

# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Highfield Road, Hemsworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF9 4LJ

**Inspection dates** 22–23 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
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 are achieving well because their learning and progress are good.
- Children's learning gets off to a good start in the Reception Year.
- Pupils are taught well. Teachers are very clear about what each pupil knows, understands and can do, and what interests them. They make good use of this information when they plan their lessons.
- Pupils say that the school 'feels like one big family' and are very happy here. They behave well and feel safe.
- The school is led and managed well. Staff follow the headteacher's example and are just as determined to provide the best possible education for every child.
- Leaders, managers and governors work together successfully to keep the school improving. For example, as a result of investment in new books and changes to the way reading is taught, pupils' skills have improved.
- In this school, every child does matter. Leaders and staff go out of their way to care for pupils and help them to be successful learners.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Occasionally, work for the most able pupils is not quite hard enough. In some lessons, not every pupil is involved fully in activities, especially when pupils are working in groups. Marking is not always helpful enough.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematics and writing skills during lessons in other subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited seven lessons. One observation was conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, governors and a member of the multi-academy trust board.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents including records of pupils' learning, progress and behaviour; the school's plans for its future improvement; safeguarding information and samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics.
- The inspector took account of the 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the outcomes of a recent survey of parents' views conducted by the school.

## Inspection team

Rosemary Eaton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- An average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy on 01 November 2012. When its predecessor school, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school is now part of a chain of academies in the Leeds Diocese, which form the Bishop Konstant Multi-Academy Trust.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - the most able pupils always have work that stretches them to reach the highest levels they can
  - all pupils play a full part in activities throughout each lesson
  - marking informs pupils exactly what to do in order to improve.
- Improve achievement in writing and mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing and mathematics skills during lessons in other subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- At the start of the Reception Year, most children's skills are below those typically expected for their age. Their speaking, writing and number skills are often particularly weak and they tend to find it hard to make friends and play together.
- The children settle quickly into the welcoming and well-organised Reception class. They make good progress in all aspects of their learning because the adults know the children so well and tailor activities to what each one needs to learn next. By the time children enter Year 1 they play together well and have many friends.
- There are usually small numbers in each year group, so each pupil makes a big difference when average levels of attainment are calculated. Nevertheless, inspection evidence suggests strongly that the current Year 6 pupils are set to meet the government's minimum expectations for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points as they move up through the school. Progress is usually fastest in reading. Pupils find writing and mathematics more difficult.
- Pupils often make fast progress in learning to read. Because they are taught well, children in the Reception Year quickly learn to use the sounds made by letters (phonics) in order to read. Key Stage 1 pupils, including those that are less able, use their phonics skills confidently to tackle unknown words.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 often read fluently because they get plenty of opportunities to practise their skills. Their ability to understand what they read is less well developed but a number of successful steps have been taken to improve this. The books purchased recently appeal to pupils' tastes. Pupils are encouraged to think harder about what they are reading because they are enjoying, for example, mystery and fantasy novels. A reading club for more-able pupils in Years 5 and 6 is broadening the range of their reading and stimulating discussion.
- This year, teachers have developed pupils' ability to write at length. For example, those in Years 3 and 4 quickly produced two chunky paragraphs about a dragon-slayer. Throughout the school, skills such as spelling and punctuation are taught carefully but pupils do not automatically apply them to their writing.
- Teachers ensure that pupils regularly practise and improve mathematics skills, including their mental calculations. Pupils enjoy beating their own previous scores and are working ever faster. Their ability to apply their skills in order to solve mathematical problems is less well developed.
- In their planning for other subjects, teachers have begun to include more activities involving writing and mathematics. There are not yet enough of these opportunities to improve achievement in writing and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils are given equally good opportunities to be successful. As a result, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. They are supported well during lessons and staff choose additional programmes carefully, for example, to help individuals with reading or mathematics.
- The starting points of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium tend to be lower than those of others in the school. Consequently, although all groups of pupils make equally good progress, pupils eligible for free school meals usually attain less well than others of the same age. Staff are all aware of these pupils and of the need for them to catch up as quickly as possible.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils have noticed that teachers 'try their best to make lessons the best they can be' with 'a good balance between hard work and fun'. Teachers find out what motivates pupils and use this information to plan activities that are enjoyable and move pupils' learning forward. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 revised and improved a range of mathematical skills as they competed in

teams to solve practical problems such as finding average basketball scores.

- From time to time and especially when working as part of a group, particular pupils 'opt out' and are happy for others to do most of the work. They look occupied while contributing little and their learning slows. Teachers do not always spot or tackle such situations and the school is currently considering approaches to make sure that every pupil plays a full part in all activities.
- Teachers have a detailed and accurate knowledge of the levels at which each pupil is working. They generally use their insight very well to make sure that the work for different groups of pupils is neither too hard nor too easy. Just occasionally, work for the most able pupils does not stretch them enough or teachers do not spot that these pupils have grasped a new skill and are ready to move on faster than others in the class.
- Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers and make strong contributions to teaching and learning. They share teachers' high expectations and use their expertise to support pupils but not to do work for them.
- In the Reception Year, staff are adept at teaching literacy and numeracy through activities linked to the class topic or children's interests. Children were fascinated by the idea of magic spells and a group working with the teacher were thrilled to count out toy creatures such as bats and rats to make 15 ingredients and then write down their recipe. Two other boys could not wait for their turn and set about using a display of letter sounds to attempt to write words like 'spider' and create their own spell.
- Pupils' books are marked conscientiously with plenty of praise and encouragement. Teachers give general points for improvement such as 'check your spellings'. However, their comments are not always precise enough to inform pupils exactly what they need to do in order to improve. Consequently, there is sometimes no sign that teachers' advice has been followed.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils show how very happy they are in school by their cheerful attitudes and above-average attendance.
- Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding. However, one or two pupils chatter too much when they are working and others say that this makes it hard for them to concentrate. Most pupils are keen to get involved in lessons and work very hard. A few are content to let others do most of the work during group activities.
- Pupils move around school in an extremely orderly and considerate manner. They are polite and helpful. Behaviour during acts of worship is exemplary.
- Outside, any arguments are invariably linked to football games. 'People get cross and say the wrong things', pupils explain. They add, 'We always make friends again'. Playground buddies are ever on the lookout for opportunities to help others.
- Pupils are clear about the difference between bullying and arguing. They are adamant that there is no bullying at their school. They know that they should go to an adult with any concerns or use the 'worry box'. Records show that pupils are justified in being confident that help would be forthcoming.
- Not only do pupils feel very safe here, they learn to take some responsibility for their own safety. The school council gives regular presentations about, for example, safety near water or railways. The curriculum covers important topics such as the safe use of social networking or mobile phones.
- A few pupils have significant emotional difficulties, which make it hard for them to control their behaviour. The work of staff, such as the learning mentor, helps these pupils to cope, for example with feelings of anger, and consequently their behaviour steadily improves.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has established a school where leaders, staff and governors strive to give every pupil the education, care and support they need to set them up for their future life. Leaders and staff work as a closely knit team sharing the same high expectations for pupils.
- All teachers work with the headteacher to check the quality of teaching and pinpoint where improvements can be made. This work links closely to plans for the school's future development, staff training and the arrangements to manage teachers' performance. The systems for reviewing the performance of other staff are currently being reconsidered.
- Support and training for staff have led to improvements in the work of individuals and in teaching overall. For example, phonics skills are now taught more effectively and so pupils are making better progress in reading.
- Giving pupils equal opportunities is at the heart of the school's work. For example, the curriculum is arranged so all pupils have experiences that some might otherwise not have. Visits and special days such as 'Victorian Day' make sure that everyone has images and memories to call on as they work. The curriculum does not yet provide enough chances for pupils to apply their writing and mathematics skills to their work in other subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given high priority. Each week has a particular ethos statement, such as 'I know how to show I am sorry', and staff draw pupils' attention to this during assemblies and lessons.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements. Staff training is comprehensive and great care is taken to keep pupils safe during visits.
- The multi-academy trust board is already providing a range of support, such as training in managing the school's finances. Staff speak with appreciation about the stronger partnerships between the schools in the chain. Members of the board help to arrange opportunities for the schools to work together, for example, to consider teaching in particular subjects.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a detailed awareness of pupils' achievement. They understand which aspects of learning pupils find difficult and know what sort of support leaders are providing. Visits to classrooms enable governors to see how the policies they have agreed, for example, for phonics teaching, work in practice. They are clear about the quality of teaching, how performance is managed and the links between the quality of teachers' work, their pay and their responsibilities. Governors know that the headteacher picks up any weaknesses quickly and arranges support for the teachers concerned. They help to decide how the pupil premium is allocated and are to check that actions such as the investment in library books are helping to narrow the gap in attainment.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138941
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	411735

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	108
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Caroline Cromack
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marlyn Morgan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 723140
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