

# Inspection of St Clare's RC Primary School

Trimdon Avenue, Acklam, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire TS5 8RZ

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Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Trustees in this multi-academy trust believe that they are 'Forming lives ready to face the future'. Leaders in this school are determined to make sure that they achieve this. The whole staff team is united in this commitment.

Leaders ask pupils to show the virtues of kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, peace, patience and self-control. Adults reward pupils with badges for their school tie when pupils show these virtues consistently. Pupils try hard to show these virtues every day. As a result, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. On the extremely rare occasions when there is bullying, leaders resolve this quickly. They involve parents, who fully support leaders' actions.

Parents, including non-Catholic parents, told inspectors how much they appreciate the school's Catholic ethos. They know that the outstanding curriculum for pupils' personal development is helping their children to develop good character. Governors are rightly proud of how much charitable work pupils do within the community. Pupils understand their responsibility to be good citizens.

Leaders are careful to make sure that pupils of all faiths feel included and equally valued. Pupils told inspectors what they have learned about other faiths and cultures. Pupils are kind and respectful to each other.

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

All staff in the early years are experienced and knowledgeable. Leaders consider the latest research and good practice from other schools to improve their work.

Children in the early years are developing their early reading skills rapidly. The Reception teacher is a specialist leader of education for phonics. Phonics is taught well throughout the early years. Leaders help children to develop a love of reading through daily story-telling, singing songs and reciting nursery rhymes. Children love joining in.

Leaders notice quickly if pupils might have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ask the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) to do early assessments to check if children need extra help. When pupils are identified as having specific learning needs, help and support is quickly planned and offered.

Older pupils achieve very well in reading and mathematics. Highly effective teaching assistants help struggling readers catch up quickly. This ensures that all pupils have the knowledge and skills they need to be well prepared for secondary school.

Leaders know how important results are, but they also want pupils to develop a love of reading that will stay with them for life. Every teacher reads to their class every day. Pupils get completely lost in the stories that are shared. They talk excitedly about the books their teachers have read to them. They can remember books that

teachers read to them when they were younger. Pupils love the library and the wide variety of books that they can choose from. Leaders also provide sheltered lending libraries on the playground, so parents and pupils can take and return books whenever they like.

The curriculum is enriched by after-school clubs. The 'game of life' club teaches pupils to control a bank account to set up a home. Pupils learn to budget. They make decisions about how much to spend on furniture, fuel and food or luxury items. This is teaching pupils the essential knowledge and understanding they will need in later life.

Pupils have a mature understanding of democracy. They ran their own election to elect a pupil president. The Mayor of Middlesbrough is an ex-pupil. The school council invited him to visit. Pupils learned about what he is doing to reduce plastic pollution. The pupil eco-team have also developed ideas of their own. Pupils are developing a strong awareness of global issues and how they can play a contribution locally.

Pupils wanted to do something to help those who have suffered bereavement. They held a 'danceathon' raising £5000 to decorate a room in a local hospital. This room is available to parents who have suffered a stillbirth. Pupils can go to the prayer room or the 'rainbow club' if they are feeling sad. Leaders support families too. One parent said, 'The staff listen properly, and I mean really listen. They spend time with you and something always happens as a result.'

Leaders have designed the wider curriculum around whole-school themes. Teachers remind pupils about earlier learning and help pupils make links between different subjects. For example, teachers linked Year 6 pupils' study of apartheid to their previous learning about discrimination when they studied the Second World War. Teachers sometimes choose books that link to the wider curriculum for the daily story.

The system to assess whether pupils are learning important knowledge and concepts across the curriculum is still in its infancy. Leaders are still refining it. Leaders know that they need to check that pupils' knowledge in each subject is getting deeper and stronger year on year against their own high expectations of what can be achieved and the national curriculum objectives for each subject.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are three safeguarding leaders who share responsibility for keeping pupils safe. They are all well-qualified. The multi-academy trust provides regular safeguarding training for all staff within the trust. This ensures that all staff have up-to-date training.

Leaders act quickly if staff share concerns that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders work with social workers from other areas when new pupils relocate and

join the school. This makes sure that the specific needs of new pupils are met from their very first day at school.

Governors check that pupils are safe. They discuss safeguarding at every meeting. Governors make sure that all the necessary recruitment checks are made when new staff are appointed.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have concentrated on assessing the themes they have introduced across the wider curriculum. They have not cross-referenced the new assessment system closely enough to the national curriculum programmes of study for each subject to make sure that there is progression in key concepts and skills. Leaders should continue to refine the new assessment system. They should check that the curriculum is helping pupils embed and use their prior knowledge to access new and demanding content. They should make sure that teachers use the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding to inform their teaching.

## **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 Ofsted Parent View information 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142370
<b>Local authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121913
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Eddies
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://stclares.npcat.org.uk">https://stclares.npcat.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This school converted to academy status in November 2015.
- This school is a member of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust.
- Trustees delegate responsibility for the quality of education to the local governing body.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2017.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- During the inspection, we met the headteacher, the senior standards officer representing trustees, a group of seven governors, including the chair of the local governing body, and senior and middle leaders, including the SENCo, subject leaders and those responsible for safeguarding.
- The diocesan representative was unavailable to meet us, but we read the report of their June 2018 section 48 inspection.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and history.
- We spoke to pupils about their learning and heard pupils read. We visited lessons and discussed pupils' work with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders. We discussed pupils' learning with teachers following visits to their lessons.
- We spoke to pupils and staff at breakfast club, at breaktime and during lunch. We also spoke to pupils in separate focus groups.
- We evaluated documentation including the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of behaviour and exclusions and safeguarding records. We reviewed complaints made by parents and evaluated leaders' response to these complaints.
- We spoke to parents before school.

### **Inspection team**

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Colin Lofthouse

Ofsted Inspector

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