

Inspection of a good school: St Clare's Catholic Primary School, Preston

Sharoe Green Lane North, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 9HH

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 March 2022

Outcome

St Clare's Catholic Primary School, Preston continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Clare's is a welcoming, friendly school where pupils are happy and feel safe. Pupils know that staff are there to help them if they have any worries or concerns. They enjoy playing with their friends at playtimes and joining in after-school activities. Carefully selected trips and residential visits enrich pupils' learning.

Pupils live up to the high expectations that leaders have of them, both academically and socially. Most pupils, including those in the early years and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils behave well. Classrooms and playtimes are calm and well organised. Pupils are respectful towards each other and towards adults. Pupils are confident that if bullying were to occur, staff would deal with it quickly and effectively.

Pupils are encouraged to become responsible citizens from a very young age. For example, pupils from the Reception class to Year 6 are elected to be school councillors. Older pupils particularly enjoy their roles as buddies to younger children.

Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They would happily recommend this school to others. As one parent commented: 'St Clare's is a wonderful school. Staff really care about the children.'

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

Leaders have an accurate overview of what the school does well and of those aspects that can be developed further. All staff strive to ensure that pupils, including children in the early years and pupils with SEND, achieve their very best.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that meets the varied needs of pupils. Pupils learn the full range of national curriculum subjects. In most subjects, leaders are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils must learn and the order in which this should be

taught. For example, the mathematics curriculum sets out clearly the specific knowledge and skills that pupils need to remember, from the early years through to the end of Year 6. However, in some subjects, leaders have not made the knowledge that they want pupils to learn clear enough for teachers. In addition, in some subjects leaders have not fully considered the building blocks in learning that children should acquire in the early years to prepare them fully for learning in key stage 1.

Ensuring that all pupils become confident, lifelong readers is a priority for leaders. Children, including those in the Nursery class, are introduced to the joy of books as soon as they start school. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading. Older pupils have a growing knowledge of authors. Most pupils read with high levels of accuracy and fluency.

Leaders have planned a phonics programme which ensures that pupils learn new sounds in a logical order. Well-trained staff deliver this effectively. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that they have learned.

Staff use assessment systems well to identify those pupils who fall behind in their learning. Staff intervene quickly to provide effective support to help pupils to catch up.

All staff regularly access training to keep their subject knowledge fresh and up to date. This ensures that new learning is presented clearly to pupils. In lessons, teachers address misconceptions sensitively. For example, in mathematics, teachers encourage pupils to use their prior knowledge to identify errors.

Staff ensure that learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils listen well, participate enthusiastically and show a keen interest in learning. For example, children in the Reception class joined in eagerly when learning to count backwards from twenty.

There are clear systems in place to ensure that pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Leaders provide carefully planned support to ensure that these pupils can access the same learning opportunities as their peers.

Leaders have planned thoughtfully to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND and those in the early years, have a broad range of experiences beyond the academic. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in school performances. They represent their school in competitive sporting events locally and are proud of their achievements. Pupils develop a respect for people's differences. They learn about other faiths and religions. Pupils develop their skills as citizens by taking part in charitable fundraising efforts locally and further afield.

Governors know the school well. They are supportive of the headteacher, but are not afraid to ask challenging questions when required.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the support leaders provide to ensure they have an acceptable work-life balance. Subject leaders have time to monitor their areas of responsibility to ensure that the intended curriculum is being delivered as they intend.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding. This ensures that they remain alert to the potential signs of likely harm or neglect. Staff are aware of what they must do if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Leaders work with other agencies to support those families experiencing challenging circumstances.

Pupils learn how to stay safe when they are using the internet, including social media. They are aware that some behaviours, such as those relating to peer-on-peer abuse, are unacceptable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, subject leaders are not clear about the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This hinders pupils from gaining some of the essential knowledge that they need to succeed in future learning. Leaders need to ensure that teachers have a secure understanding of the knowledge that pupils should gain. This is so that they can design learning that will help pupils to know more, remember more and deepen their understanding of concepts over time.
- In a minority of subjects, subject leaders have not considered carefully enough the specific building blocks that children need to acquire in the early years to prepare them for future learning. This means that some children are not as well prepared as they could be when they start Year 1. Leaders should ensure that they consider fully what children should learn in the early years, so that they are ready for the demands of key stage 1.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	119587
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10199969
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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	J Metcalf
Headteacher	Anne Charnley
Website	www.st-clares.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic school. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in June 2016.
- Governors opened a provision for three-year-olds in September 2021.
- School leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governors.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record, and spoke with staff to check how well they understood their safeguarding responsibilities.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtimes, in the morning club and during lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke with parents to gather their views about the school, and spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to the pupil survey or the staff survey.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, history and geography. In doing this, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. The inspector viewed examples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils about their work. The inspector also spoke with subject leaders for science, music, physical education, computing and French.
- The inspector visited mathematics lessons in early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- The inspector observed some children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.

Inspection team

Julie Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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