

Inspection of a good school: St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Bracknell

Pembroke, Hanworth, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 7RD

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Bracknell continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school values of 'we act with love, build our faith and grow as people' are threaded through all aspects of daily life. Pupils strive to live up to these values and understand the importance of being a kind and caring citizen. Parents are effusive in their praise for the school. One parent commented, 'The school has a lovely community spirit and children are happy to come to school.'

Throughout the school, pupils work very hard in their lessons. There is a calm and purposeful learning environment. This starts as soon as pupils enter their classrooms in the morning. Because of the school's high expectations, pupils behave well and focus to ensure they complete their learning. Pupils enjoy talking about their work, for example to share the wonderful artwork they have created or to discuss their latest science experiment.

Pupils value the interesting range of clubs and opportunities. They relish the challenges of the chess club and participating in different sports events. Older pupils take pride in their leadership roles. They cannot wait to support younger children during 'buddy time' or when sharing a book with others.

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

The school's curriculum is well planned and sequenced. In most subjects, it sets out exactly what staff intend pupils to learn and remember. Staff follow these plans closely to build knowledge over time. This helps pupils to usually achieve well. For example, children in early years practise counting and use their developing number skills from the start of each school day. Staff provide carefully designed tasks for children to use these skills around the early years environment. This continues through the rest of the school and pupils are supported to develop fluent number and place value knowledge.

In a few other subjects, older pupils sometimes struggle to recall the important knowledge as well as they could. This is because older pupils have not benefited from the ambitious curriculum from the start of their time at the school. As a result, some pupils' learning is slowed because they cannot build on previous learning.

Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading. They enjoy many opportunities to explore a range of exciting books. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their trips to the library and visits from different authors. This encourages pupils to read books that they might not otherwise be exposed to. Staff are trained to deliver the phonics programme effectively. Well-established routines are in place for children in early years to enable them to learn their phonic sounds quickly. Staff ensure that any pupils who need help to catch up are supported well. The books that pupils read enable them to practise the sounds they have learned in lessons. As a result, pupils become competent and proficient readers.

Teachers identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. They are adept at providing the necessary resources and support to help pupils with SEND access the same work as their peers. This means that pupils with SEND usually achieve well.

Pupils typically behave positively. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at breaktimes is consistently strong. Staff help pupils to understand the clear routines and expectations. Pupils are treated with respect and rewarded for their 'marvellous me' attitudes and kindness. This encourages them to develop positive attitudes to learning.

The school offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. Pupils are supported to understand important issues such as respect and democracy. They appreciate how the school community celebrates diversity. Pupils are supported to value the importance of helping other people who are disadvantaged. They take part in a range of school-led charity work and also raise money outside of school. Pupils love to celebrate the achievements of their peers in assemblies, such as community and volunteer work. Pupils keenly take on additional responsibilities through the many leadership opportunities available. The school council members are proud of their work to recycle glue sticks and paper.

Leaders, including governors and the trust, have an ambitious vision for the school. The local governing board knows the school well and challenges and supports leaders to ensure a positive education for pupils. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being and think about the impact on staff when making decisions. Staff speak highly of the support they receive through training and the approachability of leaders. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum has been recently introduced, so older pupils have not benefited from learning it since the start of their time in school. Consequently, pupils have variable recall of the most important knowledge and skills in a few subjects. The school should ensure that staff are supported to accurately identify gaps in pupils' understanding and use this to inform their teaching to help pupils learn and remember more over time.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2018.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142319
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10288063
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gaynor Rennicks
CEO of the trust	Jacqui Lemaitre
Headteacher	Anne Mulholland
Website	www.stmargaretclitherowbracknell.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Frassati Catholic Academy Trust.
- St Margaret Clitherow is a Roman Catholic school in the diocese of Portsmouth. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in October 2023.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this graded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents provided by the school and observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- The inspector met with members of the local governing board and representatives from the trust.
- The inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View and the inspector also talked with parents.
- The views of staff were gathered through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views throughout the inspection, including during classroom visits as well as at playtimes and lunchtime.

Inspection team

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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