enjoy and learn a lot from numeracy games and the use of the interactive whiteboard. A range of stimulating and interesting exploratory activities are provided for children to support learning. Adults support these activities well through good questioning, leading pupils to develop their learning and understanding. The provision in the outdoor area has improved this year but there is still considerable scope to improve the outdoor curriculum further. There is limited space for children to cycle or to use other similar equipment. Children are well looked after. There are trusting and caring relationships between adults and children. Leadership and management are good. There is good communication with parents and carers. During the inspection, an assembly by both Reception classes was much enjoyed and very well attended by parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards by ensuring that more able pupils receive more challenging work in all lessons.
- Improve the quality of academic guidance for pupils so that they know what they need to do next to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress because assessments are beginning to be carried out on a regular basis, helping teachers to gain a better understanding of where pupils are, and to provide early support if needed. The improvement in the quality of teaching and learning is also a key factor for improved progress.

There have been variations in standards over time. In 2009 standards improved in all subjects to match the national picture, particularly in mathematics. The school has plans in place to improve standards in English by, for example, providing pupils with increased opportunities to write across the curriculum. Improving the attainment of more able pupils in all subjects is also a priority identified by senior leaders. Hence, pupils complete 'Extras for Experts', challenges in English and mathematics which help to extend learning. Such strategies are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are new to English make good progress because of close links between school and home and appropriate support programmes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. They work and play well together and clearly enjoy being in school and the activities provided for them. Spiritual development is good, with regular prayers taking place in classes that reflect the ethos of the school and links with the local chapel. The 'It's good to be green' strategy has had a positive impact on behaviour, which is good. There are harmonious and supportive relationships throughout the school. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living and take part in and enjoy the many physical activities that are available to them, such as dance. They know why they should not bring sweets and chocolate to school and what constitutes a healthy diet. Pupils play safely in the playground and wear hats to keep safe in the sun. The school has an active school council which is chaired by the head boy and head girl. Pupils are involved in the school choir and in a range of productions and assemblies for parents and carers.

A range of strategies to improve pupils' satisfactory attendance are beginning to have a positive impact.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Strengths in teaching and learning include good relationships between staff and pupils, a wide range of activities and a brisk pace throughout lessons. In most lessons the teacher's enthusiasm and passion shine through. Good questioning helps to engage pupils. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher used a good range of open questions to develop pupils' understanding of child labour and poverty. The effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) also impacts positively on pupils' learning and engagement. Where the work is well matched to pupils' abilities, good progress is made. Support staff contribute well to lesson planning and provide good support to the pupils they work with; this ensures that these pupils are successfully

involved in lessons. However, in some lessons, more able pupils are not consistently set the challenging work they are capable of doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The many displays around the school and in classrooms demonstrate the good breadth of the curriculum, for example displays relating to Art Week, music and Multicultural Day. Excellent pastel and watercolour pictures by the pupils demonstrate good creativity, thought and attention to detail. Pupils talk enthusiastically about curriculum areas they enjoy, particularly where the subjects are practical or have involved visits. The reorganised library has some lively displays, in which the pupils have demonstrated good word-processing skills. French is taught and enjoyed enthusiastically by pupils. ICT is being used across the curriculum to enrich pupils' learning. Key priorities are to develop writing across the curriculum in order to raise standards and to strengthen links between subjects in order to make learning meaningful and relevant.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good. The happiness and well-being of all pupils is at the centre of school life. Pupils say that 'There is always someone to talk to if you are in need'. Safeguarding procedures are in place and teachers are regularly trained in child protection. The school's strong commitment to inclusion is evident in the good provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are new to English. Support for these pupils, both in lessons and through individual and small-group work, is managed well and means that they make good progress in line with their peers. However, academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking. As a result, not all pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work and learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Senior leaders have worked hard to create a happy and caring environment for both pupils and staff alike. Senior leaders and subject leaders, some of whom are new to their role, are beginning to develop a good understanding of the areas they lead and to carry out monitoring activities, such as observing teaching and learning, scrutinising pupils' work and providing training for other staff.

Self-evaluation is good. New leaders have critically evaluated aspects of the school's work and have swiftly identified key and appropriate priorities, some of which are already being successfully addressed, such as improving progress and raising standards. Governors provide good support to the school. They interview staff and contribute to the school's self-evaluation. However, they are still developing a detailed understanding of the school's work and of their role as critical friend.

Community cohesion is satisfactory. Formal auditing of provision and planning has not yet started. However, work to improve community cohesion has begun, for example, through links with a school in Jamaica and by providing English-language classes for parents.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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	3
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

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

13 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, London, SW15 5NX

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for helping us when we came to find out how well you are getting on. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to some of you.

We agree with you and your parents that Sacred Heart is a good school.

Here is a list of some of the things that we found out about your school.

- You make good progress and attain average standards by the time you leave in Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use good questioning, set you a wide range of activities and use a variety of resources that interest you. You all spoke very highly of your teachers and told inspectors you enjoy coming to school.
- You behave well and are sensible and mature individuals.
- The curriculum is good because of all the different visits you make, such as to the beach and museums. Focus weeks, such as on science and reading, make learning fun! It is really good to find out that you participate in a range of musical activities, such as being part of the choir, playing the recorder or the trumpet.
- All the adults in your school show good care for you and, as a result, you feel well looked after.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start.
- Your headteachers and all staff work hard to make sure you receive a good level of education.

Even in a good school like yours, there are certain things that could be improved. We have asked that those of you who are capable should receive harder work in lessons. Your teachers should make clear to you what you need to do next to improve your learning, so that you can make even better progress!

I wish you all the very best and hope you continue to work hard and enjoy school!

Yours faithfully

Pritiben Patel

Lead Inspector