

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary and Nursery Voluntary Academy

Mildenhall Crescent, Bestwood Park, Nottingham, NG5 5RS

Inspection dates 22–23 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The firm commitment of the headteacher to improve all aspects of the school has ensured that pupils' attainment is rising and achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching is good and, at times, outstanding because all staff work effectively together.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding and at the heart of all the school's work.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide good support for any pupils who need additional help.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning contribute to the strong sense of community in the school. They feel very safe and display a high level of respect for the feelings and well-being of others.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and demand good teaching and achievement, which leaders and managers deliver well.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with the school and the progress their children are making.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, pupils have work that is too easy.
- Occasionally, teachers' explanations are too long when higher-ability pupils, in particular, could be getting on with learning independently.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Several staff are new to leadership and are not yet experienced enough to make a strong impact on improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons, three of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also observed the breakfast club, two school assemblies and made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other staff and pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors heard groups of pupils of different ages reading.
- Inspectors took account of eight responses to the teachers' questionnaire and a recent survey of the views of parents and carers carried out by the school. There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- They looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety, together with samples of pupils' work. They also looked at tracking documentation on individual pupils' progress, information on how the performance of staff is managed and documentation and minutes from meetings held by the governing body

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Heald

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services, is below average.
- Although most pupils are White British, the proportions of those from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language are both above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, while the proportions supported through school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, are average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary and Nursery converted to become an academy on 1 October 2012 as part of the Pax Christi Catholic Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory overall.
- The academy is part of a multi-academy trust made up of four primary academies and one secondary academy.
- Pupils are educated onsite. There is no regular, alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by building on the best practice and making sure that:
 - full use is made of assessment information to plan work that is suitably challenging for pupils of all ability levels
 - teachers' introductions and explanations to the whole class are not too long, so that higher-ability pupils are able to engage in more demanding, independent work
 - when they mark pupils' work, teachers provide pupils with clear guidance on their next steps in learning and give time for them to respond to the comments written in their books.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that all staff with leadership roles have training for them to develop the skills needed to identify and tackle weaknesses in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Nursery with knowledge, understanding and skills that are often well below those typical for their age. Many are in the early stages of learning English. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and most reach the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.
- Pupils' good progress continues as they move through the school. This is reflected in a rising trend in attainment over recent years. Both boys and girls now reach above-average levels in reading and writing by the end of Year 6. Attainment in mathematics, although broadly average, is rising because of the variety of activities being successfully used to stimulate pupils' interest and engagement with the subject. This was clear from pupils' work and from the school's records of the progress of individual pupils.
- Progress in reading is particularly good because the early teaching of letters and the sounds they make is followed by a strong emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills in all year groups. As a result, attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2 and, by the end of Year 6, virtually all pupils are reading widely and fluently.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 represents good achievement when pupils' starting points are taken into account. This is equally true for all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and regardless of their ethnic heritage.
- The good use of teaching assistants, together with well-organised, small-group and individual support for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language ensure that these groups make good progress.
- The progress of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium is good because of the additional resources and support the school has provided to meet their, specific, needs. If some pupils make slow progress despite the extra help, the school quickly changes its approach to help them understand what they have to do better. This reflects the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' good classroom management is based on excellent relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves. Such positive relationships make a strong contribution to pupils' learning because they listen, share ideas and are willing to try their best for their teachers.
- Teachers typically set work at the right level for pupils of different abilities and ages, especially for pupils who need extra support. However, in a small number of lessons, the work planned for different ability groups is not varied enough, and is not sufficiently demanding, for example, for those working at higher levels. This restricts opportunities for these pupils to learn for themselves and slows the pace of learning.
- Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to work with a partner or in small groups so they can talk with and learn from each other. This helps to promote their social, as well as their speaking and listening, skills. Occasionally, there is too much teacher-talk with all pupils being

given the same explanations when higher-attaining pupils are capable of moving on more quickly.

- Teachers generally use questioning well to check pupils' understanding as lessons proceed. Probing questioning was a feature of outstanding teaching in a Year 6 English lesson, for example, where rapid progress was made in story writing because the teacher was constantly checking and reshaping pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants are deployed exceptionally well. They ensure that the work given to disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium – and others who need extra help – is carefully sequenced so that all make good progress towards their learning targets. In particular, pupils who speak English as an additional language are helped to achieve their potential and gain confidence in using the language.
- Homework is given regularly and closely linked to work being done in the classroom. Parents, carers and pupils spoken to said that the right amount is given and that it helps them to make progress.
- While there are examples of good-quality marking providing pupils with clear pointers for improvement, other marking does not help the pupils to improve enough. In some instances where pupils are given guidance on what to do to improve, they are not always given enough time to follow these through and so do not learn from their own mistakes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- In this harmonious school, pupils of all backgrounds get on exceptionally well together. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour contribute significantly to the calm and purposeful atmosphere that permeates the school.
- Excellent relationships between adults and pupils ensure that pupils cheerfully comply with the requests of their teachers. They understand the need for school rules and follow them willingly.
- Pupils are confident and polite in conversation with staff or visitors. They have very positive views of the school and talk enthusiastically about the many aspects of school life that they enjoy.
- Pupils are pleased to come to school. Their enjoyment and commitment are demonstrated in their regular attendance and punctuality at the start of the school day.
- Pupils are well cared for in the breakfast club and say, 'We have lots to do and enjoy coming here.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by adults. They have a firm understanding of different types of bullying, including physical bullying and persistent name calling, and the pupils that inspectors spoke to had no incidents to report.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibility. They do so through, for example, the school council or as assembly monitors, and play a constructive role in the life of the school. The 'buddy system' works well; older pupils befriend younger ones and are on hand to help at playtimes.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher communicates a clear vision and ambition for the continued improvement of the school. Her commitment, together with the strong support of staff, governors and parents and carers, has been the driving force in raising achievement and underpins the school's capacity for continued improvement.
- Regular checks are carried out to improve teaching further. Teachers and other staff are well supported through training to achieve the targets set for them to improve their practice. There is a clear understanding that decisions about promotion and pay rates will be based on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.
- A number of staff have only recently been appointed to middle leadership. While they are all keen to support the drive to improve pupils' achievement, they do not, as yet, have the necessary skills to accurately identify the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in lessons and to guide improvement.
- Underpinning the improvements seen in the school is the systematic analysis, by senior leaders, of information on pupils' progress and attainment to evaluate teachers' effectiveness and pupils' performance. Through regular meetings at which pupils' progress is closely analysed, teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement.
- The teaching programmes promote pupils' achievement well. They are enriched through music and the arts, and by a variety of after-school clubs, visits to places of interest and residential experiences. At the core of the life of the school is the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is done exceptionally well. Pupils are provided with numerous opportunities to reflect on the human condition and to apply the school's firmly-held values to their everyday lives. All have a good range of opportunities to contribute to the school and local communities.
- Partnerships with other schools in the academy trust are particularly good, even at this early stage. For example, they help the school confirm their assessment of pupils' skills, and support staff training and development.
- Surveys of parents' and carers' views, carried out by the school, show that they are very satisfied with the quality of education provided for their children. As one said, 'The school is fabulous. My (now) secondary-aged son made amazing progress and my other children are really happy here.'
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive and fully committed to ensuring the school's future success. Together with the governing bodies of the other academies in the trust, governors have successfully overseen the transition to academy status. Governors have a clear understanding of the link between progress and achievement and how these relate to the quality of teaching. They demonstrate a good understanding of the school's strengths and those areas in which it needs to improve. They know how its results compare with those of other, similar, schools and hold leaders to account for its performance. The governing body oversees the management of teachers' performance effectively and makes sure that pay and promotion are justified by pupils' progress and achievement. It manages all aspects of the school budget conscientiously and effectively. Governors ensure that the income received through the pupil premium is spent on the pupils eligible for it and for the purposes intended. Consequently, these pupils achieve as well as others. Governors ensure that training is up to

date and that all statutory duties are met, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils. All necessary checks are carried out to ensure pupils' safety.

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	138814
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	410832

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non maintained
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	Not previously inspected
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