

Clarice Cliff Primary School

Goldenhill Road, Fenton, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 3DP

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Over time, leaders' actions have not had enough impact on improving outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2.
- In 2018 pupils in key stage 2 made insufficient progress. By the end of Year 6 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average.
- The quality of teaching is still too variable. The support provided to teachers has not had enough impact on improving practice in key stage 2.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. As a result of shortcomings in the quality of teaching, too few children achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.
- Leaders and governors have taken action to bring about improvements, but the impact of some initiatives is not yet evident.
- In some year groups, teachers' subject knowledge is insecure, particularly in mathematics. Where subject knowledge is not as strong, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.

The school has the following strengths

- Effective external support has helped leaders prioritise areas of school improvement. Actions are now focused on improving the curriculum and the quality of teaching. Outcomes are beginning to improve for current pupils.
- Leaders have recently implemented a new mathematics curriculum that more closely meets the needs of pupils. Additionally, early improvements to the teaching of reading have also been secured.
- Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, they provide appropriate challenge and support for leaders.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils build up strong skills in linking letters to sounds, which supports the development of reading.
- Teaching in key stage 1 has improved. Pupils make positive progress across this key stage and most are reaching national expectations by the end of Year 2.
- Leaders place emphasis on pastoral care and promote a strong safeguarding culture. As a result, pupils are happy and safe in school.
- Attendance has improved, and pupils now come to school more regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management further by ensuring that all leaders evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement consistently, so that current improvements can be sustained.
- Secure consistency in the quality of teaching in key stage 2 by ensuring that:
 - the changes made to the teaching of mathematics are embedded
 - pupils who need to catch up in mathematics receive well-targeted support to make accelerated progress
 - all teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge to allow them to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Improve the quality of teaching in early years, so that a greater proportion of children achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception Year, by:
 - using assessment information to plan next steps in children's learning so that activities are matched well enough to children's needs
 - doing more to promote boys' learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have experienced some significant challenges since the previous inspection. The uncertainty around academisation, significant pupil mobility and staff absence have contributed to the slow the pace of improvement. However, recent appointments to the senior leadership team, collaborative working with the local authority and the engagement with a national leader of education have provided additional support and led to improvements to the quality of provision.
- Leaders' honest and accurate evaluation has identified the key priorities for improvement. However, some key aspects of provision have not improved rapidly enough at this stage. Leaders are not yet systematic enough when evaluating the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes.
- The monitoring of teaching has helped to identify gaps in teachers' subject knowledge. The training and support which teachers have received have started to improve their practice. However, there is still too much variation in the quality of teaching, especially within key stage 2.
- The changes leaders have made to the way reading is being taught are quickly improving progress in reading for current pupils. Although recent changes to the mathematics curriculum are beginning to have a positive impact, the rate of improvement is still too slow.
- Subject leaders have ensured that staff receive specific training to improve their subject knowledge, especially in English and mathematics. They work with colleagues to share good practice and ideas and have a very clear vision for improvement. However, their work is still in its infancy and some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain.
- Leaders, including governors, have ensured that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively to support pupils' personal and social development. Leaders have worked well with outside agencies to ensure that the pupils and their families have the support they need. This has led to an increase in the number of pupils who attend school regularly. The work seen in pupils' books and in-school assessment information show that progress for current disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- The additional funding for physical education and sport in primary schools is spent effectively. This has helped to provide professional development opportunities for teachers and increased pupils' participation. The school provides a range of after-school sporting activities and has developed links with Stoke City Football Club. The school now enters competitions with other schools locally.
- Leaders have recently reviewed the school's wider curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and there is a consistent approach across all year groups. Work seen in pupils' books shows that the newly implemented curriculum is having a positive impact on progress.
- Leaders place an emphasis on supporting pupils' moral and social development. To this end, they have introduced themed assemblies and workshops, where pupils learn the necessary skills to deal with a range of situations, such as those involving friendship

issues. Pupils' cultural development is also effective. The recently implemented wider curriculum identifies opportunities for pupils to study the major world religions and cultures which are represented in Britain today.

- Leadership of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Leaders have now ensured that pupils with additional needs are quickly identified, and appropriate support is put into place. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to deliver targeted interventions. The school's assessment information shows that these interventions have resulted in rapid progress for pupils with SEND, especially in reading.

Governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, action has been taken to strengthen the impact of the governing body. The school has undertaken an external review of governance. Through this process, areas for improvement for the governing body have been identified. Governors have created an action plan and have used this to improve their effectiveness. New governors with specific skills and knowledge have been recruited recently. Governors now use the range of information, shared with them by leaders, to provide a greater level of challenge.
- Governors have a high level of commitment and regularly give their time in support of the school. They have an improved understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There are clear structures that link governors to key aspects of school improvement work. They ensure that they check the information they receive by talking to staff and pupils about this work.
- Governors understand their statutory duties. They undertake regular training to ensure that they are up to date with new initiatives and have a strong understanding of their responsibilities relating to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders promote a culture of safeguarding to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. The safeguarding team ensures that all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities through providing regular training and updates. The school's pastoral team has strong links with families and outside agencies. Its members know vulnerable pupils and their families well and make sure support is provided when needed.
- Procedures in place for the protection of pupils are well understood by staff. Designated staff make timely referrals and appropriately challenge other professionals when they have concerns. Records relating to safeguarding are detailed and regularly updated.
- Leaders place an emphasis on pupils' welfare. They provide a range of courses and workshops, such as 'e-safety for parents', to provide the help and support that will benefit pupils and their families.
- Leaders have implemented a range of opportunities to promote safeguarding across the curriculum. Pupils are taught about online safety as well as how to manage risks in

a range of situations. As a result, pupils are well informed about how to keep themselves safe and they know who to approach if they have any concerns.

- Leaders make sure that checks are carried out on staff members to ensure their suitability to work with children. Leaders, including governors, regularly review these records to ensure that they are up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Despite recent improvements, some explanations and demonstrations show that teachers lack vital subject knowledge, especially in mathematics. As a result, pupils' rates of progress are variable over time.
- Training and guidance in the teaching of reading and writing are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching across the school. However, some teaching is not strong enough to address the gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills that have developed over time. Examples of work from some older pupils showed that capital letters were not used correctly, and the spelling of some key vocabulary, such as months of the year, was inaccurate.
- In a minority of lessons in key stage 2, teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are not challenged to think deeply, and teachers do not take sufficient opportunities to check pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils struggle to explain their learning in any depth.
- Recent changes in the teaching of mathematics are not fully embedded. Although there are pockets of very strong practice, especially in upper key stage 2, progress over time is hampered by inconsistent subject knowledge. Pupils often spend too much time repeating calculations, even though they have previously demonstrated their understanding of the skill being taught. There are not enough opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- The teaching of reading is improving. Teachers are provided with high-quality training which has developed their subject knowledge. Pupils are now helped to search for clues in texts when making assertions about characters and plots. Leaders promote a culture of reading across the school, and they have implemented several initiatives such as 'book swap' and the 'reading buddy' programme. The school has also worked alongside the charity Age UK to promote reading for pleasure.
- The teaching of writing is also improving. Pupils are provided with increasing opportunities to practise and apply their skills in a range of different contexts. However, some pupils still struggle to use the correct punctuation in extended pieces of writing.
- The teaching of phonics has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. As a result of extensive staff training, pupils now benefit from high-quality teaching which is well matched to their needs. Pupils are increasingly accurate when using their phonic skills to decode words. Pupils approach their learning with enthusiasm.
- Changes made to the wider curriculum are beginning to have a positive impact. Pupils have increasing opportunities to develop specific-subject knowledge, skills and vocabulary. For example, in geography pupils were adept at identifying the location of

specific landmarks using world maps, recognising specific countries and continents. Additionally, pupils are given opportunities to apply their English and mathematics skills in other subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Leaders place a heavy emphasis on nurturing pupils' well-being and welfare needs. A 'smart start' programme has been implemented by leaders, which provides pupils with a range of resources to ensure that they are well prepared for school life.
- The members of the school's pastoral team have an excellent understanding of the needs of pupils and the surrounding community. They are on hand to provide valuable support to families. The nurture and support provided to vulnerable pupils are a strength of the school. Many families commented positively on the quality of care they receive, stating that leaders 'go the extra mile' to support pupils.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school. They understand the risks associated with using the internet, including social media. Visits from charities, assemblies and workshops help pupils understand what they need to do if they need help.
- Pupils, staff, and parents and carers agree bullying is rare. Pupils say that if incidents do occur they are dealt with quickly by members of staff.
- Pupils take pride in their work, which is reflected in the care that they take to present their work neatly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils good.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve whole-school attendance by working closely with families and external agencies. Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. Until recently, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has been above the national average. However, recent figures show that this is quickly decreasing, and for those pupils who have attended the school since the Reception class it is below the national average.
- Pupils' behaviour between lessons and during lunchtime is calm and orderly. Pupils are open and welcoming and demonstrate good manners when introducing themselves to visitors. Older pupils act as 'play leaders'. They take their responsibilities seriously and behave as role models for younger pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour and positive attitudes support their learning. They respond well to instructions and show willingness to work hard. During shared learning opportunities, they cooperate well together and listen to each other's opinions.

- There is a clear system for the management of behaviour. Pupils have a good understanding of this system and respond well to rewards. Leaders carefully monitor incidents of poor behaviour and keep detailed records of any action taken. Incidents of bullying are rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Significant instability in staffing has contributed to a substantial decline in standards. Over the past three years, too few pupils achieved the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. The pupils who left at the end of Year 6 in 2018 had made insufficient progress over key stage 2.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have not been high enough but are improving. The school's assessment information and inspection evidence suggest that current pupils' attainment and progress are considerably stronger than in 2018.
- Progress in mathematics is variable. Although pupils have well-established fluency skills, they do not have enough opportunities to develop their reasoning skills. However, there are some pockets of rapid progress, especially in Year 6.
- In reading, attainment is beginning to improve, particularly in key stage 2. This is because of improvements made to the quality of teaching. In Year 6, where teaching is particularly strong, pupils make strong progress from low starting points at the end of Year 5.
- In recent years, there have been a significant number of pupils who have joined the school mid-way through the year, especially in key stage 2. The school's assessment information and inspection evidence show that pupils who joined the school in Reception make better progress than those who join the school later.
- Attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has strongly improved since the previous inspection and is now in line with the national average. Current assessment information shows that this is likely to be sustained in 2019.
- Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 have also improved. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is now broadly in line with the national averages. These pupils are now better equipped for learning in key stage 2.
- The majority of pupils with SEND are now making strong progress from their starting points. This is as a result of teaching that focuses effectively on filling gaps in their knowledge and skills, and the provision of tailored interventions.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is variable and linked to the quality of teaching they receive. Over time, their attainment has been significantly behind that of other pupils nationally. However, as a result of recent improvements in the quality of teaching, these differences are beginning to diminish.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- During this academic year there have been substantial changes in staffing. An interim early years leader took up her position in December 2018. She has begun to address

shortcomings in provision by using previous assessment information to shape the curriculum.

- Teaching within early years is inconsistent in quality. Teachers routinely gather assessment information from a range of sources, but this is not used well enough to plan the next steps in children's learning. As a result, activities are not matched well enough to children's needs. Teachers encourage children to use a range of mathematical resources such as number lines but do not always address significant gaps in learning, such as recognising numbers.
- A significant proportion of children enter early years with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their age. Prior to 2018, a high proportion of children within this group made rapid progress to reach a good level of development. However, more recently progress has been variable. Some groups of children, particularly boys, have not made sufficient progress to reach the early learning goals and are therefore not well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders have ensured that there are a wide range of opportunities for children to develop early reading skills. As well as delivering effective phonics teaching, adults also promote 'early talk'. Adults ensure that there are a range of opportunities to promote language and enhance communication skills, especially in the Nursery.
- Adults have high expectations for children's conduct. There are well-established routines in place for children to follow. As a consequence, children behave well and cooperate effectively in their learning.
- The youngest children settle well in Nursery and positive relationships exist between early years staff and parents. However, there are not enough opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's learning and parents do not have enough useful information about how to support their children's learning at home.
- Throughout early years there is a strong emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills. Learning environments are safe and supportive and children are warmly welcomed into class. There are strong relationships between children and adults. Children are happy and enjoy school.
- Leaders ensure that the welfare requirements are met. All adults in early years have a strong knowledge of safeguarding procedures and children are well cared for.

School details

Unique reference number	124008
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10058469

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Williams
Headteacher	Diane Broadhurst
Telephone number	01782 881480
Website	www.claricecliffprimary.co.uk
Email address	dbroadhurst@claricecliffprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 September 2016

Information about this school

- Clarice Cliff is larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- A higher number of pupils join or leave the school throughout the academic year than found nationally.
- The majority of pupils on roll are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is just above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 40 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of lessons were jointly observed with members of the leadership team.
- The lead inspector met with the school's administration team to review the single central record. She also met with the deputy headteacher and the school's pastoral team to review child protection procedures, including the organisation of child protection files, and records of training and to discuss the wider work of the team.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books and also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' conduct throughout the day, including during lesson times, breaktimes and the beginning and the end of the school day.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessment information, school policies, behaviour records, development plans and the school's self-evaluation plan.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and met with parents at the beginning of the school day. They also looked at 40 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 24 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Josie Leese, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jayne Thorpe	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Hamilton	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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