

Holy Name Catholic (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103996
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	336216
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patrick Pritchard
Headteacher	Andrew Brennan
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, and spoke to some parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the improvement plan and self-evaluation, as well as assessment and tracking data that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress. Seventy-three parental questionnaires were collated and the results of these appear at the end of this report.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of pupils in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and the impact of measures taken by the school to accelerate the progress of girls
- the learning and progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 in writing
- the extent to which the school has improved the consistency of the teaching and assessment since the last inspection
- how well the leadership team and subject coordinators manage teaching and support pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school whose Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class for three-year-olds who all attend part-time and a Reception class for four-year-olds. The majority of pupils throughout the school are of White British heritage. Other pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and very few are in the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of most schools. The main areas of need include pupils with moderate learning or speech and language difficulties. The school has a number of nationally accredited awards such as the Investors in People, Healthy Schools and Active Mark awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Pupils achieve well at this good school, most notably in the way they mature into courteous and confident young people who behave well and work hard. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6 attainment is, and has been for some time, above average. Good teaching across the school and the staff's commitment to pupils' all round development underpin the school's success. The large majority of parents who returned questionnaires are rightly pleased with the good care, guidance and attention the staff provide for their children. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and learning; as one rightly commented, 'There's lots to do you see. I love school because we are always busy and you make lots of friends.'

The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and are always seeking ways to improve the school. Those responsible for leading subjects are active in analysing pupils' performance in detail using accurate assessments. Although overall national test results show above average attainment for a number of years, results for mathematics by the end of Year 6 have been comparatively weaker. In addition, past results show that girls tend to make slower progress than boys in mathematics. As a result, the subject coordinator and staff have put in place well-devised programmes and training which are beginning to improve attainment in mathematics, including the progress of girls. Currently, pupils are on course to reach higher levels compared with previous years, though there is still scope to improve by checking that all pupils, particularly girls, reach their targets.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is temporarily shared amongst staff until a more permanent role is established. Although the children achieve well in both the Nursery and Reception years, there is no clear oversight of the effectiveness of this key stage to provide a coordinated evaluation and to ensure that good provision and outcomes for children are sustained.

The school provides a good range of stimulating activities, including sport, the creative arts and music, as well as interesting visits and visitors so pupils enjoy school; this is reflected in above average attendance. Pupils are encouraged, with good success, to adopt healthy and active lifestyles. The school is particularly good in supporting those pupils whose circumstances cause them to become vulnerable. Skilled teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school council works successfully on behalf of all pupils and there is a good level of satisfaction amongst pupils about the way they contribute to the life of the school and community. Pupils feel safe and say that the few instances of bullying are dealt with effectively.

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The school is energetic in seeking to improve and has established a good partnership with parents and carers. Leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are effective and a real asset. They work closely with the staff helping to influence the school's direction and determine the right priorities for development, reflecting the school's good capacity to sustain improvements. The school provides good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the current improvements to attainment in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - implementing intervention programmes that will ensure that all pupils reach their expected targets
 - focusing on the progress of girls to accelerate the progress of those who fall behind.
- Clarify and establish the leadership roles of staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that:
 - there is a systematic process of self-evaluation, audit and review that identifies clear priorities for improvement
 - there is a coordinated overview of the progress made by children to maintain good outcomes and provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Despite a little variation in Years 3 to 6 in some aspects of mathematics, they make good progress overall. Teachers have begun to address relative weaknesses in mathematics by accelerating the progress of girls using booster work and targeted support in lessons. For example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 increasingly tackle complex calculation work which is having a positive effect on their progress. Some pupils still lack the confidence to apply number skills when trying to solve practical problems independently, reflecting some inconsistencies in the questions posed by teachers and the tasks provided. In all classes there are good opportunities for pupils to edit their writing and to express views on their reading and writing, and these are particularly effective in English lessons, where attainment has been consistently above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards achieving their learning targets. Their targets are precise and are clear to the pupils so they have a good understanding of each stage of their learning. Pupils in the early stages of learning English do well because they are encouraged to engage in conversations with others which improves their confidence in speaking. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics because of the good foundations laid in the Nursery and Reception classes in early language, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Attainment in science and information and communication technology (ICT) is above average, reflecting the good progress pupils make as well as a curriculum that provides good opportunities for pupils to apply skills

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across subjects. Pupils develop a good range of skills that prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils feel safe and have formed trusting relationships with others. They have a good understanding of healthy and active living as many participate in sports and activities provided after school. Pupils enjoy their lunchtimes and most have a balanced packed lunch and eat fruit. Pupils know that their work and contribution to the school are valued and school councillors take the lead when representing the views of other pupils. There are opportunities for pupils to help their local area, reflecting a good awareness of the needs of the environment and topics related to road safety. There are well-established links with other schools and the Catholic parish, contributing well to pupils' strong sense of their own community and their good spiritual, moral and social development. Special topics and events provide opportunities for pupils to learn about other customs and religions, so contributing to their understanding of cultural and racial diversity.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The lessons observed during the inspection confirm that the school provides well for

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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pupils' pastoral care and welfare, as well as improving their learning through mainly good teaching and some that is outstanding. Lessons are well planned and cater successfully for the range of abilities. Despite concerns raised by some parents about the progress their children make in mixed-age classes, the inspection found that teachers and support staff accommodate the different needs and ages of pupils well in the two classes where there are mixed ages. Tasks and learning objectives are carefully pitched at the right level for all pupils, although in some lessons the questions posed by teachers or the tasks set could be more challenging. Imaginative approaches, such as the use of film clips in a highly effective English lesson for pupils in Year 6, add further impetus to the good rate of learning. The knowledge and expertise of those working with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who are very capable, enables these pupils to cope and be challenged at the right level. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to share ideas with talk partners and lessons are productive and make efficient use of time. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently and have devised good assessment systems. The staff have stepped up their scrutiny of pupils' progress using new and more robust assessment data, although there remains scope to check pupils' performance in mathematics more often. Pupils have clear learning targets pasted into their workbooks and a good understanding of the steps needed to reach them. As two older pupils explained, 'These are our writing targets and this is what we have to do to check that we have achieved them.'

The curriculum is well planned with a broad range of topics for pupils to study that draw together a range of subjects. Pupils have developed good ICT skills; for example in Years 3 and 4 they designed sophisticated illustrations using desk-top publishing skills on computers by managing text and graphics. Topics incorporate a good range of visits to places of interest so pupils can, for example, combine their study of geography, history and science when visiting museums or undertaking field trips.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team and governors are effective in identifying the right priorities for improvement. There are good monitoring systems in place to ensure that governors and staff check pupils' progress and observe the quality of teaching, which enhance the school's good knowledge of its effectiveness. Joint work scrutinies of pupils' work and analyses of assessments, including a breakdown of the progress of pupils from different

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backgrounds, account for the uniformity in teachers' planning and the improved consistency of teaching. The evaluations made by staff are accurate, although modest in some cases, reflecting the high expectations they set for themselves.

Resources and staff are deployed well to encourage pupils to read widely and to write independently, which accounts for the consistently good progress pupils make in English. Governors hold the school to account well and have effective systems in place to ensure that they monitor the school's performance. There are good links established with other schools and organisations, as well as the local parish and wider community. The large majority of parents who returned questionnaires have paid tribute to the efforts of staff and governors; 'I can only praise the teachers and the school for their efforts', was one typical comment.

There are good systems to ensure that the pupils are safeguarded. Good attention is paid to child protection and to systematic risk assessments of activities and resources. The school has a good understanding of its own community and assessments incorporate details about the progress of pupils from different backgrounds. This enhances the school's determination to ensure that all pupils have equally good opportunities to succeed. Staff and governors are increasingly developing links beyond the local area, which are helping to build a cohesive community that respects all faiths and customs represented in wider society.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The large majority of children join the Nursery and Reception class with skills and

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abilities that are in line with those expected of three- and four-year-olds. They make good progress so that, by the time the children start Year 1, attainment is above that expected of five-year-olds in all areas of learning.

The staff are skilled and effective in laying good foundations for children's learning, development and well-being. The staff provide a stimulating range of activities, such as role play and stories that help the children to develop and improve their reading and writing. Nursery children settle quickly and enjoy playing and working indoors and outdoors with equal success. Reception children thrive on the challenges, for example, of rolling dice to move counters on the snakes and ladders mat, prompting them to develop with increasing success their understanding of number. The children develop early scientific skills well when handling different materials or working out how things float. The children thrive on the opportunities to explore the outdoor areas safely and productively, which improves their physical and creative development. The staff work cooperatively, ensuring there is a smooth transition between Nursery and Reception and between the Reception class and Year 1. All staff are committed to their role in supporting the children, although the temporary and shared leadership roles currently in place mean that there is no coordinated and systematic process of self-evaluation to ensure that the good progress made and the quality of provision throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage are sustained.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The majority of the 73 questionnaires were positive and parents believe that this is a caring and supportive school; views that agree with those of inspectors. Most parents are pleased with the progress their children are making. A small number of parents expressed concern about the behaviour of a few pupils. Inspectors found behaviour to be mainly good and pupils endorsed this when commenting on how they trusted the staff to deal with any incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holy Name Catholic (Aided) Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 294 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	62	26	36	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	58	29	40	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	41	34	47	7	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	33	39	53	4	5	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	29	40	34	47	4	6	3	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	35	38	53	7	10	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	37	40	55	5	7	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	38	35	48	5	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	37	36	49	6	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	29	33	45	12	16	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	34	30	41	13	18	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	25	34	38	52	5	7	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	48	31	42	5	7	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Name Catholic (Aided) Primary School,
Birmingham, B43 6LN

You were all so welcoming when the inspectors visited. We enjoyed talking to many of you. The inspectors have judged that you go to a good school. The inspectors were pleased with your good behaviour and the quality of your work. Children in the Nursery and in the Reception class are good at recognising their letter sounds which is helping them to learn to read and write. The inspectors think you are doing particularly well in English, science, ICT and many other subjects. We were particularly impressed with the work that pupils showed us in the ICT room when they were designing covers related to their history work on Henry VIII - that was really clever.

Your teachers are providing you with good challenges and I can see from your test results that you are doing well. The staff and governors are doing a good job, especially in helping the school to grow and develop. To improve your school even more we have asked your teachers to check that all pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, do a bit better in mathematics by making regular checks and providing more booster work for some pupils, especially some girls, who are finding their mathematics challenging. The teachers have made a good start already. We have also asked your headteacher and governors to improve the way that checks are made in the Nursery and Reception class so that there are clear plans in place to improve the work going on there.

You can all help too by carrying on trying hard, behaving well and coming to school every day to keep up the good attendance rates that inspectors have noted in this report.

I wish you and your parents the very best and I am so pleased to have met you all. You were all great!

Yours faithfully

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector

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