

Holy Souls Catholic Primary School

Mallard Close, Acocks Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B27 6BN

Inspection dates

11–12 January 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is inadequate. Leaders do not consistently take appropriate action to secure pupils' welfare and ensure that they are safe.
- Governors do not monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements with enough rigour or hold leaders to account for the implementation of agreed policies and procedures. As a result, pupils are at risk of potential harm.
- Leaders do not record safeguarding concerns or behaviour incidents in enough detail to allow for accurate tracking of any action that is required or taken.
- Early years provision is inadequate because safeguarding is not effective. Leaders have not established a culture that safeguards children's welfare and ensures that they are safe.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have created a calm and orderly environment. As a result, pupils' conduct around school is good.
- Teaching is good. Staff have high expectations and plan work that matches pupils' needs and interests. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve standards that are above national averages in reading and writing and broadly in line in mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff use a range of interesting activities to enrich pupils' experiences and enhance their skills.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy school because lessons are interesting.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding to support pupils in overcoming any barriers to their learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make progress that is at least as good as that of their peers, and sometimes better.
- The school's values strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils work together successfully and show care and respect for others.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their low starting points. A higher-than-average proportion achieve a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year. This prepares children well for Year 1.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a priority, improve safeguarding arrangements so that they are effective by ensuring that:
 - where concerns arise about pupils' safety and welfare, they are shared fully and swiftly with the relevant external agencies
 - records for all safeguarding matters, including those relating to behaviour, include sufficient detail so that cases can be tracked and reviewed over time
 - staff receive training so they have the knowledge, skills and understanding to better support pupils and keep them safe
 - physical intervention is only used as a last resort and any incidents of physical intervention are recorded in detail so that pupils and staff receive the appropriate support
 - governors rigorously check the implementation of policies and procedures and monitor leaders' actions in response to safeguarding concerns.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - continuing to develop the role of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility so that they can have greater impact on school improvement.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teaching consistently challenges the most able pupils to make the progress they are capable of.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Safeguarding is not effective. Senior leaders do not respond well enough when dealing with concerns raised by pupils about their safety. They do not consistently take appropriate action to secure pupils' welfare. Senior leaders do not record safeguarding matters in enough detail to enable them to track the actions that they have taken or to identify whether they need to take further action to ensure that pupils are safe. This places pupils at risk of potential harm.
- Leaders and governors have successfully created a culture of high expectations for staff and pupils. Morale is strong and staff work well as a team with a clear sense of purpose. Staff are committed to doing their best for each pupil and have high expectations of their work. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are good.
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning are accurate and effective. Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of how well the school is performing and where it could improve further. For example, leaders are aware that attainment and progress for the most able pupils in writing are not as strong as in other subjects. They have made improvements to the teaching of writing skills, and work in pupils' books shows that the most able pupils are making better progress as a result.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress pupils make. They make effective use of training to improve the quality of teaching and they provide thorough support to staff who are new to the school. As a result, there is consistency in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Leaders effectively use assessment to monitor pupils' progress. They regularly check the progress pupils make and hold teachers to account for this. The achievement of different groups of pupils is analysed and teachers identify pupils who are falling behind. Where pupils' progress is not good, teachers put in place extra support or additional focused teaching. This helps pupils to catch up.
- The curriculum is well planned, broad and balanced. While the key skills of English and mathematics are a strong focus, pupils enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities. For example, all pupils in key stage 2 have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument.
- Effective use is made of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders use the funding appropriately to employ additional adults to provide one-to-one support and small-group teaching. Teachers track the progress of disadvantaged pupils closely to evaluate the impact of this support and to identify pupils who may require additional provision. As a result, differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are reducing.
- Leaders accurately identify pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and who would benefit from extra support. The way in which the teaching of English and mathematics is organised ensures that these pupils are effectively supported by teachers and

teaching assistants. Individual targets in pupils' personal plans are precise and revisited regularly. Consequently, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.

- The school's relationship with parents and carers is strong. The majority of parents said that their children are well cared for by staff and that leaders are swift to address any concerns that they raise.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding to provide a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, for example athletics, basketball, dance and football. However, the impact of this funding is not analysed sharply enough to inform future planning.
- Subject leaders provide training for staff in areas that need to improve and they identify aspects for further development. Middle leaders are becoming more effective by being involved in checking the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. For example, the mathematics leader has recently led training on developing pupils' reasoning skills and has checked whether staff have implemented this by looking at pupils' work. However, middle leaders are not yet fully involved in checking the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not ensured that safeguarding policies, practices and procedures are effective in keeping pupils safe from potential harm.
- Governors want the best for pupils and routinely ask leaders questions about how well the school is performing. However, governors do not always pursue issues in the depth and detail required to hold senior leaders robustly to account and to evaluate the impact that their policies are having on pupils' behaviour and safety.
- Governors are highly committed to the school. They have high expectations and are aspirational for what pupils should achieve during their time at Holy Souls Catholic Primary School.
- Governors know the school well and regularly meet with the leaders of each year group to monitor pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. As a result, governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in relation to pupils' outcomes.
- Governors closely monitor the spending of additional funding and effectively hold leaders to account to ensure that the funding has a direct impact on pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The culture of safeguarding means that leaders do not act on concerns about pupils' safety and welfare in a sufficiently thorough or timely way.
- Records of actions taken to support pupils who may be at risk of potential harm show that senior leaders do not consistently share concerns about pupils' safety with the relevant external agencies. Inspectors found examples of staff having raised serious

concerns about pupils and leaders not referring these concerns to the appropriate professional agencies. Thus, the safety of pupils could be at risk.

- Although senior leaders document safeguarding incidents, these records do not show clearly what action leaders have taken in response to concerns raised. Records of serious behaviour incidents lack detail about what actions staff have taken to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. This means that leaders are not able to evaluate whether the actions they have taken have been effective.
- Staff do not have the necessary training to deal safely and effectively with occasional incidents of pupils' challenging behaviour. Risk assessments for pupils who pose a risk to themselves and others are not undertaken in a timely manner and do not contain the information needed to keep pupils and staff safe. Governors do not check whether leaders are adhering to policies, particularly relating to the use of physical intervention. As a result, pupils are at risk of potential harm.
- Staff take part in regular training and know the signs that might indicate that a pupil is at risk of abuse. Staff are able to explain confidently the process they should follow if they have a concern about a child.
- Leaders follow safer recruitment procedures effectively. They carry out appropriate checks when adults apply to work at the school and record these accurately on the single central record.
- Most pupils said that they feel safe and are confident that adults will help them if they have any worries or concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and make these clear. Pupils respond well to these expectations and conduct themselves well in lessons. They work hard and want to succeed.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to provide high-quality explanations and to accurately model learning for pupils. As a result, pupils grasp new concepts quickly and make good progress in lessons.
- In lessons, teachers accurately identify errors and misunderstandings and swiftly address these. As a result, pupils learn from their mistakes and make good progress.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' progress by supporting groups or individuals to practise basic skills. Teaching assistants receive training to enable them to undertake their roles successfully. As a result, they provide effective support for pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities benefit from good support with their learning. Additional help ensures that these pupils make good progress from their starting points. As a result, the differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have SEN and /or disabilities and their peers diminish over time.
- Teachers have a clear focus on what pupils are learning. They skilfully question pupils to check whether they have understood new information.

- The teaching of reading is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and accurately model sounds. There is good continuity in the development of reading skills from early years into key stage 1. Regular reading lessons across the school successfully develop pupils' comprehension and vocabulary skills. As a result, younger pupils are able to use their phonics skills effectively to help them to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils read with fluency and confidence and show a secure understanding of what they read.
- Staff teach writing well. Trips and visitors provide interesting stimuli to help develop pupils' writing skills. For example, a performance by a visiting theatre company enthused pupils across the school to write purposefully about the story of Snow White and the seven dwarves. Teachers also provide opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in subjects other than English, particularly in religious education.
- There is a strong focus on the promotion of key skills in mathematics. Teachers' systematically build on pupils' understanding of number as they move through the school. Work in pupils' books indicates that they successfully develop fluency in their approach to calculation methods.
- Teachers effectively use the school's assessment system to monitor pupils' progress. They compare their assessment judgements with those of teachers in other schools to ensure accuracy. Teachers make appropriate use of assessment information to plan work that matches the needs of the majority of pupils. However, teachers do not consistently plan work that challenges the most able pupils. This limits the progress these pupils make.
- Teachers do not consistently check the pace at which pupils learn in lessons. As a result, teachers do not adapt work in order to extend pupils' learning if they are finding tasks too easy. This means that some pupils, particularly the most able, do not make the progress that they are capable of.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. This is because leaders do not consistently act on concerns about pupils' welfare in an appropriate, thorough or timely way. This places pupils' welfare at risk.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying, including cyber-bullying. They told inspectors that incidents of bullying and racist name-calling occur but that adults respond quickly to deal with this. However, leaders' records of these incidents do not contain enough information to enable them to evaluate whether their actions have been effective in addressing issues.
- There is a calm, orderly and purposeful atmosphere in all areas of the school. Pupils are polite and well mannered and are courteous to adults and other pupils, for example routinely holding doors open for adults and their peers.
- Pupils are thoughtful, caring members of the school community and are keen to support those needing help. For example, a group of pupils told inspectors that they are planning to raise money for children who are less fortunate than themselves.

- Pupils are self-confident and put their views forward in a clear and respectful way. They listen carefully to the ideas of other pupils.
- The school's values strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Teachers skilfully weave the development of these aspects through the curriculum. As a result, pupils develop a good understanding of how people across Britain and other countries live, and they show respect for people from different faiths and religions.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with a successful start to the school day. Relationships are positive and behaviour is good.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff share high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and behave sensibly in lessons and around school. They listen carefully to instructions and are keen to do well. As a result, there is no disruption to learning, and pupils make good progress.
- Pupils take a pride in their work and present it well. They are proud of their school and of their achievements. Pupils are confident and articulate when talking to one another and to adults.
- Teachers enable pupils to become independent learners. As a result, pupils apply themselves diligently in lessons and work cooperatively with their peers.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, pupils' attendance overall is broadly average, and the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is below average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils are making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stages 1 and 2. A sustained focus on the development of basic skills contributes to positive progress for all pupils.
- In 2017, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics were above national averages. The proportions working at greater depth were broadly in line with national averages in reading and mathematics.
- In Year 6 in 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading and writing were above national averages. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in mathematics was slightly below the national average. Work in books shows that current pupils are making better progress and more pupils are now working at the standard expected for their age in mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their phonics skills as a result of systematic teaching. Consequently, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the

phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 is consistently above the national average.

- Pupils develop strong reading skills. They read fluently and expressively and have a secure understanding of what they read. The most able pupils read suitably challenging books and are confident readers.
- Pupils make good progress in the development of their writing skills. They confidently respond to focused tasks to develop their skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils use these skills well when writing creatively and in other subject areas.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of key concepts in mathematics. Work in books shows that pupils have made good progress this year in the development of their calculation skills and their ability to solve mathematical problems.
- The school's assessment information shows that the majority of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because of effective teaching and bespoke support.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is as good as, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils in the school with the same starting points. Additional adults provide tailored teaching in reading, writing and mathematics. This teaching supports disadvantaged pupils who are working below the expected standard to make good progress and to reduce the differences between their achievement and that of other pupils.
- Work in pupils' books shows that teachers do not consistently challenge the most able pupils to make rapid progress or to deepen their knowledge and understanding. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 is below the national average.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Leaders have not established a culture in which children's safety and welfare are protected at all times. Therefore, safeguarding in the early years is ineffective, and the early years provision is inadequate overall.
- Most children enter Reception with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below those typical for their age. From their starting points, children make consistently good progress. As a result, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year is above the national average. This means that children are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.
- Transition arrangements are effective. Children join Reception from a wide range of settings and leaders liaise effectively with providers and parents so that they understand the needs of each child when they start school. As a result, children settle into school quickly and make strong progress from their starting points.
- The quality of teaching is good. Adults use their good subject knowledge to plan and teach early reading, writing and mathematics skills carefully. They expect children to recall information and to use and apply the skills that they have learned when working independently. These high expectations mean that children make good progress in their learning.

- Adults plan frequent opportunities for children to practise their reading, writing and mathematics skills. As a result, children's basic skills develop quickly. For example, work in books shows that children move rapidly from learning how to form letters correctly to writing simple words and then full sentences.
- Effective use is made of early years pupil premium funding to help disadvantaged children overcome barriers to their learning. Leaders give careful thought to the deployment of additional adults to provide extra support where children have gaps in their learning. As a result, disadvantaged children make good progress from their starting points.
- Adults support children's language development well. They question children effectively and provide high-quality commentary while they play. As a result of the strong modelling of language, children make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. These skills support children's learning across the curriculum and contribute to their good progress.
- The curriculum includes a good range of activities across all areas of learning. Adults plan interesting activities that meet children's needs and interests. This engages children and promotes their learning. Adults skilfully question children to reinforce and develop their knowledge and understanding. As a result, children make strong progress in their learning and development.
- Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and provide clear guidance to support children to behave well. As a result, children's behaviour is good. They listen attentively to adults, respond politely when spoken to and quickly follow instructions.
- Clear routines and positive relationships ensure that children develop their social skills effectively. Children play happily together and help each other by sharing and taking turns.
- Parents are very positive about the early years provision. They said that their children enjoy coming to school and settle in quickly. Leaders offer parents opportunities to be involved in their children's learning, for example through termly workshops and regular information evenings. Parents value these opportunities and find them useful in helping them to support their children's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	103429
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10037125

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Cunningham
Headteacher	Kevin Kelly
Telephone number	01214 646780
Website	www.holysoul.bham.sch.uk
Email address	k.kelly@holysoul.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The number of pupils who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans, is also below the national average.
- There are two classes in each year group from Reception to Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in a range of lessons. Some of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher and senior leaders. One inspector visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with a group of pupils and talked to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in pupils' books.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with seven governors and the chair of the governing body. A conversation was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, information about pupils' progress, records relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour, minutes of meetings of the governing body, reviews from external partners and the school's website.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 24 responses to Parent View and information from the additional contact with parents during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke to staff and took account of the views expressed in the 37 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Blackburn	Ofsted Inspector
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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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