

Inspection of St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School

Cole Close, Thamesmead, London SE28 8GB

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone at St Margaret Clitherow's tries to live by its values of love, respect, forgiveness and compassion. Pupils enjoy learning, are happy in school and attend really well. Their positive attitudes towards learning are infectious.

Pupils feel safe because they are well cared for by adults. Leaders and staff ensure that there is strong pastoral support in place for pupils and their families.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils' learning and behaviour, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils meet these expectations. They achieve well overall, and their successes are recognised.

Leaders and staff celebrate diversity and encourage pupils to do the same. They also promote orderly conduct and behaviour. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They understand and follow the school rules consistently well. As a result, the school has a calm learning environment, and pupils are respectful of their peers and adults. Pupils said that bullying does not occur here. Staff identify and respond quickly to any issues that arise.

Across the school, pupils enjoy taking part in the extra-curricular activities on offer, including basketball, multi-skills, gymnastics, football, dance and archery.

Pupils want to contribute actively to their community by taking on leadership responsibilities. They enjoy carrying out their roles as environmental ambassadors, playground friends and news reporters.

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

Leaders give careful thought to their curriculum design. Their thinking is based on making sure that all pupils benefit from an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. In many areas of the curriculum, staff are well supported by subject leaders, who provide helpful guidance on how to deliver each subject curriculum well. Teachers explain key concepts clearly and link new learning to what pupils have learned previously.

Teachers typically use assessment well. In mathematics, for example, they routinely check what pupils already understand about their prior learning. They identify misconceptions and build on pupils' learning so that they can remember key concepts. As a result, pupils achieve well. In the early years, children settle in quickly. Staff help them to develop important knowledge, including their understanding of numbers. They regularly have opportunities to recall their learning and grow in confidence using what they know in different contexts.

In some subjects, such as modern foreign languages and geography, leaders' curriculum thinking is at an early stage. Teachers are less clear about the concepts that need to be emphasised and secured at each stage of pupils' learning. Consequently, some gaps arise in pupils' knowledge. These gaps can prevent pupils from being ready to understand new learning over the long term.

Leaders make reading a priority. Teachers and teaching assistants have been well trained to teach the phonics programme consistently. Children begin learning to read as soon as they join the school. Generally, teachers make sure that they practise sounds regularly and secure their knowledge. Children's language development is also carefully planned for and supported from the Nursery class up. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given extra support. Staff make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their phonics knowledge. Staff share stories and high-quality texts with pupils to develop their vocabulary and love of reading.

Leaders identify and support pupils with SEND well. These pupils are fully involved and supported in school life. Staff plan necessary adaptations to ensure that pupils follow the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils are taught about healthy relationships. They are encouraged to develop a strong sense of what it means to be a responsible citizen. Pupils enjoy putting this into practice through various leadership roles. For example, some act as environmental monitors and assist leaders in running the biodome greenhouse. Pupils also recently raised money for a national charity and undertook a community litter-picking exercise.

Pupils celebrate diversity and are respectful of different faiths and cultures. Through the selection of texts and authors, leaders aim to reflect diversity in the school community. Leaders provide a range of educational visits, such as to the Royal Albert Hall and Greenwich Maritime Museum, to enrich pupils' learning.

Pupils' behaviour and conduct at school are impeccable. This contributes to an enabling, calm and orderly learning environment.

Governors are knowledgeable and have a range of expertise. They provide a balance of support and challenge for school leaders.

Staff have mixed views on how leaders consider their well-being and professional development. Some were concerned that full consideration is not given to the demands placed upon them. Leaders are aware of and beginning to address this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise the safeguarding of pupils. Staff have regular and detailed safeguarding training. They know how to identify and report concerns to leaders.

There is a culture of vigilance, and responsibilities for safeguarding are shared by all staff. Leaders are meticulous in their record-keeping. They work diligently with external agencies to ensure that suitable and timely support is put in place for pupils and their families.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about how to keep safe, including online safety. Staff promote pupils' emotional health and well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff expressed concerns about how leaders consider and mitigate against the pressures on them. Leaders should build on recent actions to improve staff's well-being and strengthen the quality of support on offer to staff so that they can undertake their roles effectively.
- The implementation of the curriculum is new in a few subjects. This means that in some instances, pupils are not learning and remembering the knowledge that leaders want them to. Leaders should provide teachers with further support and training to ensure the curriculum is delivered as intended.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	100180
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10240952
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Monica Manley
Headteacher	Mary Rooney
Website	www.stmargaretclitherowschool.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School is part of the Archdiocese of Southwark. Its last section 48 inspection took place in February 2016.
- The school is smaller than the average-size primary school.
- The school has a Nursery class that admits three-year-olds.
- The school has a breakfast and an after-school club.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school staff. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and spoke with a representative of the archdiocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also looked at other subjects as part of the inspection, including modern foreign languages and science.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils formally to talk about their learning, behaviour and their experiences at school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator and members of the safeguarding team.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally about their learning and experiences at school and observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records and policies, including pre-employment checks that leaders make on staff who work with pupils at the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jeffery Quaye, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Robin Boshier	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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