

# Holy Cross RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109244
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	324928
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Howard Dodd

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.

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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 (total)	155
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	20
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rebecca Flemming
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andy Newport
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Dean Lane Bedminster Bristol BS3 1DB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01173 772199
<b>Fax number</b>	01173 772366

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Holy Cross R C Primary School is a medium sized primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS). Most pupils are from a White British background, with small numbers from other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

## 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. It has made significant improvement since its last inspection and its capacity to improve further is good. Measures implemented by senior leaders, such as well-targeted support for pupils at risk of underachievement, have done much to raise standards. As a result, pupils' achievement is good and standards are now broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Children settle quickly in the Reception class and make satisfactory progress because of the well-managed and stimulating provision.

Good teaching and learning and a good curriculum mean that pupils want to learn. Pupils say how much they like their teachers. One said, 'Our teachers make lessons fun and are always trying to help us'. Most tasks are planned to interest and challenge pupils at their own level, but this is not consistently the case in all classes. Good care, guidance and support make a major contribution to pupils' good personal development and well-being. All staff know their pupils well and provide high quality support. Pupils respond well to the clear targets they are given to help them improve the standard of their work. However, marking is not always clear about how pupils can improve their work and individual learning targets are not always used with enough consistency to ensure that all pupils know their targets in all subjects.

Pupils are very friendly, welcoming and polite. Their relationships with adults and each other are very good and the school has forged good links with its parents and external agencies that enhance the pupils' well-being and breadth of experience. Their enjoyment of, and participation in, the wide range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities makes a strong contribution to their good understanding of how to keep healthy.

Leadership and management are good. The school offers a warm and caring environment. All staff strive to offer the pupils as wide a range of experiences and opportunities as possible. School managers are now monitoring pupils' progress regularly so that any underachievement is quickly identified. However, the monitoring of teaching sometimes lacks rigour and good practice is not always shared efficiently. The work of the school is well supported by an effective governing body that is not afraid to challenge senior leaders when new initiatives are being considered. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school. Its success is summed up well by one parent who wrote, "This school has a family atmosphere; everyone is caring towards the children and they feel safe here".

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with skills below the expected levels, and their language and mathematical skills are particularly weak at this stage. They settle quickly into school routines, interact well with the class teacher and are happy and confident. Children make satisfactory progress overall. In most areas of learning they develop skills that reach national expectations by the time they enter Key Stage 1, but the weaknesses in language and number work remain. Skilled teaching provides children with a good range of activities to excite and stimulate their interest and help them to develop their skills as independent learners. Children behave well and are friendly towards each other and adults in the school. They work collaboratively showing good concentration and positive attitudes to learning.

All adults in the EYFS are sensitive to children's needs and provide good support to their personal development. They work carefully in tracking progress, providing appropriate

intervention and support when needed. The school has forged good links with parents and this helps children to enjoy school and feel safe. During the inspection, children were unable to access the reception play area but this is being addressed and when fully in use will further enhance the learning opportunities for all children. The EYFS is well led and managed.

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

- Adopt a more rigorous approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school so that best practice can be shared more effectively.
- Make sure that teachers' marking is linked closely to pupils' targets so that pupils understand how they can improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good for all pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards are broadly average in Years 2 and 6. There has been good improvement over the last three years and standards have risen significantly since the last inspection. Unvalidated results in the 2008 National Curriculum tests show particularly good improvement in science and in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics. The good improvement in English that took place in 2007 was also sustained in 2008. Work seen during the inspection confirms these improved standards with, for example, pupils showing good confidence in correctly explaining how they solve problems in mathematics. Standards in Year 2 have followed a similar pattern of improvement since the last inspection but writing remains a relative weakness. Other subjects have also improved but pupils' progress in information and communication technology (ICT) has been held back due to an insufficient number of computers.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' enjoyment of school is clear in their enthusiastic approach to lessons, particularly when it involves them actively and in practical work. They play and work happily and safely together. They have a good understanding of the customs and religions of people from different cultures and respect the views and values of others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand right from wrong and are keen to help others through their charity work and community involvement. In the past, attendance has been below average due to the persistent poor attendance of a small minority of pupils. Since the beginning of term, attendance has improved and is now average due to the successful strategies put in place. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, but in a few lessons learning can be briefly interrupted by the uncooperative actions of a very small number of challenging pupils. Around the school, pupils behave in a polite and orderly way. They feel safe in school and are confident that their teachers deal quickly and successfully with any bullying issues. The school council meets regularly and is encouraged to make recommendations for improvement, such as the new toilets, over which there was full consultation. Pupils are aware of how to stay healthy and many enjoy the healthy menus at lunchtime and the fruit available at break times. Pupils are developing satisfactory skills for later life especially through the personal and social programme.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching ensures pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress as a result. Relationships are good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. This has a positive impact on pupils' readiness to learn. The use of skilful questioning ensures that learners take an active part in classroom discussions. Most pupils express their ideas in a confident and persuasive manner. Teachers make very effective use of interactive whiteboards and this clearly helps pupils to understand new ideas. High quality teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants results in good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. While teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, there are still some inconsistent approaches to planning and the use of assessment. In a very small number of lessons, introductions are too long with the result that children lose concentration. Teachers' marking does not always show pupils how they can improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum, including that in the Reception class, is broad and balanced and is designed to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has adopted the new national frameworks for literacy and mathematics and provides pupils with a good range of creative activities such as Samba drumming. The school's close work with partner schools has enriched the curriculum in specialist physical education lessons, additional art work and food technology. The programme for personal and social education and citizenship makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The wide range of extra-curricular opportunities enhances pupils' experiences and learning. Of particular note is the school's involvement with local and international projects. In celebration of such a rich curriculum the school has received a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Arts Mark and the International School bronze award for its links with schools in France, Spain and Bulgaria.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school complies with all statutory requirements for child protection and safeguarding its pupils. Parents are pleased with the way the school welcomes new children into the school both in Reception and for those who join at other times. Pastoral care is a major strength of the school. All adults promote pupils' health, safety and welfare and the school has good links with external agencies. Teaching assistants ensure that pupils' welfare needs are met effectively and that they make good progress in their learning. Pupils' views and concerns are listened to and acted upon whenever possible. The school works closely and effectively with outside agencies in helping pupils to achieve their potential. Pupils at risk of underachieving and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and effective measures are taken to meet their needs. Although work is monitored on a regular basis, individual pupils are not always aware of their own targets in each subject. Teachers' marking does not always explicitly reflect these targets or indicate to pupils how they can improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides a clear and appropriately prioritised vision for continual improvement of pupils' achievement and standards. He receives good support from members of his senior team, who undertake their roles with skill and enthusiasm. The more detailed tracking system implemented last year clearly helped to improve the 2008 national test results by identifying more quickly those pupils falling behind. Whilst there are strengths in the quality of self-evaluation, it is currently satisfactory because monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work by school managers is not sufficiently detailed. The school provides good community cohesion. It has created productive links with the local community including activities involving the church. In addition, it is forging productive links with schools internationally. This expands the pupils' awareness of other cultures and significantly enhances their learning. Governors are well informed, reflective and very supportive. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and make a good contribution to school development. Good communication and improved assessment procedures are increasing their understanding of pupils' achievements.

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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?	3
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 <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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

25 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Cross RC Primary School, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 1DB

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us so confidently. We realise that you are proud of your school and of the work you do. You are polite and look after each other well. We feel that your school is a good school. The main things that we found about your school are these.

- Your teachers teach you well and as a result you make good progress.
- The school makes sure that you are cared for well, and you understand how important it is to eat healthily and take regular exercise.
- You are given a good curriculum with plenty of extra activities and clubs that many of you really enjoy.
- The headteacher makes sure the school runs smoothly and knows what to do to improve your education further.

We are asking the school to make these changes so that you make even better progress.

- Check the quality of teaching and learning in all classes so that the best ideas can be shared easily between teachers.
- Make sure that teachers regularly remind you about your targets and mark your books by giving you guidance on how you can improve your work so that you reach your targets.

You can help by making sure you always come to school and try hard in lessons. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Howard Dodd Lead inspector