

# Inspection of St. Clare's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

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

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 April 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Carmel Utting. This school is part of Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer, Chris Hanson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joe McDonnell.

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

Everyone is welcome at St Clare's Catholic Primary. Teachers build positive relationships with pupils. The school celebrates people of all faiths and backgrounds. There is a strong sense of community. Pupils benefit from a supportive ethos where forgiveness and trust are highly valued. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They speak with maturity about some of the concepts they learn, such as the importance of democracy. Pupils behave well in lessons. Most pupils enjoy learning. On rare occasions, some pupils lose focus. Staff get them back on track quickly.

The curriculum is designed well. Children in the early years get off to a strong start. The school prioritises language development, which prepares children well for key stage 1. The school is highly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school quickly identifies pupils' needs and makes sure that they get the right support.

At social times, pupils play well together. They enjoy one another's company. Some pupils have responsibilities in the school, such as representing their peers on the school council. Pupils enjoy fundraising for charity. They take ownership of these activities and choose the charities that the school supports. This allows pupils to actively support the wider community.

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

The curriculum is well thought through. The school makes sure that knowledge and skills are broken down into small steps. This usually supports teachers to emphasise important knowledge to pupils. Occasionally, in some subjects, lesson activities do not consistently draw out the intended learning effectively. Where this happens, pupils do not learn the most important knowledge and skills.

Most pupils learn to read quickly. Where pupils need extra support with phonics, well-trained staff give pupils the right help. Pupils practise reading regularly to help them to become confident readers. Adults read to pupils to immerse them in enjoyable and challenging stories. Pupils enjoy reading and discussing the books they study.

There is an effective curriculum for children in the early years. The curriculum is well designed. Staff know children well. They are clear about what each child needs to learn next. There is a strong focus on language development. Children are also supported well with their physical development, which helps to prepare them for writing. Staff have a strong understanding of child development, which impacts positively on the activities they choose for the children. Children are immersed in their learning and achieve well.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Staff are knowledgeable about how to make adaptations for pupils with SEND where required. Staff have regular training to

enable them to do this well. Leaders provide support that matches pupils' needs. Those pupils who need more specialist interventions get the right support. Pupils often work independently and sometimes help one another to complete tasks. Staff monitor interventions carefully to make sure that pupils with SEND stay on track.

The school has made attendance a high priority. This is having a positive impact. Most pupils attend school regularly. Those pupils who have not come to school regularly in the past have improved their attendance. This is as a result of the school's swift and effective actions.

Pupils remember many aspects of the personal, social and health education curriculum well. They can explain important concepts, such as British values, with sensitivity and maturity. They learn how to stay safe online. They also learn about how to support their mental health. The wider offer is becoming more strategic and targeted. Pupils participate in educational visits which help them to learn the curriculum. For example, they visit Nell Bank to explore and learn about the natural world. The school helps pupils to gain confidence through regular opportunities for scaffolded discussion and debate. The range of some of these opportunities, such as extra-curricular clubs, is developing.

The school has effective quality assurance processes that help leaders to continually improve the school. Subject leadership is strengthening. Those responsible for governance support the school effectively. The trust works closely with the school. They provide lots of opportunities for staff to work with professionals from other schools within the trust. This sharing of best practice helps to continually improve the school, especially around leadership and curriculum design.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to keep safe through a comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum. Assemblies are also used to remind pupils about important safety messages, such as how to stay safe online. The school makes timely referrals to external agencies, such as local authority children's services, to support pupils who need help. The school also forms effective, positive relationships with families, which also helps to keep children safe. However, a lack of detail in the recording of some incidents means that the school sometimes falls short of best practice. The school, supported by the trust, is working quickly to resolve this.

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

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

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. However, a minor administrative weakness means that some record-keeping lacks sufficient clarity and detail. Pupils are still safe. The school, supported by the trust, should ensure that

record-keeping is improved and closely monitored so that the school consistently maintains the highest standard.

- In some subjects, teachers sometimes choose tasks that do not draw pupils' attention to the most important knowledge and skills that they need to remember. When this happens, pupils do not secure that most important knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers know what to emphasise and design activities that help pupils remember the most important learning. Staff should then check that pupils have understood it.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148477
<b>Local authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323129
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Joe McDonnell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carmel Utting
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://stclares.bradford.sch.uk">stclares.bradford.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector held several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with the interim chief executive officer, the chair of the trust and several members of the local governing body. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the Diocese of Leeds.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. An inspector also spoke to parents as they dropped their children off at the school gate.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during breakfast club, during lesson visits and at breaktime. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour at the school.
- The inspectors reviewed the parental responses received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses received through Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Zoe Helman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Gordon

His Majesty's Inspector

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