

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Leigh

Windermere Road, Leigh, Lancashire, WN7 1UX

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make faster progress in English and mathematics than in many other schools.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Successful steps are taken to boost the learning of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those learning to speak English.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and the new school building. They enjoy lessons and are very positive about teaching and the wide range of activities and opportunities provided.
- The behaviour of pupils in class and around school is good.
- Leaders have shown that they are capable of continuing to make improvements. Since the last inspection more rigorous systems are in place to check teaching and it has improved as a result.
- The headteacher leads by example in all aspects of school life. She is a much admired role model within the school community.
- Governors are well informed. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and ask questions to check how well it is doing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to act upon the advice they receive from teachers.
- The skills of teaching assistants are not always used well enough.
- In mathematics, activities are sometimes too hard for some pupils and too easy for others.
- Pupils are not always given enough chances to get on with their work and learn on their own.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 14 teachers. Joint observations were undertaken with both the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the members of the governing body, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, safeguarding information, governing body minutes, pupils' exercise books and displays around the school.
- Inspectors analysed 18 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the responses to a questionnaire sent to parents by the school.

Inspection team

Desmond Stubbs, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sheila O'Keeffe	Additional Inspector
Peter Jones	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is larger than the average sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The school is part of the Leigh, Lowton and Golborne Schools Partnership.
- It moved to a new building in 2010.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is all at least good and a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers give pupils the time to follow the advice given when their books are marked
 - using teaching assistants' skills more effectively so that pupils of all abilities are making the best possible progress in lessons
 - using information about pupils' progress better in mathematics to make sure work set helps them learn well, whatever their ability
 - giving pupils more opportunities to get on with their work and learn on their own in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their ages. They make good progress in the Reception classes developing, in particular, good social and literacy skills.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are now reaching standards which are broadly in line with the national average. These pupils are now making good progress in mathematics.
- There has been an improving trend in reading, writing and mathematics in the past two years because pupils now make good progress through both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school. By the end of Key Stage 2 they reach the National Curriculum levels expected for their age.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and so do the pupils who speak English as an additional language. They all benefit from good quality extra help and support. Leaders make sure the opportunities they have to learn well are just as good as those of other pupils.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic about reading. Children who find reading difficult learn the skills needed to tackle words they have not come across before. The school has done much in the past year to improve the way in which pupils are taught to use the sounds made by letters (phonics) to help them read. This means that pupils of all abilities now make good progress in reading.
- A review of pupils' work shows that progress in writing is particularly good. This is due to the expert way that teachers pinpoint weaknesses in writing and set pupils targets for improving their work. Pupils know these targets and find this support from the teacher helpful.
- In mathematics, pupils have a good grasp of the basic skills.
- In 2012, the gap between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and all other pupils was wider than it is in many other schools. Leaders are now using the extra money very effectively. The 'Summer School' and use of extra teachers to teach certain groups is having an impact and the pupils entitled to this funding are making better progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the Reception classes teaching is good. Classrooms have well planned areas for children to develop their early literacy and numeracy skills and children take part in many exciting activities. Good opportunities are also provided to enable children to develop their own interests. The outside areas are not used as well and leaders have begun to make sure they are as interesting as those indoors.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good in all lessons. Staff encourage pupils successfully to try hard and behave well.
- In most lessons the time available is used well. Plenty of different activities make sure that pupils have work that gets the best out of all of them. Good use is made of a range of quality resources to make lessons interesting for all pupils. In one class the teacher organised a Second World War tea party to give pupils ideas for writing a story. Pupils were inspired by this and produced high quality writing for their age.
- In some classes teaching assistants are not given clear enough instructions about what to do and how to help pupils.
- In the best lessons pupils have more opportunities to work on their own or with a partner. They enjoy learning this way and make good progress.
- In a small number of lessons pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. This slows down their learning because they lose interest and do not have enough time to learn things for themselves.

- In Years 5 and 6 pupils are often asked to find things out for themselves during mathematics lessons. For example, some designed a multimedia presentation for younger pupils on 2D and 3D shapes. Pupils in other year groups do not have such good opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- The teaching of phonics is good. These are active sessions which pupils enjoy and they make good progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' writing carefully. They use information about pupils' progress in writing to set targets for individual pupils' learning and to make sure work is at just the right level. In other subjects teachers do not allow time for pupils to act upon the advice given when books are marked.
- The information which teachers have about their pupils' learning in mathematics is not always used well enough. As a result, pupils sometimes repeat work and activities are, at times, too hard for some and too easy for others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils around school is good and in class pupils are keen to get on with their work. They are polite and courteous.
- Parents, staff and pupils are very pleased with the behaviour of pupils and the way which school encourages good behaviour. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with problems promptly.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying and they understand the effect of name-calling and cyber-bullying. The number of bullying incidents has reduced and these are now rare.
- Attendance is average. Punctuality is good. The learning mentor checks the attendance of individual pupils and makes sure that all absences are explained.
- Pupils feel very safe. If they have any concerns they will go to any of the adults in school. One pupil said, 'we know all the teachers and they know all of us', and this is typical of the strength of relationships at the school.
- The school provides lots of opportunities to help pupils understand how to stay safe including visits from the police and fire service. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the 'Adventure Service Challenge', an after-school club.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have an ambitious view of how successful the school can be and this is shared by governors and all staff. The headteacher leads by example, in particular the way she models excellent teaching.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher make frequent checks on the quality of teaching. They know very well the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers and have organised effective staff training to improve the quality of teaching.
- Sacred Heart is a school that meets the needs of all its pupils. Senior leaders meticulously check on the achievement of the different pupil groups and the pupils of different nationalities. This information is used well to decide where and what extra help is needed. Meetings between senior leaders and all teachers to consider the progress of each pupil in the class have helped to raise achievement.
- Recent developments in the teaching of phonics and systems to measure pupils' progress have further improved the quality of teaching.
- The areas from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. After the upheaval of the move into the new school building, the school is now settled and leaders are concentrating on making it even more successful.

- The curriculum is well planned and ensures that pupils acquire the necessary basic skills. Pupils have opportunities to use their writing in many different subjects. Pupils enjoy this very much and it has made a significant impact on achievement in English. Subject leaders in English and mathematics help their subjects to improve, for example with a wide range of events for pupils and parents.
- Pupils benefit from a variety of activities out of school hours and they are enthusiastic about the opportunities the school provides.
- Pupils are well aware of other cultures and religions. They are very happy with all the chances they have to take part in sporting, artistic and dramatic activities.
- The Leigh, Lowton and Golborne Schools Partnership has brought significant benefits to pupils and staff, for example the shared training organised for teachers and senior leaders.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority keeps a watchful eye on this good school from a distance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are clear about wider issues such as the pupil premium allocation and help to decide how it is used. The headteacher provides governors with detailed information to enable them to understand the achievement of pupils and make informed decisions, for example about spending the budget. They also ask questions and find things out for themselves, for instance by checking pupils' exercise books.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106502
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	400847

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Audrey Ward
Headteacher	Helen Ahmed
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2010
Telephone number	01942 674226
Fax number	01942 262684
Email address	enquiries@admin.leighsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk

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