

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



23 November 2015

Mrs Ewa McSperrin
St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School
Quainton Street
London NW10 0BG

Dear Mrs McSperrin

Short inspection of St Margaret Clitherow Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 November 2015 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in July 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school and made sure that St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary continues to be a happy place to learn. Together with the leadership team, you have maintained good-quality teaching from Nursery to Year 6. Leaders and teachers measure pupils' achievement regularly and check that the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is used effectively. As a result, the well-above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs all achieve equally well.

Pupils continue to have positive attitudes to school because teachers make learning demanding and fun. For example, pupils appreciate the challenging work teachers set in mathematics. They are motivated to acquire mathematical knowledge, such as key facts about numbers and multiplication tables, recall it rapidly and use it accurately. All groups of pupils make extremely strong progress in mathematics.

At the previous inspection, inspectors found there was more work to do to increase the rate of pupils' progress in writing. Since then, the leadership team has made sure that pupils understand the features of good-quality writing. Work in pupils' books shows teachers encourage pupils to write very regularly. As a consequence, pupils build their literacy skills rapidly.

Phonics (the link between sounds and letters) is taught well. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is consistently above the national average year on year. However, pupils do not always understand securely the meaning of what they read. This is because there are gaps in pupils'

knowledge of English words, expressions and turns of phrase. Further work is needed to make sure pupils, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, build up better skills to understand what they are reading.

At the previous inspection, inspectors found pupils were not always acting on teachers' feedback on their work. Since then, the leadership team and staff have made striking changes to the start of the school day. Pupils now spend time each morning responding to teachers' advice and comments in order to improve quickly.

You and the leadership team have made sure that pupils continue to behave well, feel very safe and enjoy school. Pupils are polite, respectful and caring. The school site is very well maintained. It is graffiti- and litter-free. Pupils take on roles of responsibility with gusto, for example as members of the school council or as prefects. Year 5 'red hats' help to make sure breaktimes are calm and that all pupils are included in games and activities. Pupils are confident that the 'red hats' will help them, should any issues arise. They are in no doubt that staff will take swift and effective action to sort out any problems.

You have sustained the school's very positive and nurturing culture by making sure that all pupils are equally valued and by tackling discrimination effectively. Parents that I spoke to informally at the start of my visit typically told me that the school community is 'like a family'. All these strengths demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff, including non-teaching staff, receive safeguarding training at the start of each academic year so that they are up to date with the most recent guidance and requirements. Staff are secure in their knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures and systems. They know what to do should any safeguarding concerns arise. Staff are trained to recognise a wide range of warning signs that may suggest a pupil is at risk from harm or abuse, including female genital mutilation and radicalisation.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Senior leaders, members of the governing body and staff are united in their determination to tackle prejudice and promote equality of opportunity for all pupils. They closely monitor how well all groups of pupils make progress and take swift action to support the learning of any pupil at risk of falling behind.
- Governors keep a close watch on the use made of the pupil premium funding and check that disadvantaged pupils achieve equally as well as the others. As a result, you have maintained pupils' good overall achievement and built on pupils' particularly strong achievement in mathematics.

- Leaders and governors have sharpened the quality of action-planning in order to drive improvements since the last inspection. They carefully measure the impact of key initiatives against better outcomes for pupils. Well-chosen initiatives to encourage pupils to write regularly each week and to practise writing across a range of subjects have increased pupils' progress in writing.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve children's outcomes by the end of the early years provision so they are better prepared for the start of Year 1. In particular, adults have prioritised developing children's English speaking and listening skills in the Reception Year class. Provisional results suggest that standards of attainment at the end of the Reception Year rose considerably in 2015.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous and detailed. The leadership team has identified that pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing is stronger than in reading. You have carefully analysed pupils' performance in reading in order to identify where the gaps are in pupils' skills. Leaders have already taken steps to increase the time pupils spend reading each day. Leaders need to continue building pupils' vocabulary throughout the school to help pupils to understand securely the meaning of what they read.
- Teachers mark pupils' work consistently following the school's agreed approach. They make clear to pupils how to improve further. Leaders and governors have successfully made sure pupils act on teachers' comments and feedback.
- Pupils learn a broad and balanced range of subjects that encourage their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils enthuse about the variety of school clubs they can attend, including those for choir, cookery, football and French. Outings and visits are well selected to deepen pupils' understanding. Residential trips to an activity centre and to the city of York to explore the life of St Margaret Clitherow are particularly popular.
- You have successfully tackled falling attendance rates. You have communicated your high expectations of pupils' attendance to the whole-school community. Your use of the weekly acknowledgement of the class with the best attendance and the award of an attendance trophy, as well as termly certificates for pupils who have attended every day, have been effective.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- pupils throughout the school, including children in the early years provision, increase their understanding of what they read by building their knowledge of English vocabulary.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Gerard".

Madeleine Gerard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met you, your acting deputy headteacher, the assessment coordinator and two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. Together with you, I visited classes in all year groups from Nursery to Year 6 to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I spoke to pupils in lessons and around the school at breaktime and also met a small group of Key Stage 2 pupils. I evaluated the school's most recent information on pupils' progress. Records about attendance and keeping pupils safe were scrutinised. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to show the results. I took into account the school's analysis of a recent survey of parents' views as well as the analysis of a recent survey of pupils' views. I also considered one letter received from a parent, and the responses of 35 members of staff to the questionnaire for staff.