

Sacred Heart Secondary Catholic Voluntary Academy

Mersey Road, Redcar, North Yorkshire TS10 1PJ

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of education that pupils receive requires improvement. Recently, the leaders and governors have realised the issues involved. However, the progress made to improve the quality of education has been too slow.
- Rates of fixed-period exclusions are much higher than the national average. Boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are over-represented.
- Pupils' outcomes over time are broadly average. However, across key stage 4 in science and mathematics, pupils make less progress than in other subjects.
- Although improving, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable within and across subjects. Some teachers do not plan to meet the different needs of pupils. Current pupils do not make consistently strong progress, particularly boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Pupils' attendance has declined incrementally since 2016. Rates of attendance are now below the national average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, boys and pupils with SEND.
- Leaders' strategies to improve the outcomes of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils lack precision and/or accuracy. Furthermore, leaders do not always evaluate the effectiveness of their actions so that they know how well they are doing or the effect their actions are having on pupils' learning.
- Governors ask challenging questions of leaders. However, at times, governors are too accepting of the information they receive.
- Leaders work hard to pre-empt and reduce instances of bullying. While most pupils say that staff successfully resolve bullying issues, some pupils continue to have concerns.

The school has the following strengths

- Careers education is strong. Effective guidance and partnerships with businesses and further education providers ensure that all pupils progress into education, employment or training.
- Provision to support vulnerable pupils emotionally is well-developed. A range of professionals engage well with pupils who may have additional social and emotional needs.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in mathematics and science, so that all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, boys and pupils with SEND, make at least good progress by:
 - insisting that teachers use pupils' prior assessment information to plan activities that meet pupils' needs and abilities effectively
 - ensuring that all teachers consider and use the specific guidance from the special educational needs coordinator when planning to meet the needs of pupils with SEND
 - reducing inconsistencies in the quality of teaching
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve
 - helping pupils to understand how they can apply newly acquired skills, knowledge and understanding to different concepts and subjects
 - developing a culture of reading across the school.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, particularly disadvantaged pupils, boys and pupils with SEND, by:
 - reducing the number of pupils who are excluded for a fixed-period
 - improving pupils' attendance and reducing further persistent absence
 - reducing instances of disruptive behaviour and bullying.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - refining school improvement plans, including those linked to attendance and additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, so that they are accurate and precise
 - regularly evaluating the actions and strategies of leaders so that they understand the effectiveness of their work on improving pupils' learning
 - reviewing the accuracy of the SEND register
 - ensuring that governors understand the validity of the information that they receive
 - ensuring that all staff are aware of the key strengths and weaknesses of the school and their role in improving the quality of education provided.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not acted swiftly enough to address the declining standards in some aspects of the school's provision. Over time, pupils' attendance has declined, exclusions have increased and some groups of pupils have not made the progress that they should.
- Staff do not have a consistent understanding of what senior leaders are trying to achieve. Although senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, they have not shared this information successfully so that all staff know what they have to do to improve the quality of education provided.
- Leaders do not routinely review the effectiveness of their work in sufficient detail. They are not sufficiently clear about which strategies markedly improve the quality of education that pupils receive.
- Leadership of disadvantaged pupils has improved recently. However, plans to spend additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils lack precision. Leaders' strategies to improve the attendance and outcomes of these pupils are too generic and do not always get to the root of the problem. Because of their poor attendance, disadvantaged pupils miss vital learning. This means that they make less progress than their peers. Furthermore, between 2016 and 2018, disadvantaged pupils' attendance and progress was below that of others nationally.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a range of academic opportunities. Nevertheless, the rationale and design of the curriculum, including how the curriculum meets the needs of groups of pupils, are less clear. As a result, subject content and skills are taught in isolation. There are few opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding from one subject to another.
- Leadership of SEND is improving. Pupils with SEND are well-known to staff. Teachers now have information to help them plan lessons that ought to meet the additional needs of pupils with SEND. An increasing number of pupils receive tailored support that meets their social and emotional needs. However, although the SEND register has been reviewed recently, the changing needs of some pupils with, and without, SEND have not been identified and amended sufficiently. Consequently, the outcomes of pupils with SEND are inconsistent.
- Senior leaders lead fortnightly staff training during a 'period 50' session every other Monday. Staff value the opportunity to learn from each other and report that training is well-matched to their own needs. This, and the improving leadership of teaching, learning and assessment recently, is beginning to improve teachers' skills and effectiveness.
- The school joined the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust in September 2018. Following a whole-school review in November 2018, leaders of the trust quickly gained an understanding of how well the school prepares pupils for the future. Senior leaders of the school continue to act on the recommendations from the review with varying degrees of success.

- Pupils develop a strong understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) issues. Opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of SMSC developments in the world are wide and varied. For example, some pupils make the pilgrimage to Lourdes each year and other pupils support asylum seekers and refugees at the John Paul Centre, Middlesbrough.
- Staff morale is high. Staff say that they enjoy coming to work, that they receive excellent support and that leaders regularly recognise and reward their work.

Governance of the school

- Members of the local governing body are passionate and committed to improving the life chances of all pupils. Governors adhere to the trust's scheme of delegation. In addition, governors know their roles and responsibilities in detail. Many systems and procedures have been developed that allow governors to question leaders and evaluate the quality of provision.
- Inspection evidence demonstrates that governors ask leaders a wide range of questions and request that staff attend governors' meetings to explain further the detail behind an initiative or change of approach. However, governors are sometimes too accepting of the information that leaders present. Consequently, governors do not hold leaders to account as well as they could.
- The governing body and previous board of trustees have carried out their legal responsibility to secure an inspection of denominational education given to pupils, and the content of the school's collective worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- During the inspection, leaders successfully resolved some minor administrative errors on the single central record, which is the document of checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with children.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. Teachers ensure that pupils learn about and understand the potential dangers of sexting, online gaming and talking to strangers. Furthermore, the vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, said that they feel that their children are safe when they come to school.
- The designated safeguarding leader is knowledgeable. She has a clear understanding of her role, responsibilities and the pupils that are/may be vulnerable. Safeguarding leaders in the school are appropriately trained. They have helped to develop a culture of vigilance in the school, where the safety and welfare of all pupils and staff are the top priority.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies within and across subjects. Some teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This results in pupils making less progress than they are capable of.
- Teachers consistently and accurately follow the school's assessment and feedback policies. This ensures that, in addition to the newly updated SEND pupils' profiles, teachers have a wealth of information relating to pupils' prior assessment, current understanding and additional needs. However, some teachers neglect to use this information when planning lessons. Pupils are often asked to complete activities that are not well-matched to their starting points, and some pupils do not make sufficient progress as the work is often too easy or too difficult.
- Typically, teachers place an emphasis on preparing pupils for their GCSE examinations. Pupils from Year 7 onwards develop an understanding of examination rubric and how to approach different types of GCSE questions. Consequently, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to explain to pupils how they can apply their newly acquired skills, knowledge and understanding to a variety of different concepts within and beyond subjects. For example, some pupils do not consistently apply their mathematical understanding when they attempt to solve scientific problems.
- A minority of boys lack motivation to do well. Occasionally, the activities that teachers ask boys to complete do not interest them and they become disengaged in their learning. This leads to instances of low-level disruption. Not all teachers nip this in the bud quickly. When compared to girls across the school, rates of progress for boys are much lower.
- Most pupils enter the school in Year 7 having achieved above-average results in their key stage 2 tests, including in reading. However, despite having a well-stocked library and a designated librarian in school, pupils do not read widely and often. Pupils are not consistently encouraged to read. Pupils' written work sometimes lacks depth of vocabulary, particularly in relation to the use of subject-specific terminology.
- Most pupils arrive to lessons keen and eager to learn. Teachers have developed well-rehearsed routines that ensure pupils quickly settle and use time effectively. When asked to work in groups, pupils respond with enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 8 French lesson, pupils worked effectively in small groups and, because of the teacher's tight but achievable deadlines, pupils improved their speaking and listening skills while regularly using the target language.
- Improved procedures to monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching ensure that teachers who need support receive it promptly. Increasingly, more experienced teachers, or strong practitioners, support other staff and often lead by example during joint observations in lessons. To this end, teachers work collaboratively, and there is a collective determination to work together and be the best they can be for the benefit of all pupils. For example, over one-third of teachers voluntarily attend the teaching and learning focus group. They regularly share ideas, design new learning opportunities or research and trial new ideas. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this on the outcomes for pupils.

- Teachers who are new to the profession or recently qualified develop an increasing range of skills and attributes commensurate with the stage of their careers. Because of the one-to-one support they receive from mentors, and effective induction, they feel equally valued and supported.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils receive highly effective careers advice and guidance that helps them to make informed choices about their next steps. A new careers education adviser meets with every pupil during their time at school. Pupils benefit from work experience in key stage 4 in addition to well-established links and visits to local businesses and higher-education providers. Pupils have a detailed understanding about the qualifications and skills they need to progress into further education, employment or training.
- The increasing number of pupils with social and emotional difficulties are supported well. A trained counsellor meets with pupils during breaktimes, lunchtimes and in times of need. This provision is strengthened due to a commitment from Teesside University and Stockton Riverside College to provide five additional post-graduate counsellors to support pupils' varying needs. Communication between the school, pupils and their families is strong. Pupils say that the opportunity to speak with a professional helps them to improve their coping strategies, reduce anxiety and refocus on their classwork.
- Pupils say that they are provided with a number of opportunities to learn about the different types of bullying and the negative impact that bullies can have on people. In discussion with inspectors, key stage 3 pupils demonstrated a good understanding in this regard, sharing examples of when they had seen or experienced bullying and how staff responded. Pupils say that staff are usually good at alleviating the immediate effects of a bullying incident but that, sometimes, bullies may continue to cause upset at a later date.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded for a fixed-period is significantly higher than the national average and has been for the last three years. Published school information demonstrates that exclusion rates for boys are more than three times that of girls. Similarly, the proportion of pupils with SEND who are excluded for a fixed-period is more than double the national average.
- Pupils' attendance has been in decline since 2016. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are absent more than their peers and others nationally. Rates of attendance this academic year have improved slightly, and disadvantaged pupils attend more often than they have done previously. However, boys are more likely to be absent from school for longer periods of time.
- The few pupils who attend alternative education provision attend very well. Rates of

attendance for these pupils have improved.

- The school's own information highlights that a significant minority of pupils account for the majority of poor behaviour in and around school. Leaders say that the high number of recorded behaviour issues are due to the introduction of a new school behaviour policy which includes much higher expectations of pupils' conduct.
- Pupils in key stage 4 say that a number of lessons can be disrupted by consistent low-level disruption or 'one-off' incidents. However, during the inspection pupils' behaviour was extremely positive. Pupils were observed arriving to lessons on time, speaking enthusiastically to teachers and visitors, working well with each other and acting in a mature manner.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because, over time, inconsistent teaching has led to pupils' progress being weak in a number of subjects, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress across key stage 4 has fluctuated over time. Between 2016 and 2018, disadvantaged pupils made progress that was, on average, between approximately one grade and half a grade below other pupils nationally.
- Most pupils enter the school with attainment that is considerably higher than the national average. When they leave school at the end of Year 11, the proportion of pupils who achieve a good pass in their GCSE English and mathematics examinations is also higher than the national average. However, the difference between pupils' progress in English and mathematics varies considerably. From their different starting points, pupils make progress that is in line with the national average in English, but below the national average in mathematics.
- Current pupils' progress in English and mathematics is below that of other subjects across some year groups.
- The outcomes of pupils with SEND vary depending on the level of support or challenge they receive. For example, inspection evidence highlights that, although many pupils with SEND are more able, some teachers provide them with work that is far too easy. When this occurs, pupils with SEND do not make the progress that they should.
- Girls' attainment and progress across the school is stronger than boys in a wide range of subjects. This is partly because girls attend more and generally display more positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils in Year 10 are achieving well. The school's own information and scrutiny of pupils' work demonstrate that teachers ask more of the pupils in this year group. Pupils are on-track to achieve the aspirational targets that teachers set for them.
- Stronger teaching in art and modern foreign languages is leading to pupils in key stages 3 and 4 making good progress. Teachers in these subjects plan to meet the needs of most pupils appropriately. This ensures that pupils are self-motivated, challenged and able to articulate aspects of their own learning that they could improve. Because of this, many pupils are closer to achieving their aspirational targets than they are in other subjects.

- Excellent careers advice and above-average attainment at the end of key stage 4 contributes to an impressive number of pupils making the transition to further education, employment or training. In 2018, all Year 11 pupils secured an appropriate placement or work when they left school.

School details

Unique reference number	142273
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10057887

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	750
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Martin Campbell
Headteacher	Paula Strudwick
Telephone number	01642 487 100
Website	www.sacredheartrc.org.uk
Email address	admin@sacredheartrc.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 October 2011

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The vast majority of pupils attending the school are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is broadly average.
- Pupils' prior attainment when joining the school in Year 7 is much higher than the national average.
- The school is in the top 20% of all schools for the proportion of pupils with SEND.
- The school is a member of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust. Responsibility for the school rests with trustees who delegate some powers to the local governing board. The mission statement of the trust envisages 'learning taking place in communities inspired by the Spirit of Christ'. The academy trust website and scheme of

delegation can be found at: <https://npcat.org.uk/>

- Currently, the school uses part-time alternative education provision at Educate and Middlesbrough Football Club for a very small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 40 lessons across the school. Many of the observations in lessons were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, teachers, members of the local governing board, including the chair of governors, and the lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work during lessons and with a group of subject leaders in mathematics, English, science, history and geography. In addition, an inspector scrutinised a large sample of books belonging to pupils with SEND in key stages 3 and 4.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with a parent.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with many pupils and observed interactions during social times.
- Inspectors listened to a group of Year 7 and Year 8 pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, analysis of performance information, action plans and evaluations, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding files, recruitment checks and governor minutes.
- Inspectors took account of one qualifying complaint made in advance of the inspection. The complaint raised possible concerns about the wider issues concerning the quality of the leadership and management of the school and of the contribution made by the school to the well-being of pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the 76 responses from parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lee Elliott, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alexandra Hook	Ofsted Inspector
Jen Cave	Ofsted Inspector
Julie McGrane	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019