

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School, Church

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119658
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339495
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Platt

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	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Debbie Kenyon
Headteacher	Mrs Jacqueline Williams
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Approximately 65% of time was spent looking at learning. Nine teachers were seen and inspectors visited 13 lessons. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at teachers' lesson plans and documents, including those related to the safeguarding of pupils, the school development plan, self-evaluation records, minutes of governors' meetings and the school's own assessment data. Inspectors analysed 26 questionnaires from parents and carers, 87 from pupils and nine from staff.

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

- the progress of all pupils in Key Stage 1 and of the more able pupils in Key Stage 2
- teachers use of assessment to plan challenging work and track the progress of pupils
- pupils' attendance and procedures to improve it
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and understanding of how to improve.

Information about the school

This is an average sized school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Approximately half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and an above average number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school also has a number of Traveller learners who start and leave schools at different times during the school year. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Two assistant headteachers were appointed this year. Before and after school provision is managed and run by the school. The school holds Healthy School status and Activemark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The speed of improvement since the last inspection is accelerating with the extended senior management team that is now in place. Self-evaluation is honest and mainly accurate. It effectively identifies priorities and the ensuing actions are slowly reaping benefits. However, the concerns raised at the previous inspection have not been fully resolved. Nevertheless, the school is getting closer to reaching its challenging targets and has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where effective teaching captures children's interest and they make good progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6. Attainment as pupils leave at the end of Year 6 is broadly average but the lack of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age is holding down overall attainment. There is a similar problem at the end of Key Stage 1 where attainment is below average. Although the more able pupils make good progress in the later years of Key Stage 2, where teaching is stronger, their progress is inconsistent in other years. Assessment is now in place but not fully embedded to provide teachers with a detailed picture of the progress pupils make from year-to-year. As a result expectations of progress are not always sufficiently high. Teachers mark pupils' work and older pupils appreciate having check-lists to guide them on how to improve. This effective practice is not seen consistently throughout school. Most lessons include good use of the electronic whiteboard and this adds interest to lessons. Access to information and communication technology (ICT) resources and their use in lessons are less well developed.

The school's ethos helps to promote pupils' spirituality and self-esteem. The majority of pupils talk positively about their school and it has a good reputation in the local community. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good in lessons and during the daily act of worship. However, in less structured times some pupils misbehave and do not give enough thought to how their actions can hurt and upset other pupils. Attendance is currently close to average but this is not yet consistent. The school is endeavouring to impress on parents and carers the adverse effect that irregular attendance has on their children's progress.

Pupils appreciate the good range of after school clubs. They enjoy belonging to the school community and celebrate each other's different beliefs and traditions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- ħ Ensure consistency in the progress of the more able pupils by:

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- making more use of assessment information to track pupils' progress from year-to-year
- planning work that focuses on individual needs and is sufficiently challenging
- consistently involving pupils more in their own learning so that they know how to improve.
- Increase pupils' responsibility for their own actions especially when unsupervised and impress on them the impact of their behaviour on others.
- Raise the profile of ICT by:
 - improving access to resources
 - improving the use of resources
 - implementing an action plan that focuses on raising attainment.
- Improve attendance to bring it consistently in line with the national average by impressing even more on parents the importance of regular attendance.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most pupils enjoy learning. When their interest is captured they eagerly answer questions, as was seen in a history lesson when pupils were eager to learn more about how homes have changed over time. On other occasions activities lack enough challenge and they lose interest. Nevertheless, in lessons their progress is largely satisfactory and at the end of Key Stage 2 is more consistently good. Overall attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave school. Although the results of national tests are rising especially at the end of Year 6 they are not yet consistently average because of the low numbers reaching above average levels. Most pupils make satisfactory progress from a below average starting point but the more able are not always making enough progress. Traveller pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified promptly and supported well. As a result, these pupils make progress which is at least in line with their peers.

Pupils say they feel safe but a number expressed concerns about the conduct of a small minority of their peers. The school has strengthened behaviour management and the incidents of inappropriate behaviour have declined and in general are managed well by staff. Pupils enjoy the healthy meals offered and are particularly energetic at play. They make a good contribution to the school and local community and were instrumental in the transformation of derelict land next to school into playing fields used by the community. They are aware of their role in the wider world as can be seen in the charter in Year 6 showing their contribution to overcoming global warming. Pupils have a good understanding of life in a culturally diverse society. This is reflected in the integration of pupils from a range of minority ethnic heritages in all classes. With

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satisfactory basic skills and growing maturity pupils are soundly prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Monitoring of teaching and the use of assessment is developing with the new management team but there is still a way to go to share the good practice seen in school. The best teaching is characterised by variety of tasks and pace that sustains pupils' interest. In Year 6 the effective use of support staff ensured all pupils were involved in writing accounts at the correct level. Challenge in these lessons to encourage pupils to aim for high standards was realistic. In other lessons teachers' expectations are not always high enough and too much talking reduces the pace of the lesson. A strength throughout the school is the management of behaviour which ensures some challenging behaviour is not allowed to escalate and disturb learning.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of after school activities and these especially contribute to their understanding of keeping fit and healthy. The school has sustained an effective balance of learning experiences. A good design and technology lesson was observed with older pupils showing an informed understanding of the design and evaluation

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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process. Music is popular and of good quality. The school is moving towards being more creative with planning and aims to avoid the current overuse of worksheets which restricts the excitement of both the curriculum and teaching.

Pastoral care is based on sensitive relationships between pupils and staff, and pupils say they know how to find help when it is needed. The recently introduced anti-bullying policy is having a positive impact on behaviour. Attendance is a concern for the school and a wide range of strategies are in place including support from external agencies. There is some evidence of improvement but this is not yet consistent and persistent absence is too high.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has benefited from intensive support from the local authority which has now reduced because of current improvements. Standards are rising in Key Stage 2 and the extended leadership team is working together well. The drive to improve is accelerating as teachers are made more accountable for the progress of pupils in their class.

Monitoring is more rigorous although teachers do not have a clear overview of the progress pupils make from year-to-year. The school's development plan identifies the correct priorities to move the school forward. However, actions are not always closely linked to outcome. This is especially the case for ICT which has priorities linked to provision and resources but which do not identify how actions will raise pupils' ICT skills.

The school gives good attention to the needs of the vulnerable pupils and shares its experiences with helping Traveller learners with other schools. Effective links with external agents and other partners support these pupils well. As a result they have full equality and the school is starting to focus more on the needs of the more able. Pupils develop a sense of belonging to the community and the school celebrates diversity. The school is at the early stages of formally planning for community cohesion and evaluating its impact on the ethos of the school.

Safeguarding meets requirements. Staff care for pupils, although at dinner time staff are not always sufficiently vigilant to see pupils play safely. Parents appreciate the before and after school club which enables them to seek employment.

The governing body is supportive and improving, as governors have established a committee system to include them more in the school's daily life. They play a good role in managing the school's finances that is enabling the school's building to be updated.

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Governors are not fully involved in making decisions that lead to the identification of school priorities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage has benefited from reorganisation so that Reception and Nursery children are now taught in a single unit. This improves consistency of approach and availability to a wide range of resources. Children enjoy school. They start with skills that are below age-related expectations, and currently falling to well below average with an influx of more children who speak English as an additional language. In response to good teaching, children make good progress, although in the key skills of language, communication and use of number their skills are below expectations when they leave Reception. Teaching effectively meets children's needs. Questions are challenging and extend vocabulary and listening skills. Bilingual support is used well to enable children to settle happily. Teachers capture children's attention with interesting topics and all enjoyed sending letters to the postman as well as receiving a reply. This greatly encouraged their early writing skills. There is a good balance of free choice activities and those led by adults. Outdoors is used regularly but it is not always clear how the main learning outcome is being extended to the outdoor setting. Assessment is good and each child has an individual profile that records their progress. The new coordinator has made a good start in improving provision although is not making full use of assessment to track progress from start to finish of the Early Years Foundation Stage or to identify future priorities. Welfare requirements are met and children settle well and say they feel safe and happy.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Only a small proportion of parents and carers returned the questionnaires sent out before the inspection. A large majority indicated positive views although few added written comments to extend their opinions. A very small number would like more communication with parents but this is seen by inspectors to be satisfactory. A few parents identified concern about dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors feel this is generally managed well in lessons but when unsupervised, especially at play, supervision is not always vigilant enough to intercept and prevent behaviour deteriorating.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School, Church 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 179 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	48	14	52	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	59	11	41	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	44	11	41	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	30	16	59	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	48	12	44	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	37	12	44	3	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	44	14	52	1	4	0	0
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)	11	41	13	48	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	30	16	59	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	19	16	59	5	19	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	30	14	52	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	22	16	59	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	44	13	48	0	0	0	0

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.



8 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School, Church, Accrington, BB5 4HG

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We appreciated your help, especially those of you who gave up playtime to talk to us about your school. We were pleased to hear that you know how to keep safe and healthy. It is good to find that you celebrate the different cultures and traditions of pupils who attend your school. Your school provides you with a sound education and you make satisfactory progress.

To help the school become even better, I have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- make more use of assessment to ensure that the work set for you is at just the right level and that you know how to improve and make as much progress as possible
- remind you of the importance of always behaving well and caring for each other especially at play when you are not closely supervised
- improve resources for information and communication technology and make more use of them in lessons

-impress on your parents and carers the importance of you attending regularly.

You can help especially by behaving well all of the time and attending every day unless you are really ill. I am pleased that most of you enjoy school and wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jennie Platt

Lead inspector

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