

Sacred Heart RC Primary School

Tollgate, Bretton, Peterborough, PE3 9XD

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 good progress from Reception to Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is mainly good, with some outstanding in Years 5 and 6, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have a statement of special educational needs are well cared for and make good progress.
- The school makes good use of outdoor environmental study areas to provide a varied and interesting curriculum.
- Attitudes to learning are good and pupils enjoy coming to school and work well together.
- Pupils feel safe in school, and it takes very careful steps to protect them.
- Leaders and managers have made improvements to the school, and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The governors have been effective in challenging and supporting the school to make changes that have improved teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Children in Reception do not do as well in early writing skills as they do in other areas of their learning.
- In classes for younger pupils the more-able pupils do not always make as much progress as other pupils.
- Progress is not outstanding across all year groups and subjects. For example, while outstanding in mathematics, the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 in reading and writing is typically good.
- Leaders and managers do not routinely monitor the performance of additional staff who have teaching responsibilities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons. Five joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and examined pupils' work on display.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a telephone discussion was undertaken with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire for parents provided by Ofsted (Parent View) and responses to the school's own most recent paper-based questionnaire. They talked directly to parents during the inspection. In addition, 25 responses to a staff questionnaire were considered.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Andrew Read, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils speak English as an additional language, and the percentage from different minority ethnic groups is high.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional government funding for certain groups, such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care).
- An above-average number of pupils join or leave school at other than normal times.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching, and thus further increase the progress that pupils make, by:
 - further developing the teaching of early writing skills in Reception
 - making sure that more-able pupils receive challenging work in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1
 - ensuring that progress in reading and writing matches that achieved in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Extend the capacity of the senior leadership team to make improvements by:
 - routinely monitoring the quality of teaching of additional staff who teach classes or groups
 - ensuring that the information collected and analysed on how well different groups of pupils are doing is used by all teachers to plan effective teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils make good or better progress from Reception to Year 6. The older pupils make more progress than the younger ones. For example, many pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics in Years 4 to 6.
- Children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and abilities which are below those expected for their age. Typically a third of the children are learning English as an additional language. Most children leave Reception at expected levels of development. This represents good progress and is an improvement on previous years.
- Attainment in early language acquisition and number skills is strong in Reception. However, the level of development reached in early writing skills remains below that of other areas. This is a recognised area for development by the school.
- Overall, pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some more-able pupils do not make quite as much progress as other pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The school's own assessment data for 2013 show that improvements to teaching have given rise to a further increase in the rate of progress made by pupils, particularly in mathematics. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is now at or slightly above national averages. This is because progress is now good or better for most groups, including those who join the school at a time other than Reception.
- Information collected by the school and previous national test results show that progress is frequently outstanding in mathematics across older-aged classes. This represents a significant improvement on recent years. Progress in writing and reading, whilst typically good, remains behind that of mathematics with fewer pupils reaching the highest attainment levels.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils from minority ethnic groups make particularly good progress in the upper year groups. For example, pupils learning English as an additional language frequently make accelerated progress in writing and mathematics, attaining a level at or above that of their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress as a consequence of high levels of support. Pupils who have a statement of special educational needs do particularly well in the upper year groups because class teachers ensure that their learning is well matched to their particular needs.
- Recent improvements mean that the progress made by pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is good, regardless of age or ability. In the past some pupils were up to a year behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. While these pupils are still achieving at a lower standard, the gap is closing rapidly, and is typically now no more than a term behind by Year 6.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good. This matches the school's own record of the quality of teaching.

Some teaching is outstanding in Years 4 to 6.

- In previous years the teaching of children in Reception has been of variable quality. However, the school has adopted an uncompromising approach to ensuring that children receive the best possible provision. This approach has included the deployment of additional in-class support, and the appointment of two new teachers on a class-share basis. This means that in more recent times, teaching has improved.
- The teaching of early reading skills in Reception and Year 1 is good. Pupils work in groups, and provision is well matched to specific need. The school has recently taken effective steps to improve the co-ordination and development of reading in all year groups through the deployment of a specialist lead practitioner.
- Teaching is strongest in Key Stage 2. It is frequently based around a theme, and highly imaginative approaches are taken to stimulate ideas and thinking. For example, during the inspection teachers were seen using role-play to present Victorian characters and scenes, resulting in imaginative and purposeful writing.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics have centred on better use of information regarding how well pupils are doing, for example through the use of pupil feedback slips at the end of each learning session in Year 5. This enables teachers to adapt their teaching well to specific needs.
- The teaching of more-able pupils is inconsistent. By the end of Year 2 not all are reaching the highest levels of attainment because learning is not always structured around their specific needs. Despite this, such pupils make accelerated progress as they move through the school, because teaching is increasingly well matched to their specific needs, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium receive extra help and resources from teachers and support staff which enable them to make good progress. The school provides a wide range of different specialist teaching programmes for such pupils, which are effective in narrowing gaps in attainment.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed by teachers and provide good support to all pupils who need extra help, but with a focus on those eligible to the pupil premium funding as well as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers mark regularly and accurately assess the standard of pupils' work. The use of such information to inform the planning of teaching is strongest in higher year groups. Pupils have a good understanding of how to make their work better and say that homework helpfully reinforces their classroom learning.
- The teaching of whole classes or groups by additional teachers is generally good. However, such staff have had limited monitoring or support from leaders in a way that helps inform their practice. As a result some variation exists in the quality of such provision, and not all teaching is well matched to the needs of individuals. Where teaching is good or better, it is matched by strong subject knowledge and expertise, such as in the teaching of additional English language skills.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have extensive opportunities to discuss their feelings and debate moral issues. Pupils say they highly value this aspect of school life. Pupils learn about the diversity of different nationalities found across the world and therefore have a good awareness of other cultures. The spiritual

development of the pupils is very strong and assemblies are used effectively to promote different belief systems. Music and art are also used extensively as vehicles to promote wider spiritual development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and reflect a strong ethos of respect that underpins all activities in the school. For example, pupils work well together in lessons, and are keen to help should any pupil appear lonely or unhappy. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have a well-developed understanding of how to lower the risk of coming to harm out of school. For example, they know how to cope with the unwanted attention of adults with whom they are unfamiliar. Their understanding of how to stay safe on the internet is also well developed and introduced from a young age through taught activities.
- Pupils' behaviour beyond lessons and when not directly supervised by adults is generally good. Those who find it harder to regulate their own behaviour are very well supported and show improvement over time. Pupils behave well at lunch time both in the dining area and around the school, for example when tending the school's vegetable plots.
- Parental surveys and interviews during the inspection show that in general parents feel that behaviour is well managed and that any concerns are addressed rapidly. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and that where it does occur teachers are quick to address it. Pupils thus feel listened to and have a number of pupil councils within which to give their opinions, such as the 'Eco-council'.
- Pupils support each other very well at playtime. For example, during the inspection Year 6 pupils were seen organising high-quality activities with Reception children and all concerned were having fun while also learning to play together in harmony.
- Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy coming to school and parents say they value the education provided. Where attendance issues do arise, the school takes rapid action to resolve any issues.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers at all levels have contributed to improvements over the last three years and demonstrate the capacity for further improvement. As a consequence standards have been maintained in reading, writing and mathematics and gaps between the lowest and highest performing pupils continue to close.
- The headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has been skilful in targeting resources on those areas of greatest need. For example, in the recent past emerging areas of underperformance have been quickly identified and addressed effectively.
- Subject and key stage leaders receive good levels of support from the senior leaders and consequently have clear areas of responsibility and well-defined performance expectations. They have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the development needs of their own areas of responsibility.

- Improvements have been made to the use of assessment data as a means to analyse the performance of the whole school and groups of pupils. This aspect has been led effectively by the deputy headteacher, and has been used to best effect in the planning of teaching in classes for older pupils.
- Teaching is monitored effectively and new arrivals, including those new to teaching, are given good support and induction. The school has an established track record of developing such teachers. Processes to manage the performance of teachers are effective and clearly linked to pupils' progress. For example, leaders make very good use of national teaching standards. Such rigour has not been applied to the monitoring and mentoring of additional teachers used to deliver whole class and group teaching, and this is an area for further development.
- The Primary Sport Funding (extra money provided to encourage physical activity and improve sports education) is being used to good effect. The school has identified key areas of development and in addition to improving provision in existing areas it has created new curriculum opportunities, such as dance.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good and ably led by the headteacher. Clear lines of communication between parents, managers and classroom teachers enable, for example, the early identification of additional needs in Reception.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good as a consequence of recent changes in staffing. The current provision for Reception children shows that the Key Stage 1 leader, who also has responsibility for Early Years, has an effective knowledge of the needs of young children and keeps a close eye on children's progress.
- A local authority officer has been providing effective challenge in a number of key areas such as mathematics and early years education. This has directly contributed to improvements in outcomes for pupils. Such support is underpinned by a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The leaders have a strong focus on ensuring equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination within the school. They are aware that to achieve this fully they need to eliminate the variations in the impact of teaching throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of learning opportunities. For example, they develop an extensive understanding of environmental matters through 'Eco-school'. Through such activities the school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn and work in groups so that they can develop collaborative learning skills. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy the wide variety of clubs and activities available to them.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet national requirements. A robust approach is taken to the identification and resolution of care issues affecting the pupils. All staff ensure that any pupils at risk are well supported.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective. In recent years, they have demonstrated a strong drive to improve standards of achievement, supporting the headteacher in direct action to tackle any emerging underperformance. The governing body is led well by the Chair, and ably supported by others, all of whom meet on a monthly basis. Governors hold leaders to account and have a good understanding of the performance of pupils across the school. For example, they have a well-developed understanding of the progress made by different groups, such as those who are eligible for the pupil premium. They are effective at allocating resources according to need and

ensuring good value for money. For example, they ensure that teachers' pay and promotion are systematically linked to their performance in helping pupils to achieve well. Governors apply rigorous planning and controls to the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

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	110855
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	425358

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Larry Binns
Headteacher	Christina Tallowin
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2008
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