

Inspection of a good school: Sacred Heart Catholic School

Cecil Road, Paignton, Devon TQ3 2SH

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 May 2023

Outcome

Sacred Heart Catholic School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this inclusive school, where everyone is valued. They are clear about the school rules of being 'ready, respectful and safe'. Pupils are polite, well and welcoming to visitors.

Pupils learn and play well with others. They behave well across the school. While some said that they occasionally do fall out with friends, they know that adults are there to help them find a solution. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive.

Pupils live up to the school's values of kindness, compassion, peace, integrity, justice, courage and forgiveness. The nurturing culture of the school leads pupils to act responsibly, and to care for each other. For example, Year 5 pupils apply to be school chaplains. This involves supporting other pupils in the playground or helping in the local church.

Parents are positive about the quality of education provided by the school, as well as the caring, family approach. Parents value the recent improved communication between school and home.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum is ambitious and engaging. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a wide range of subjects throughout their time at the school. The curriculum is carefully planned to build on pupils' prior knowledge as they progress through the school. For example, in mathematics, pupils recall number facts with increasing fluency. This helps them to be confident when they move on to problem-solving and reasoning.

Leaders have prioritised oracy to improve communication and language across the school. This learning starts in Nursery and develops with increasing complexity as pupils grow and mature. For example, when children in the Nursery sort shapes, they are encouraged

to say whether they are the same or different. In the main school, staff use a common approach to encourage all pupils to speak in full sentences. This helps pupils to answer questions precisely and to think deeply about what they are learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 3 can clearly explain how fractions are part of the whole, accurately using the correct terms 'numerator' and 'denominator'.

Subject leaders are knowledgeable about the subjects that they lead. They value the specialist support and training they received to develop their expertise. Subject leaders carry out some checks on the delivery of the curriculum. However, some subject curriculums are not as developed as others. This means that pupils do not deepen their knowledge in these areas as well as they do in others.

Leaders prioritise reading and promote a love of it throughout the school. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they begin school and have daily sessions. Teachers monitor pupils' reading closely and provide effective support to help those who may be at risk of falling behind. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they are learning. Pupils practise regularly to build up reading fluency. As pupils move through the school, teachers help pupils to develop their comprehension. Pupils are proud to take on leadership roles within the curriculum. For example, 'Reading ambassadors' help others to develop their reading skills in different contexts, writing book reviews and sharing favourite stories with younger pupils.

Teachers successfully make adaptations to their teaching, so that pupils with SEND can learn well. Their needs are identified accurately, and plans are in place to support and monitor their learning. Leaders are working to ensure that personal targets for a minority of pupils with SEND are more precise.

Leaders have put in place many ways to enrich pupils' learning, including through a variety of trips and visits. For example, in history, pupils visit the local pier to learn how it was designed and built during the Victorian era. However, pupils and parents are eager for the school to offer a more wide-ranging choice of lunch and after-school clubs.

Leaders are considerate of the welfare of staff. They pay careful attention to their workload. Staff feel valued. They enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe. They are confident that any adult in school will help to resolve any issues or worries. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in the locality and online.

Leaders ensure that all staff are trained. This means that staff are vigilant and know how to report concerns. Leaders, including governors take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They maintain the belief that 'it could happen here'. Leaders ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to protect children. Staff have a thorough understanding of the role they play in keeping pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the precise knowledge that pupils need to know and remember has not been identified precisely enough. As a result, pupils do not develop the deep understanding they need to be successful in these subjects. Leaders should support subject leaders to securely embed the key knowledge that pupils need to understand, so they can learn and remember more.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Sacred Heart Catholic School, to be good in December 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	140749
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10227104
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ruth O'Donovan
Headteacher	Nichola Day
Website	www.sacred-heart-primary.torbay.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Sacred Heart Catholic School is part of Plymouth CAST multi-academy trust.
- The last section 48 inspection was carried out in March 2016.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, members of staff, parents and representatives from the trust and governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted’s online staff survey and the online Parent View survey, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector checked the procedures for keeping pupils safe, including scrutinising the single central record.
- The inspector looked at the school’s plans for improvement, leaders’ self-evaluation, minutes of meetings, monitoring documents and reports from the trust.

Inspection team

Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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