

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122785
Local Authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	359301
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie O'Boyle
Headteacher	Christine Reilly
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Fourteen lessons were observed and seven teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with the chair of the governing body, parents and carers, the home support worker, a group of pupils, senior managers and curriculum leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information, school policies and 80 questionnaires from parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the level of children's skills on entry into the Nursery and how much progress do pupils make in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2?
- How effectively does teaching meet the needs of all groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more-able?
- How rigorously do leaders check on pupils' learning in lessons and work with external agencies to improve attendance?

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and approximately half of the pupils are of White British heritage. There is an above-average proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. These pupils are mainly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Reception class and one Nursery class. The school has achieved the National Healthy Schools status and the International Schools Award foundation level.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

The quality of education that pupils receive is satisfactory. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure. They are polite, behave well and show mature and conscientious attitudes to their learning. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together. Parents and carers speak highly of the school and say that their children are happy and well supported. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. This helps to ensure a calm and orderly ethos in lessons and around the school. Over recent years, senior leaders have implemented many initiatives to try to improve attendance. However, these initiatives are not focused enough on the needs and individual circumstances of those pupils who are persistently absent. Consequently, attendance is consistently low.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well. Progress is slower for all groups of pupils Key Stages 1 and 2 because there is not enough good and outstanding teaching. This is mainly because teachers are not clear about what they want pupils to learn in lessons and pupils are not guided well enough through the small steps which help them to learn effectively. In addition, teachers' expectations of some of the more-able pupils are too low and the work they give to these pupils is often too easy.

Assemblies, strong links with the church and programmes for personal, emotional and social education, contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most pupils eat healthily when in school and eagerly participate in clubs and other activities which help them keep fit and active. Pupils' effective contribution to the school and local community is seen in their enthusiasm and willingness to act as playground buddies, raise money for charities, support church activities and contribute to community events such as the local gardening project.

Since the decline in pupils' achievement following the last inspection, the headteacher and senior managers have re-established among the staff a strong sense of common purpose, with raising pupils' achievement at its core. Leaders at all levels are now more involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school than at the time of the last inspection. Senior leaders carry out lesson observations and all leaders analyse pupils' work and check on pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy. Many initiatives have been implemented to support those pupils who are underachieving. These initiatives are having a positive impact and pupils' achievement, especially in writing and mathematics, is improving. However, despite these recent improvements, the school's capacity to improve is only satisfactory. This is because the lesson observations by the senior leaders are not focused sufficiently on evaluating and improving the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Consequently, although leaders and managers have a generally accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, their evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is too generous.

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Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance by matching the initiatives for improvement more closely to the individual circumstances and needs of those pupils who are persistently absent.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn in lessons and carefully guide pupils through the small steps which help them to learn effectively
 - the work given to the more-able pupils is always well matched to their capabilities and provides sufficient challenge.
- Ensure that lesson observations by leaders are focused on evaluating and improving the quality of pupils' learning in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

From their low starting points on entry into the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in language and communication skills, all groups of children achieve well and by the time they enter into Year 1, attainment is close to average. The decline in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 following the last inspection has been halted and attainment is now beginning to rise, especially in writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment in all year groups in Key Stages 1 and 2 is average. Progress of all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, and their learning in lessons are satisfactory in all classes in Key Stages 1 and 2. In lessons and withdrawal groups, the support given by teaching assistants helps those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as a second language, make similar progress to most other pupils. However, the progress of some of the more-able pupils is slower than other pupils because the work they are given does not provide sufficient challenge. In one lesson observed during the inspection, higher-attaining pupils in Year 5 and 6 were challenged well. This was because the teacher skilfully built upon pupils' previous knowledge of problem-solving in mathematics, with each new problem providing an increased level of challenge.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and are keen to take part in extra-curricular sports activities. They say that bullying is very rare and are confident that teachers will listen to their concerns and resolve any difficulties which may arise.

Although the school has applied many general strategies to improve attendance, individual cases of persistent absenteeism have not been analysed well enough. Consequently, the actions taken have not been tailored to individual circumstances and have not been decisive enough.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers reinforce good behaviour wherever possible and raise pupils' self-esteem. Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful and caring, and help to provide a positive climate for learning. Although the lessons seen during the inspection were planned in detail by the teachers and showed many activities, few plans were focused on what pupils were expected to learn during the lesson. Consequently, in many lessons, although pupils were purposefully engaged with the activities, their learning was not focused enough and the prior knowledge and skills, especially of the more-able pupils, were not systematically built upon. Teachers' marking sometimes provides pupils with very clear guidance on how to improve their work. However, this practice is inconsistent.

The curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of clubs and activities. The physical education programme is supported effectively by external sports coaches. A wide range of small-group and one-to-one support initiatives have been implemented to support pupils who are underachieving. However, the curriculum is not structured in sufficient detail to help teachers identify the small steps which help pupils learn effectively.

Parents and carers say that the school looks after the pupils well. The school works effectively with external agencies to provide support for the very large majority of the most vulnerable pupils and their families. Good induction arrangements when pupils first enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, together with effective links with secondary schools, help pupils quickly settle into their new communities. However, the school's

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actions to ensure good care, guidance and support for those pupils who do not attend regularly are not effective enough.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Following the decline in pupils' achievement since the last inspection, all leaders and managers have shown a commitment to improvement. New initiatives have been introduced, staff have received training and many of the self-evaluation processes are now more detailed. Pupils who are underachieving are identified earlier and supported through small group work and sometimes one-to-one tuition. Subject leaders have improved their leadership skills and are more involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Because of these improvements, pupils' achievement is now beginning to rise. However, many of the leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching are too generous because they are centered on how well the pupils engage with the activities given and not sharply enough on how well pupils' learn in lessons. The governing body supports the school well and individual governors are linked with teachers so that the governing body has a greater knowledge of all aspects of the school. However, the governing body does not receive accurate information on the quality of pupils' learning in lessons and has an over-generous view in this aspect of the school.

The views of parents and carers are canvassed and valued. Most parents and carers say that they feel well informed and nearly all say that the school helps them to support their child's learning. Parents and carers receive regular newsletters and termly information about their child's progress and targets for improvement. The school's promotion of equal opportunity and tackling discrimination is only satisfactory because the academic needs of the more-able pupils are not fully met and a relatively high proportion of pupils do not benefit enough from the school's activities because they are regularly absent. The strong links with all groups in the local community have contributed to the school's promotion of community cohesion. The school has plans to extend these links to communities of different faiths and cultures outside the local area. At the time of the inspection, the required safeguarding checks had been undertaken by the school, child protection arrangements were secure and risk assessments had been completed for all relevant activities. The few minor aspects regarding health and safety were reported to the chair of the governing body and the headteacher.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

A caring ethos, warm, friendly relationships and strong, effective partnerships between staff and parents and carers help ensure that children feel confident, secure and safe. On arrival each morning, children soon settle into the routine of the day. Both in the Nursery and Reception classes, children take part in a range of interesting and stimulating activities. For example, in a Nursery lesson, children developed social, language and fine coordination skills through making and eating beans on toast. Behaviour is good and children soon learn to share, cooperate and play well together. Children are happy and show a willingness to be independent. However, sometimes the activities are too much directed by the teacher and opportunities are missed to allow children the chance to choose their own activities and develop even greater independence.

Consistently good teaching and a stimulating environment enable children to flourish as they move through Nursery and Reception. From their low starting points children make good progress in all areas of learning. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are learning to speak English as an additional language are effectively supported to enable them to progress as well as their peers. Regular checking of children's learning by adults helps ensure that those who are not making the expected progress are identified early so that they can be provided with additional support. Accurate assessments enable teachers to plan activities that meet the needs of all children. Although the outside facilities are often used well to support children's learning, easy access to them is restricted by the building. Good leadership and management and effective self-evaluation ensure that school leaders know the strengths and areas for improvement.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaire responses received from parents and carers was slightly higher than in most other primary school inspections. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire or who spoke with the inspectors were happy with their child's experiences at school. All parents and carers agree that their child enjoys school, is kept safe, helped to lead a healthy life-style and well-prepared for the future. All parents and carers also say that teaching is good and that the school is led and managed effectively. The areas of concern raised by a few parents and carers were investigated during the inspection and these views were taken into consideration before inspectors reached their judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	66	26	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	64	29	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	49	37	46	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	51	34	43	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	61	31	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	58	32	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	46	41	51	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	41	43	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	54	32	40	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	49	39	49	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	41	44	55	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	58	33	41	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	64	26	33	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Nottingham, NG5 5RS

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a pleasant experience. We appreciated meeting with you, visiting your lessons and hearing what you thought about the school. We were pleased to find that you enjoy coming to school and know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe. We were very impressed by the sensible way you behave around school, and we liked the way you play happily together and help each other in the playground and in lessons. We were pleased to find that most of you have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves healthy through a balanced diet and taking plenty of exercise. Well done!

You go to a satisfactory school and most of you are making satisfactory progress. Although teaching is satisfactory, we want it to be better. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that, in all your lessons, the teachers are more clear about what they want you to learn and carefully guide you through the small learning steps. We have also asked the headteacher to make sure that those of you who find learning easy are given harder work so that you achieve even higher levels. Although almost all of you come to school regularly, there is a small number who do not. The headteacher says that she is going to make sure that the few pupils who are often absent attend school as often as they can so that they do not miss the fun and enjoyment of coming to your school. All the teachers work hard for you and some take on additional responsibilities in the school. We have asked the headteacher to ensure that all these teachers become even better at looking at how well you learn in lessons so that you all make even better progress.

You can help the school improve even further by continuing to work hard and making sure that every one of you comes to school as often as you can.

We shall take away many good memories about your school and have very much enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers

Her Majesty's Inspector

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