

# Inspection of a good school: St Clement's Catholic Primary School

Oxford Road, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 4NX

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Inspection dates:

10–11 March 2020

## Outcome

St Clement's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get a good quality of education at St Clements. Leaders have high expectations for every child in English and mathematics. Their expectations in other subjects are not as high. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well.

Pupils that spoke with the inspector said that they are happy and enjoy school. They like the different subjects. They particularly liked their learning about migration in the 'adrift' project. Pupils enjoy a good range of activities to promote their personal development. They learn about right and wrong and how to stay safe. Pupils told me that they feel safe because staff are friendly, caring and supportive. They said that teachers give them the knowledge that they need to stay safe when playing and socialising online.

Pupils behave well. They usually respond to adults' instructions and requests. In lessons, particularly science, they are often keen and excited. In class, occasionally some pupils lack self-control. They sometimes disrupt the learning of others. During breaktimes, pupils play and socialise well together. Pupils said that teachers are good at settling disputes and dealing with any bullying.

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

In the Reception class, children begin to read from the very start of the year. Most children pick up the reading skills that they need ready for Year 1. They learn to love books and the range of different characters within them. Outdoors, they often perch under a canvas, sharing books with each other and with adults. Children with SEND do well. They join in as much as possible. These children receive targeted teaching which meets their needs. Approximately two thirds of the children attain well across the curriculum.

Reading is a high priority in the school. Leaders are determined that all pupils can read. This is very successful in key stage 1. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' attainment in phonics and reading is well above average. There is an effective system in place to help younger pupils

catch up if they fall behind. This is particularly successful for pupils with SEND. Teachers match the reading books well to pupils' reading abilities. Teachers are developing pupils' love of reading. There is a school display showing the project 'reading around Runcorn'. Older pupils can name a range of authors and they read frequently. They read fluently but some lack confidence and expression when they read aloud. Staff are trained in how to teach reading. However, a few make errors when they pronounce the sounds that letters represent.

Leaders identified last year that the curriculum needed to be improved. One of the triggers for this was the dip in standards in reading in Year 6. Leaders, including governors, realised that the long- and medium-term plans were not detailed enough. Leaders have taken action to tackle the dip in pupils' reading. They have also restructured the curriculum in science, history and French.

The plans in other subjects do not meet every aspect of the national curriculum. Leaders realise that the plans are not broken down into small enough chunks for each year group. The sequence of learning in some subjects does not build pupils' knowledge and skills as well as it could. Teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics is not as effective as it could be. This is because leaders have not identified the intentions and sequence of learning for each subject. In physical education (PE), for example, the activities do not build pupils' knowledge and skills in tennis well.

There is a range of clubs after school, including lacrosse, archery and 'mindful colouring'. The teachers, through the curriculum, provide for pupils' personal development. They introduce projects such as one linked to Chester Zoo. This developed pupils' social outrage at deforestation and the role of palm oil in products. Teachers are effective in developing pupils' confidence, maturity and self-awareness. Through the curriculum, pupils learn well about other religions and cultures.

Pupils I spoke with were adamant that there is no bullying, racism or homophobia. They talked about some name-calling but were sure that staff tackle it well. Pupils' concentration and learning are occasionally disrupted. This is because the room is noisy or because some pupils do not listen to the teacher.

Staff feel valued by leaders. This is because leaders are considerate of their well-being, particularly in relation to workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have taken steps to make sure that the site is secure. Pupils told me that they know what to do in case the school is locked down or if there is a fire. They know what to do if they feel unsafe online and how to keep safe when crossing the roads or when they are near railway lines.

Safeguarding is a high priority for leaders. They are well trained. They follow up any incidents well with other agencies and specialists. There is a thorough system to record and track any incidents or concerns.

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

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

- Leaders have not finished reviewing the curriculum. Most, but not all, aspects of the national curriculum are covered in each subject's long- and medium-term plans. The curriculum plans in some subjects, such as PE, art, and design and technology, lack the detail that teachers need to know what to teach. In some subjects there is a lack of ambition. For example, in design and technology there is little provision for computer-aided design. In art, there is a missed chance to teach pupils about architects and designers. In French, pupils struggle to remember simple phrases or vocabulary. Leaders should continue the work that they have started to make sure that the curriculum is ambitious in each subject. They should make sure that the long- and medium-term plans enable pupils to cover all aspects of the national curriculum.
- Leaders have started, but not finished, restructuring the curriculum. In some subjects, the planning does not build up the sequence of knowledge that pupils need in each year group in small enough chunks. Teachers are not always clear about what they need to teach to help pupils learn well. Some activities are too hard for pupils because they do not have the prior knowledge. Some of the activities that teachers give to pupils are not based securely on what pupils have learned before and what pupils will need to move onto next. The activities do not build pupils' knowledge and their skills securely in some subjects, such as PE, science and French. Leaders should continue what they have started to make sure that each subject is broken down into well-sequenced chunks of learning.
- I used the transition arrangements because the school's curriculum is not planned and sequenced well enough in some subjects. It is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken in reading and science, and in the training for staff, that they are capable of making the necessary improvements.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 10–11 February 2016.

## **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>	111320
<b>Local authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111062
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mrs Andrea Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Parker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-clements.halton.sch.uk">www.st-clements.halton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10–11 February 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The governing body manages a daily breakfast club which operates in the school hall.
- The school is a Roman Catholic school.
- There have been recent significant changes to staffing and to the structure of the leadership team. This includes an acting deputy headteacher, who took up her post in October 2019, and a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo).
- The school is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury and had its last section 48 inspection on 17 October 2019.

## Information about this inspection

- I spoke with the headteacher, the SENCo, the acting deputy headteacher, a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- I considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. I looked at the record of identity checks on school staff. I also checked that they had the right clearances to work with children. I spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding. With

senior staff I talked through some safeguarding cases. I discussed the work that the school does to protect vulnerable pupils.

- I observed pupils' behaviour in class and around the school, including at breaktimes. I spoke with groups of pupils about behaviour and bullying. I also visited the breakfast club.
- I spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school. I considered the opinions of 123 pupils who completed Ofsted's online survey.
- I looked at the 53 responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View. Thirty parents left free-text responses. A few of these were negative, which I followed up during the inspection.
- I considered the views of staff when I spoke with them in groups but also through the 12 responses to Ofsted's online survey.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, science and PE. I talked to teachers who lead these subjects. I visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. I also talked with teachers about what they were teaching and to pupils about they were learning.

### **Inspection team**

Allan Torr, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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