

Inspection of a good school: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Thornton Cleveleys

Heys Street, Thornton, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 4HL

Inspection dates:

25–26 February 2020

Outcome

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Thornton Cleveleys continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. The school's Gospel values link harmoniously to the school behaviour system. This has led to the creation of a calm learning environment. Pupils behave well. They take great pride in their work and achieve well. The pupils who I spoke to told me that they enjoy school. They attend regularly. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school.

Pupils said that they are kind to one another. They understand the behaviour system. They said that behaviour is typically good. This allows them to get on with their learning with little disruption. Pupils said that bullying does not happen. However, there are occasional incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils said that staff deal with this well so that it is seldom repeated. Pupils feel safe in school. They said that adults take care of them and listen to their concerns.

Pupils enjoy taking on a range of extra responsibilities. They can become school council members or playground leaders. Pupils enjoy raising money for local and national charities. Recently they have worked with the local food bank and a homeless shelter. Pupils said that this work helps them live out their key gospel value of 'love one another'.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. They arrange subjects so that pupils build on what they already know. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. By the end of Year 6, pupils do better in writing and mathematics than they do in reading.

Subject leaders have many opportunities to check on the quality of pupils' work. Along with this they check teachers' planning. Some leaders meet with teachers from other schools. This enables them to share good practice. Subject leaders have had few opportunities to engage in subject-specific training.

Governors know the school well. They know how additional funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils. They have not measured the impact of their actions.

Leaders have worked hard to raise the profile of reading. Strong reading routines begin in the early years. Pupils across the school read every day. They are exposed to a wide range of genres and text styles. These routines are helping them to read well. Teachers have ensured that the books pupils read are appropriately challenging. Younger pupils enjoy reading poetry as they develop their reading experiences. Older pupils consider the subtleties of language as they develop their reading skills.

There is a clear systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. Teachers are skilled in supporting pupils. By the end of Year 1, most pupils pass the phonics screening check. Pupils practise new sounds by reading books that match the sounds they learn in class. This is helping them develop their reading fluency. Those who fall behind receive support to help them catch up.

The mathematics and geography curriculums are well planned. Pupils recall previous learning and apply what they know to new work. Younger pupils remember learning about Lapland. They apply what they know to new learning about the Arctic Circle. Older pupils use various maps to explore the world from different perspectives. They use mathematical vocabulary to describe positions using longitude and latitude. Children in the early years explore patterns and numbers through well planned activities. Across the school there is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop a secure repertoire of calculation strategies. They apply these well to new learning.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop personally. Pupils learn about a range of religions and cultures. Pupils know why it is important to stay physically and mentally healthy. Many engage in the wide range of additional activities offered. They have opportunities to develop their musical, artistic and sporting talents. The school competes in a wide range of sports. Recent successes have included swimming, athletics and football.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made safeguarding a priority. Staff have received appropriate training to help them carry out their duties. They are aware of how to record safeguarding concerns. Leaders engage successfully with several partner agencies. These include children's social care and several national charities. The headteacher, along with the deputy headteacher and the learning mentor, form the safeguarding team. They are proactive in their roles. This helps them to put early support in place for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils feel safe. They are aware of the dangers associated with the use of social media and online gaming. They know how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- By the end of Year 6, pupils do not do as well in reading as they do in writing and mathematics. Leaders have put systems in place to improve pupils' reading. Leaders must continue with their efforts, ensuring that pupils who leave school are better prepared for the demands of key stage 3.
- Subject leaders have a strong oversight of their subject areas. They check on the quality of pupils' work and teachers' planning regularly. Subject leaders do not have opportunities to develop their own subject knowledge. Leaders should investigate ways to provide training to subject leaders. Doing so would enable them to support teachers better to deliver the curriculum with higher levels of expertise.
- Governors are aware of the ways the pupil premium is used to support disadvantaged pupils. They do not understand the impact of their actions in relation to the achievement of pupils across the curriculum. Senior leaders should provide governors with information in relation to the impact of this spending. Governors must use this information to hold leaders to account better for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 15–16 March 2016.

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	119632
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10122072
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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Clegg
Headteacher	Paul Eaton
Website	www.sacredheart-primary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school had a section 48 inspection carried out by the diocese of Lancaster in November 2019.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, deputy head teacher and senior leaders.
- I evaluated the school's approach to the curriculum. I considered reading, mathematics and geography as part of this inspection. I met with subject leaders and visited lessons. I spoke with teachers and pupils. I viewed examples of pupils' work and spoke with them about their learning. I observed a member of staff listen to pupils read.
- I met with seven members of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governors.
- I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- I examined the school's approach to safeguarding. I scrutinised the single central record and documentation in relation to recruitment. I checked how leaders record safeguarding concerns. I spoke to staff to check their understanding of safeguarding procedures. I spoke with pupils about safeguarding.

- I viewed samples of school documentation in relation to attendance and behaviour.
- I spoke with parents to gather their views about the school. I considered the 40 responses to Parents View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 21 free-text comments. I considered the four responses to the staff survey.
- I spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.
- I spoke to pupils throughout the inspection. I observed their behaviour in lessons and at playtimes.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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