

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Springfield Road, Wigan, Lancashire WN6 7RH

Inspection dates

13–14 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The drive and enthusiasm of leaders have ensured that the school has continued to improve at a swift pace. Consequently, pupils now make good progress and achieve well.
- Governors are very well informed and provide effective support and challenge to leaders.
- The headteacher has galvanised the staff team, who work well together. Teachers are reflective about their own practice. This has contributed to the ongoing improvements in the effectiveness of teaching and learning across the school.
- The whole-school approach to teaching mathematics is a strength of the school. It has led to a rise in standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. Leaders and governors use the additional funding that they receive effectively to support good learning and progress for these pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils' welfare is a strong feature. Pupils feel safe and are safe.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in phonics is above average because of effective teaching.
- The development of the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding is strong. Pupils are typically polite and thoughtful. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Early years provision is good. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has risen since the previous inspection and is now in line with the national average. However, the outdoor area available to Reception class children limits opportunities for learning outside.
- Although teaching is good overall, not all teachers consistently provide pupils with suitably challenging work. Consequently, some pupils do not make the more rapid progress of which they are capable across different subjects.
- Although the curriculum is broad and balanced, it does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in geography and history.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress further by ensuring that teachers consistently challenge pupils to make more rapid progress across different subjects and year groups.
- Improve the quality of the outside environment for children in the Reception class so that it provides better opportunities for learning outdoors.
- Ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop subject-specific skills in history and geography.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Strong and passionate leadership from the headteacher has ensured effective improvements to the school and has set the tone, ethos and direction that the school is taking. The headteacher leads by example and has inspired staff, pupils and parents to believe and realise the vision for the school's continual improvement.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are developing, and ensuring, an open, collaborative and reflective culture for continuous improvement across the school. Morale is high and relationships are strong. This is reflected in the way that all staff work as a team and do their best to support all pupils. As a result, the school has continued to improve quickly since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have informed and precise views of the school's priorities and effectiveness. They have put clear plans and monitoring in place to secure further improvements. Their work so far has ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved and that pupils make consistently good progress from their starting points.
- Parents, pupils and staff share positive views of the school and feel confident in its leadership. All are committed to playing their part in continuing to improve the school. A typical comment was: 'I think that this school has made great steps forward and I am more than happy with the education my child receives.'
- Over the past two years, the school has seen a significant increase in pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator is passionate about developing the school's provision and is ensuring that these pupils have the best possible opportunity to succeed and progress from their starting points. Funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used effectively in additional support staff and intervention programmes.
- The school provides pupils with a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. Since the previous inspection, leaders have focused successfully on improving provision in mathematics and English. Leaders also ensure effective provision in art, technology and practical science work. However, the provision for pupils' learning in history and geography is less secure. It does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop important subject-specific skills to a high enough standard.
- The curriculum is enhanced with a good range of extra-curricular activities and school trips. Older pupils talked enthusiastically about the residential trips that they had been on. Members of the choir said that they had enjoyed taking part in a major singing event in Manchester.
- The school encourages pupils to lead healthy lifestyles. Leaders use additional funding for physical education and sport effectively and many pupils have the chance to represent the school in rugby, football and running teams.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding successfully to support disadvantaged pupils' progress and achievement across the school. This includes the increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils who also have SEN and/or disabilities, or other additional barriers to learning.

- Over the last two years, leaders have worked closely with the local authority, which has provided additional support, training and monitoring to ensure that the school provides a consistently good standard of education. This strong collaboration has been effective.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- Since the previous inspection, governors have continued to develop their skills and understanding of data. They now have a clear view of the strengths of the school and where it can improve. As a consequence, they challenge the headteacher well and are effectively supporting the school's journey of continual improvement.
- Governors oversee the finances of the school diligently. For example, they have ensured that the performance management arrangements for the headteacher and staff are fit for purpose and that decisions about pay progression are carefully considered.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school.
- The school's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are thorough and robust. Leaders ensure effective support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Staff in charge of safeguarding respond quickly and take timely action when needed.
- The pastoral care team and systems for ensuring the welfare and safety of pupils are highly effective. Pupils value the access that they have to good-quality support, advice and guidance. Consequently, they feel safe in school.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate checks are made on all staff, governors and regular visitors to school to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children. They make sure that high-quality records of these checks are maintained.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is effective and has ensured that pupils typically make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers and leaders have worked closely together to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers successfully match work to pupils' abilities and accurately monitor progress over time. However, some teachers need to challenge pupils more consistently across all subjects in order to accelerate some pupils' progress further.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use incisive and effective questioning techniques to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This encourages pupils to think through their responses and explain their answers in detail.
- Strong and respectful relationships exist between pupils and staff. As a result, pupils are confident and readily engaged in their learning. They respond enthusiastically in their lessons and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Throughout the school there is a team of committed teaching assistants who effectively and ably support teachers. Their support and interventions make valuable contributions to the quality of learning and the resulting improvements in pupils' progress.

- Teachers promote and reinforce the teaching of English and mathematics across the curriculum. This has resulted in clear evidence of improved standards in these subjects. Outcomes show that an above-average proportion of pupils make consistently good progress in key stages 1 and 2 in English and mathematics.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and this inspires pupils to learn. Teachers have increasingly high expectations of their pupils. However, teachers do not give enough attention to the development of subject-specific skills in history and geography.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is effective. Teachers and teaching assistants help young pupils to develop their phonic skills well. The teaching of reading is systematic and effectively promotes pupils' good progress as they move through the school. Similar, whole-school approaches to writing and mathematics have resulted in good progress for all pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils and staff are respectful of each other. Pupils are polite and courteous in class and around the school.
- Staff promote and reinforce pupils' positive attitudes, which are underpinned by the school's spiritual ethos, culture and faith. As a result, there is a strong sense of community, where pupils value their education and school.
- Pupils are interested in, and respectful of, the views of others. They equally respect one another's differences. As a result, pupils are happy to be in school.
- Pupils are very proud of their achievements and this has a positive impact on their engagement in learning and the consistently good progress that they make.
- Parents view the school very positively, with the vast majority identifying that their child is happy and well cared for at the school. One parent identified: 'I feel my child is well looked after and is taught well. I can see this in his progress in school and at home.'
- Pupils understand the consequences of bullying. Pupils do not feel that bullying is a problem. On the rare occasion that it does occur, staff deal well with any concerns that pupils have.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in class and when moving around school. They know the expectations of staff and take responsibility for their actions.
- Leaders have ensured that attendance has improved over time and it is now above the national average.
- The school has a very effective pastoral care team, including family support workers. They have provided timely and responsive support for the small number of pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour. As a result, where behaviour had been challenging for a small number of pupils, there has been a rapid improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders have successfully addressed previous underachievement and have ensured that the large majority of pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics was above the national average in both key stages 1 and 2. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading and writing was broadly in line with the national average in both key stages. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In 2017, pupils' progress was above the national average. The strongest area was mathematics, where the rate of progress was in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- Outcomes in phonics are consistently strong. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is above the national average.
- Evidence gathered on inspection, including the school's own tracking data and work in pupils' books, indicates that outcomes for pupils currently in the school continue to be good.
- The school's detailed tracking shows that a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils also have additional potential barriers to learning, including having SEN and/or disabilities. The school's own information, coupled with inspection evidence, confirms that disadvantaged pupils across the school make good progress from their varying starting points.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported and, as a result, progress well against their individual targets. They make good progress from their starting points.
- Some inconsistencies remain in the pupils' progress across the wider curriculum. Their attractive art work shows a depth of knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils also know how to make secure predictions and draw effective conclusions in science. However, their subject-specific skills in history and geography, such as developing chronologies, using maps and making comparisons between different times and places, are not as well developed.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. By the time that they leave the Reception class, the proportion of children with a good level of development is in line with the national average.
- Children begin the early years with starting points that are typical of those expected for their age in most areas, except in communication, language, literacy and numeracy. From this point, children make good progress and develop well.
- Adults teach phonics effectively in the early years. They model sounds consistently and accurately and encourage children to use their phonic skills in their reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is good. Adults provide children with a wide range of interesting activities that are well matched to their

learning needs. As a result, children enjoy being in Nursery and Reception and this contributes to the good progress that they make.

- The Nursery provides children with a calm, well-resourced learning environment inside and an extensive and well-planned outdoor area. This good-quality indoor provision is continued into the Reception classroom. However, although staff make the best use of the space available, the outdoor area for Reception children is cramped and limits opportunities for learning.
- Teaching assistants challenge children effectively to describe objects and predict what is going to happen in a story. This stretches their understanding.
- High-quality teaching and focused planning ensure that children in the Nursery class get off to a good start. The children who move from Nursery to Reception typically start at higher levels than those coming straight into the Reception class. Teachers and adults prepare children effectively for the demands of key stage 1.
- The leader responsible for the early years is knowledgeable and has a clear vision for making further improvements to the setting. She has high expectations for all children, including those who are disadvantaged, and shares these expectations with all staff.
- The school engages with parents effectively, for example through running workshops and sessions that support children to settle.
- Behaviour in the early years is good. Children are safe and well cared for and there are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	106461
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10042435

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	447
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Katherine Gaskell
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Mason
Telephone number	01942 231478
Website	www.sacredheart.wigan.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@admin.sacredheart.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 February 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- There is full-time Nursery provision.
- The school met the current floor standards in 2017, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across a range of subjects during lessons. They also talked to the pupils about their learning. Inspectors also undertook a formal work scrutiny.
- Inspectors took account of 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 11 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered 32 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors held meetings with a group of pupils, the chair of the governing body and members of the governing body, representatives from the local authority and with school leaders. A discussion was undertaken with a representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including: the school's own information on pupils' current and recent progress; records relating to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; leaders' own assessment of the school's effectiveness and their development plans; anonymised performance management documents; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Iain Sim, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Vanessa MacDonald	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Dixon	Her Majesty's Inspector

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