

# Pershore, Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116908
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326483
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Cox

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)	122
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hilary Rowlands
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 June 2006
<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>	Priest Lane Pershore WR10 1EB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01386 552518
<b>Fax number</b>	01386 552522

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## Introduction

- The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:
- How senior leaders and staff succeeded in raising boys' attainment and achievement in writing in 2008/9.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels are involved in school improvement.
- The evidence to substantiate the school's view that it is outstanding in all aspects. Evidence was gathered from: the school's website; senior leaders' self-evaluation; assessment records; observation of the school at work and; discussions with staff, pupils, parents and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This small Catholic primary school is situated in the centre of Pershore. The school serves and is adjacent to the Catholic parish of Holy Redeemer. Pupils travel from a wide area mostly by car. The school is the only denominational school in the town, which is otherwise served by first and middle Schools. Fifty-seven per cent of pupils are non-Catholics. The majority of pupils come from White British families. Six and a half percent of the pupils speak English as an additional language. A lower than average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school currently has 19 Reception-aged children who are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage class. The school has an after-school club managed by school governors. School awards include Healthy School Status, Investors in People and Artsmark Gold. The school became an Enquiry School in 2009 to explore how creative teaching and learning can enhance their practice. Staff are also implementing the sustainable schools framework and the site is a 'Breathing Places' school and has obtained lottery funding to support their eco garden.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This school provides its pupils with an outstanding education, both in their academic achievements and in their personal development. Strong Catholic principles underpin much of this and are the basis of the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for all pupils. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are rigorous and effectively applied in supporting all pupils. The school has improved significantly since its last inspection, when it was deemed to be good with outstanding aspects. Exceptionally high standards at the end of Year 6 have been maintained as all staff continue their relentless pursuit of excellence. Significant strides forward include a total involvement in school improvement by all staff as roles carrying responsibilities have been distributed more equitably. In addition, the introduction of a creative skills-based curriculum has proved to be extremely popular with both boys and girls and has dramatically improved boys' attainment and achievement in writing. High staff morale and exceedingly ambitious, challenging and determined leadership indicate an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

A fundamental reason for the school's exceptional success in all areas is that the headteacher's inspirational leadership enthuses others to have the highest possible aspirations for themselves and the pupils. She has skilfully developed a staff team who strive constantly for excellence. The headteacher's highly ambitious vision and absolute rejection of complacency is manifest in the exciting, stimulating and vibrant learning environment. Bright, spacious corridors and classrooms filled with high quality displays convey the outstanding achievements of all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the high expectations of all staff. For instance, the school recently held a highly successfully open day where parents and other adults from the parish and the local community were enthralled by the amazing high quality cross-curricular work on display. Some work was based on a recent whole-school project that focused on Renoir's painting: 'Les Parapluies', which resulted in all classes producing high quality large models, stunning artwork and outstandingly crafted poetry and texts about umbrellas.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a very happy start to their school days and make exceptional progress and, from an average point on entry, they all attain above average standards on entry to Year 1. Pupils' achievement is excellent in the rest of the school so that by the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that have, over many years, been consistently well above average and often exceptionally high. Pupils reach very challenging targets by the end of Year 6 and attain exceptionally high standards in reading, mathematics and science. Attainment is also high in art, history and geography, which reflect the inspiring and exciting curriculum. The 2008 Year 6 results indicated that the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5, whilst still well above national averages, was very slightly lower in writing than in reading, mathematics and science. Senior leaders immediately noted this and implemented highly effective strategies, such as using exciting curriculum experiences to encourage all pupils to write, which had an immediate impact on raising achievement and standards even further.

Another key reason why standards are so high is that the quality of teaching is outstanding. This has a considerable impact on pupils' achievement as it provides them with a lifelong quest for learning and knowledge in all subjects. Teaching of the highest calibre is evident in Year 6 where pupils display outstanding knowledge about, and enthusiasm for, the works of Shakespeare. Drama is skilfully used to bring the Bard's words to life and to enable pupils to empathise with characters from different times and places. Year 6 pupils also display a maturity

and ability beyond their years in their impressive emphatic Epistle writing in the style of St Paul. Relationships and pupils' behaviour are exemplary in all classes and, consequently, pupils are extremely well motivated and learn exceptionally well. By pitching work and support precisely at pupils' own levels, staff ensure that all pupils enjoy their work and feel they are successful. There are clear strengths in how work is planned, how time is managed and in staff's high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. In addition, all pupils are very involved in their own learning and are consulted about topics and actively encouraged to pursue their own lines of enquiry. For example, a pupil has devised and crafted a beautifully produced account of The Great Famine in Ireland. A team of talented and highly competent teaching assistants, parents and volunteers provide excellent support to teachers and pupils. Staff make excellent use of precise assessment information to record and track pupils' progress. Pupils are understandably very proud of their school and their teachers, saying such things as, 'This is a great school, lessons are brilliant, we do so many different activities and our teachers always take time to explain anything we don't understand.'

Pupils' obvious love of school is reflected in their excellent attendance. They get on extremely well together and enjoy taking on responsibilities by being school councillors, raising considerable amounts of money for charity and being playground leaders and monitors. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and lies at the heart of the school's work. Special reflection areas, regular masses and counselling visits from the parish priest and deacon for both Catholics and pupils of other faiths enable pupils to think deeply and discuss issues related to emotional security and well-being. The school's commitment to achieving community cohesion within school and with the local community is good. A whole-school visit to Birmingham and opportunities to go on residential trips with other schools to Malvern and Alton Castle give pupils opportunities for wider friendships and shared common values. Multicultural Week celebrates similarities in faith and cultural beliefs. A recently established link with a primary school in Yangzhou is expected to give pupils opportunities to share Eco news and information on festivals. The next step is to further enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils' excellent academic skills and their exceptionally mature personal skills prepare them exceedingly well for later life and learning. The school is at the forefront of innovation in curriculum design. This is manifest in the outstanding way pupils explore curriculum areas and make meaningful cross-curricular contexts for learning. Consequently, all pupils have memorable learning experiences which they recall with pride and huge enjoyment. There are outstanding opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in the wide range of exciting clubs and enrichment activities. Pupils develop excellent enterprise and financial skills through exciting projects such as growing and selling their allotment produce. The incredible outdoor area provides pupils with excellent chances to grow potatoes, strawberries, raspberries, peas, beans, and herbs and to care for two hens. Excellent support from a parish team of gardening experts gives pupils an outstanding love of gardening and outdoor activities. Different varieties of potatoes and strawberries are grown to test for plant yield and flavour. Pupils have an excellent awareness of, and commitment to, personal safety and healthy active lifestyles. Over the weekend prior to the inspection, pupils achieved two trophies for swimming and rowing. The highly effective partnership with parents is evident in parents' extremely positive comments about the school. Parents and pupils also appreciate and speak highly of the excellent quality of care provided by the friendly, enthusiastic after-school team. The coordinator plans interesting activities which successfully cater for the various ages of pupils who attend. Excellent links with a wide range of outside agencies ensure the best possible support to further all pupils' academic and personal well-being. Exceptional leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are evident in rigorous and accurate evaluation of every aspect of the school's

performance, which leads to considered and highly effective action. The well-informed governing body works closely with the school to evaluate its provision rigorously and constantly seeks innovative ways to improve it still further. The hard work and dedication of the headteacher and staff have ensured consistently high standards and achievement over a number of years. The school is very popular with parents and rightly deserves its excellent reputation in the local community.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The Early Years Foundation Stage learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is stunning. Exciting and inviting displays and activities hang from every available wall space and ceiling, just waiting to be enjoyed. It is no wonder that from an average point on entry, children make rapid progress in all areas of their development. The two fantastic outdoor learning areas provide both challenge and intrigue and one is freely available at all times and in all seasons. Children love being outside and can confidently learn to take risks and explore in a safe, supervised forest-school environment. For instance, they can search for mini-beasts under logs, examine them under microscopes and identify them in non-fiction texts. Outstanding leadership and management, excellent teaching and loving care ensure that most children exceed the expected levels for their age on entry to Year 1. Staff make learning fun and enjoyable and really challenge children to think and work together. For instance, children have just enjoyed a highly successful project about dinosaurs and are currently looking forward to their 'mini beast ball'. Staff work as a highly effective team and have excellent knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of young children. This ensures that children make exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development and their general well-being. The curriculum is excellent and provides constant pleasure, excitement and adventure. An excellent and very active partnership with parents is quickly established so parents are totally involved in their children's learning. One parent describes how valuable she found a recent 10-week parent workshop which provided her with excellent ways to brush up on her own skills and also how to support her child's learning.

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

- Further enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of being part of the United Kingdom and wider global communities.

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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

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

## 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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

1 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pershore, Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary School, Pershore, WR10 1EB

It was a real treat for us to visit your school and I am writing to thank you for an extremely interesting day. We really enjoyed watching you working so hard in lessons and playing happily outside. Highlights for us included talking to you about all the exciting work you do at school, visiting your Eco garden and looking at the amazing displays of your work. Thank you to the Year 6 guides who did a superb job of showing us around the school. I hope that Year 6 enjoy their theatre visit to Stratford and that Reception children have a great time at their 'ugly bug ball' and that your Strawberry Fair is a great success. We agree completely with you and your parents that you go to an outstanding school in all respects.

The excellent teachers make learning fun and enjoyable and you reach high standards in your work. You have an outstanding understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and it was brilliant to see some of you enjoying the Eco club activities. It was also good to hear about all the sporting trophies you win. You are really well cared for at school and you receive excellent support in your learning and in your personal development. Another strength is the impressive way in which the headteacher and the deputy headteacher lead the school and makes sure it is a welcoming, happy and successful community. You are yourselves another huge strength with your excellent behaviour, your hard work, and your tremendous contribution to school life and in the mature way in which you care for each other.

The headteacher and the deputy headteacher and governors have many excellent ideas to make the school even better. We agree with all their plans and also feel it would be helpful if the headteacher and staff could help you learn even more about other pupils' lives in the United Kingdom and abroad.

Having met you, we are sure you will play your part as well by continuing to work hard and by keeping up your excellent standards of behaviour.

We wish you every success in the future.

It was a real pleasure and privilege to meet you all.

Yours faithfully

Joyce Cox

Lead inspector