

# Inspection of St Clare's Catholic Primary School

Garmoyle Close, Liverpool, Merseyside L15 0DW

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Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Pupils have a strong sense of community at this warm and caring school. They know the importance of treating others with kindness and with respect. Although many pupils arrive at different times during the year, they settle in remarkably quickly. Pupils want everybody to feel welcome. They appreciate the diversity that exists among their friends.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and for those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils are eager to meet these aspirations. In doing so, they receive positive acknowledgement, such as 'awesome awards', certificates and house points.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They have highly positive attitudes towards their learning, and they understand that it is important to try their best in all that they do. Pupils explained that this is why the school's motto of 'let your light shine' is so meaningful to them. Older pupils are keen to act as supportive role models for their younger peers.

The school provides pupils with a range of experiences to enrich their wider development. For example, pupils attend clubs in sports, art, chess, yoga and poetry. They learn how to play musical instruments and can join the school's choir. Pupils' learning is extended through trips, including residential and visits to museums, the town hall and Parliament.

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

The school has placed considerable emphasis on improving its educational offer. It has designed a broad and balanced curriculum. This starts from the beginning of the early years, where children get off to a flying start in their education.

In many subjects, the school has identified the information that pupils should learn and the order in which teachers should introduce it. This enables teachers to design learning activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge. However, in some subjects, the school has further refinements to make regarding curriculum content. As a result, at times, teachers are not certain about the specific knowledge to deliver, leading to some gaps in pupils' understanding.

Staff benefit from comprehensive training that helps to develop their subject knowledge. Teachers typically deliver subject curriculums well, for example they explain new concepts clearly. They check how well pupils learn new ideas. However, staff are not as fastidious in identifying and addressing mistakes in pupils' written work. This hinders pupils' accuracy in their writing. As a result, pupils make some errors that they subsequently repeat.

The provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Staff identify pupils' additional needs as early as possible. They work effectively with external professionals, parents and carers to help pupils with SEND to settle and to be ready to learn well.

The curriculum centres around high-quality texts, which include reference to the many communities that the school serves. Staff foster pupils' love of reading well. This starts in

the early years, where parents come in each week to read with their children. Pupils encounter and enjoy a rich range of texts across the school, including in classroom libraries and a book vending machine. Reading events help to develop pupils' understanding of a range of authors and literature.

In 2024, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was significantly below the national average. This belies the school's strengths. Many pupils arrived mid-year and with little spoken English. They did not have time to benefit from the school's curriculum.

Children in the Nursery Year enjoy many stories and songs. This prepares them well for learning phonics at the beginning of the Reception Year. Well-trained staff implement the phonics programme effectively. They help pupils to practise reading by using books that match their phonics knowledge. Staff provide effective support for pupils new to English, and for those who struggle to learn the phonics programme.

Pupils are incredibly courteous towards others, which contributes to the calm and tranquil atmosphere across the school. Lunchtimes are wonderful social occasions. Pupils appreciate the vast array of stimulating outdoor activities. Most pupils have high levels of attendance. The school works successfully to continue to reduce any pupil absences.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to stay safe and how to look after their health. They learn about responsibility in their roles as reading ambassadors, school councillors, junior leaders and eco-councillors. Pupils also raise money for charities, which helps them to contribute to the local community.

The governing body supports and challenges the school effectively. There is a shared focus on the school's quality of education and its wider work for pupils. Staff are effusively proud to work at the school. They appreciate being consulted regarding any proposed changes. Staff value the strong teamwork ethos and the support that they receive from 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)**

- In some subjects, the school has not determined the specific information that pupils need to know. This means that teachers are not clear on the important content that pupils should learn and when this should happen, resulting in some gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school should refine the curriculum in these subjects, so that pupils know and remember more across the curriculum.

- The school has not ensured that staff check pupils' written work consistently and carefully enough. As a result, pupils make some mistakes in their writing, which go unaddressed and linger over time. The school should support staff in addressing these errors as they arise, so that pupils secure accuracy in their written communication.

## 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>	104648
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347894
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Richard Cassidy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth MacKenzie
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mystclares.com">www.mystclares.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed.
- This Roman Catholic school is in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in May 2019. The next inspection under section 48 is due to take place by May 2027.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also held a meeting with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. In each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult. He discussed reading with a group of older pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school, including at playtime, during lunchtime and at breakfast club. They spoke with several groups of pupils about their experiences at school and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and documents pertaining to pupils' behaviour and levels of attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and their well-being. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors met with some parents at the start of the school day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. They considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

## Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Swift

Ofsted Inspector

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