

Inspection of a good school: St Cecilia's RC High School

Chapel Hill, Longridge, Preston, Lancashire PR3 2XA

Inspection dates:

15–16 October 2019

Outcome

St Cecilia's RC High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They treat their teachers and each other with respect. Pupils feel safe. They said that bullying does not happen, and their teachers listen to them if they have any worries. Pupils told us that teachers deal well with the rare instances of poor behaviour.

Pupils work hard. They want to achieve. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They support pupils well during their learning. Leaders are ambitious for pupils' learning. However, in English the curriculum does not have the breadth of the national curriculum.

Pupils participate in a wide range of clubs, particularly in sports and music. Pupils from Year 10 participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Each year group has a retreat to give them time to reflect on their own experiences and beliefs. Pupils arrange many activities to raise money for charity.

There is an active pupil council. The council helped to develop the current behaviour policy. Council members regularly ask pupils about their needs and they feedback their findings at senior leaders' meetings. Pupils feel that their opinions are valued.

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

Leaders and teachers have developed a vision for learning that threads through the whole school. Teachers are encouraged to constantly improve their teaching knowledge through research and discussion. Teachers put their findings to good use. They engage pupils well in their learning.

In science and geography, leaders have developed a curriculum that is appropriately ordered to build on what pupils already know. Leaders ensure that opportunities to revisit learning are built into the curriculum. This helps pupils to remember more.

Teachers provide activities that support those pupils who may have gaps in their knowledge. This helps everyone to be successful in their learning. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Published examination information shows that all pupils make progress in line with the national average.

In English, teachers' ambition for pupils is not as strong as it is in other subjects. Although pupils perform well in the English GCSE examinations, pupils start the learning for their English literature examination in Year 9. This is to allow the early entry of this examination in Year 10. From Year 9, pupils' learning is focused on the texts that they need to study for the GCSE examinations. In Years 7 and 8, pupils' learning does not match the breadth and depth of the national curriculum for key stage 3.

The proportion of pupils that enter the English Baccalaureate is increasing over time. This is because more pupils choose to study languages through to GCSE examinations.

The special educational needs coordinator works closely with primary schools to provide the best possible support for pupils with SEND. Pupils' needs are understood well by the time that they enter secondary school. Teachers are given specific guidance so that they can give effective support to these pupils during learning.

Pupils read widely. All pupils carry a reading book with them. The curriculum includes lessons where everybody reads, fiction and non-fiction texts, including the teacher. Pupils read articles about the different subjects they are learning. This helps to deepen their learning. For example, pupils told inspectors that they recently discussed euthanasia in their religious education lesson after reading an article about this subject.

Pupils behave well in the school. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils explained that all people should be valued and respected regardless of their background or beliefs. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to learn how to be responsible citizens. There are trips abroad. For example, there is an annual trip to France for pupils from Years 8 to 10. This gives pupils the chance to work together and to build their confidence.

Leaders provide a caring community for all pupils. Exclusions are rare. Where leaders feel that they are unable to meet pupils' learning needs they carefully select appropriate support. Pupils' needs are the heart of all the decisions made by leaders.

Staff are very positive about the actions that leaders take to reduce workload. Leaders provide small acts of kindness that make staff feel valued and trusted. For example, fresh coffee at the Friday morning meeting and wellbeing activities during training. Staff have complete confidence in the leadership of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding training is delivered annually. Staff know the signs of a pupil in need and report their concerns promptly. Leaders have made links with local agencies to provide

effective support for pupils and their families.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe physically and mentally. They are aware of the risks of social media. They know how to keep themselves safe when spending time online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders should develop the English curriculum further by increasing the depth and breadth of pupils' learning in key stage 3. They need to make sure that all pupils benefit from an English curriculum that is at least as ambitious as the national curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good or to be outstanding 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 school 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 that 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 St Cecilia's RC High School to be good on 12 January 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 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	119800
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10087931
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr Michael Flynn
Headteacher	Mr Ivan Catlow
Website	www.st-cecilias.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school does not have any pupils at an alternative provision.
- The school was inspected under section 48 in March 2017.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about their work and school life. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors, subject leaders and the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and the school development plan. We scrutinised information about attendance and behaviour.
- We considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 52 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, as well as parents' comments received via the free-text facility on Parent View. We considered the 147 responses to a questionnaire for pupils and the 31 responses to a questionnaire for staff.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly

appointed staff and support for pupils.

- We focused deeply on science, English and geography during the inspection. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. We also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Erica Sharman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Philip Wood

Ofsted Inspector

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