

Inspection of St Clare's Catholic Primary School

Fagley Road, Fagley, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD2 3JD

Inspection dates: 25–26 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

St Clare's Catholic Primary is an inclusive, caring and nurturing school. Pupils say that they feel part of a family. Staff place pupils' well-being at the heart of all they do. They ensure that pupils are well cared for. Pupils say that they feel safe. There is very little bullying. When it does happen, staff effectively deal with it.

The new headteacher has made lots of positive changes. The environment is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well. However, since the last inspection, the quality of education which pupils receive has not been good enough. This is particularly the case in key stage 2. More recently, there have been improvements in pupils' achievement, particularly in key stage 1 and the early years. Children in Reception get off to a strong start.

The Catholic ethos supports pupils' personal development well. Leaders aim to develop pupils as well-rounded individuals. Pupils experience a wealth of opportunities to learn both in and out of the classroom. They relish taking part in activities such as residential, fundraising and visits to care homes for the elderly. They are keen and confident to talk about what they are learning.

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

Since the last inspection, there have been many changes in staffing. These have resulted in a period of instability. However, the school now has a stable staff team and strong leadership. Everyone is working to achieve the same aim. In key stage 2, pupils' achievement has been too low. The new senior leadership team have brought about significant improvements. The quality of education which pupils receive is improving. Parents, carers and staff welcome these changes.

Leaders have rightly prioritised improving pupils' reading. Adults teach phonics well. The programme for teaching phonics is suitably ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The books which pupils read are well matched to the sounds they are learning. Children who struggle to read receive effective help so that they are not left behind. Leaders have invested in a wide range of books to promote a love of reading. Pupils enjoy reading.

In mathematics, leaders and staff are clear about what pupils should learn and by when. They have ensured that sequenced plans of expected knowledge are in place. Teachers are well trained in how to teach mathematics. Pupils are knowing and remembering more in mathematics. Teachers make sure that pupils with SEND get the extra help they need. However, the most able pupils are not consistently given work that challenges them so that they build on their prior learning.

In science, leaders have planned a sequenced curriculum. Pupils have learned important scientific vocabulary over time. They can use this knowledge to explain what they have learned. In other subjects, leaders have not given the same careful thought to planning the curriculum. Some teachers do not cover the curriculum that

leaders have devised, for example in history. This means that pupils do not learn all that they should in the right order. At times, pupils learn disconnected facts which they do not remember over time.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development very well. The Catholic virtues of the school have a positive influence on pupils' development. Activities such as careers workshops are carefully planned to develop pupils' aspirations. Pupils and parents appreciate the opportunities to work alongside each other to learn about different careers. Staff support pupils' mental health well. Pupils enjoy the well-being sessions where they take part in activities such as meditation.

In the early years, children are happy and safe. They cooperate and play well together. The early years curriculum is well thought out. This helps children to develop early reading skills right from the start. Well selected mathematical resources help children to practise counting and recognise numbers. As a result, children are well prepared for key stage 1. Parents value the support they receive to help their children learn.

Pupils behave well in class. Most attend school regularly. However, some pupils do not attend as often as they should. Pupils' attendance remains below the national average. Leaders have a range of plans to improve attendance, including working with families. This is an ongoing area for development.

Governors have successfully managed a period of instability in the school's leadership team. They provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. Staff are proud to work at the school. They know that the leaders care about their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding is top priority. The link governor for safeguarding works very effectively to check the work of school leaders. Leaders make sure that staff receive frequent safeguarding updates in weekly briefings. Staff are well trained to spot signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They are vigilant and follow the school's procedures for reporting concerns. Leaders respond quickly when concerns are raised. They work effectively with external agencies to provide pupils and their families with the right support.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, such as history, leaders planned or designed the curriculum well enough to enable pupils to acquire sufficiently deep knowledge. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge, including vocabulary. Leaders need to ensure that the school's curricular model builds knowledge and skills sequentially and at the right

time. Leaders need to ensure that teachers consistently deliver the planned curriculum, so that pupils achieve as well as they should in all subjects, especially in key stage 2.

- At times, teachers do not plan sequences of lessons which match the ambition of the curriculum for the most able pupils. As a result, some of the most able pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects, including mathematics and science. Leaders should ensure that their planned training and support for staff is implemented so that teachers understand how to best deliver the curriculum for the most able pupils.
- Pupils' attendance remains below the national average. Some pupils with poor attendance do not achieve as well they should. Leaders have been effective in starting to improve attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Leaders should continue to improve the attendance of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. They should build on recent strategies, including working with parents so that families understand the importance of good attendance.

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

Unique reference number	107325
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10133494
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Eileen DiFiori
Headteacher	Carmel Utting
Website	www.stclares.bradford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed in the last 18 months.
- Since the last inspection, there have been several staff changes.
- This school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with SEND is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and other members of staff. We spoke to a representative from the Diocese of Leeds. We spoke to a representative from the local authority. We also spoke to governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breakfast club, playtimes and lunchtimes. We gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.
- We scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- We evaluated information relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance. We gathered the views of parents at the start of the school day. We also took account of the views of eight parents who submitted free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We considered the views of the 25 members of staff who shared their views through Ofsted's online survey.
- We carried out a range of activities to check the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. We looked at the school's policies relating to safeguarding, met the designated safeguarding leader and considered records of the vetting checks the school makes on its staff. Inspectors asked many pupils for their opinions about safety, behaviour and bullying in the school.
- We met with staff involved in the provision for pupils with SEND and those who provide support with pupils' personal development.
- We undertook deep dives into mathematics, reading, history and science. This involved meeting with curriculum leaders, visits to lessons in these subjects and listening to pupils read. The deep dives also included scrutiny of pupils' books, consideration of art work on display and other kinds of work produced by pupils who were part of the classes we visited. In addition, we had discussions with teachers and a group of pupils from the lessons visited.

Inspection team

Jean Watt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Catherine Precious

Ofsted Inspector

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