



St Margaret Clitherow Primary Academy (Part of Nicholas Postgate C.A.T.)

St Margaret’s Grove, South Bank, Middlesbrough, TS6 6TA

School Unique Reference Number: **140769**

Inspection dates:	03 – 04 July 2019
Lead inspector:	Alan Dewhurst
Trainee inspectors:	Alison Toward, James Conwell

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Margaret Clitherow Primary Academy (Part of Nicholas Postgate C.A.T.) is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The community is united in its commitment to providing the best possible Catholic education for its pupils, embodied in its inspiring and well understood mission statement that states that ‘Jesus is at the heart of everything we do’. Leaders, governors and staff strive to ensure that all pupils are given high aspiration to achieve in the knowledge that each person is unique, made in the image of God. They are very successful in doing so.
- Pupils recognise the ‘loving’ Catholic ethos within the school is created through following in ‘Jesus’ footsteps’. They fully participate in promoting the school’s mission through respecting all as equals, supporting others in the school and beyond and becoming SMC – ‘sensible, mature and caring’.
- The outstanding Catholic Life of the school is wholeheartedly applauded and appreciated by parents and carers, who understand the profound impact it has on their children in establishing strong moral values and a deep sense of spirituality.
- The school’s Collective Worship ensures that all pupils can accept the invitation to partake in celebration, whatever their background. Pupils are reverent and respectful, they sing joyfully and enthusiastically, and enjoy the opportunities to pray and reflect silently. They are able to experience a wide range of liturgical celebration, modelled in exemplary manner by leaders and teachers, and develop their own skills in the planning and leadership of Worship.
- The Religious Education (RE) curriculum is rich in scope and quality. Teachers bring excellent subject knowledge to bear on creating imaginative and engaging approaches to lessons, giving pupils a wide variety of creative activities in which to embed their learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and make very good progress.
- Leadership of the Catholic Life, Collective Worship and RE is exemplary. Headteacher and RE coordinator set the vision for the school by their personal example and passionate commitment. They are fully supported by all staff and governors.



FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Margaret Clitherow's is a larger than average sized school located in the South Bank district of Middlesbrough. It has a planned admission number of 47 pupils per year. There are currently 341 pupils on roll including nursery. Of these, 39% are baptised Catholics, 18% from other Christian denominations, 8% of other faiths and 29% with no religious affiliation.
- The school serves the parish of St Andrew's, Teesville, incorporating the churches of St Andrew's Teesville, St Anne's in Eston and St Peter's in South Bank.
- Pupils are drawn from a wide area, including large pockets of significant social and economic deprivation.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is over 40%, which is above the national average.
- 16% of pupils are on the Special Educational Needs register. 7 pupils have an Education and Health Care Plan.
- The school holds the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award, Active Mark and the Princess Diana Award for Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- The leadership of the school has undergone considerable change in recent years. The headteacher was appointed to the substantive post in June 2019, after three years as acting headteacher. Two members of the senior leadership team are currently on maternity leave.
- The school has been part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust since September 2018.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Develop the assessment of Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring that termly targets for improvement are fully understandable for pupils
 - Refining the approach to feedback which helps pupils understand their achievement and their next steps for learning
 - Making preparations for the introduction of the new assessment standards
- Enhance the provision of Collective Worship by:
 - Continuing to develop innovative practice by staff and pupils
 - Exploring further ways of engaging and involving families
 - Developing the use of identified prayer spaces
- Develop the evaluation of the Catholic Life by:
 - Seeking opportunities to share the school's outstanding practice within the academy trust

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- Pupils are immensely proud of their school. They see themselves as part of a united community, summarised by the comments of one pupil: ‘We are all unique and we are all treated the same, all a big family’. They show respect to everyone, regardless of background and openly welcome new members to the community: ‘Why wouldn’t we? She’s one of us’, one child said of a new arrival.
- Pupils can recount by heart, with actions, the key values of the school – ‘Aspire’, ‘Achieve’, ‘Love and Protect’, ‘Praise and Worship’ - taken from the mission statement. They recognise confidently that ‘Jesus is at the heart of everything we do’. They fully understand what being a member of the school community entails, and demonstrate this through their caring attitude towards each other. Pupil behaviour is exemplary, reflecting the Catholic character of the school.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities that give benefit to their community or give assistance to others in need. The SMC Missionaries, School Council, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and Buddies are several examples of pupils giving support to each other. This enthusiasm for helping others extends to their efforts beyond the school, such as in food bank collections, visits to care homes and support for charities including Mission Together, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), MacMillan Cancer, Zoe’s Place and Children in Need. ‘We want to help others’, ‘We try to put others before ourselves’ and ‘They’re all our brothers and sisters’ were typical pupil comments exemplifying their ownership of the academy trust’s theme of ‘We are called to serve’.
- Pupils have gained significantly from their participation in the regular retreats that the school has provided. In the autumn term, the focus on St Oscar Romero generated an excellent response, with imaginative and inspirational displays produced by all classes, embedding his message and witness in age appropriate ways.
- Chaplaincy provision is much appreciated, with the SMC Missionaries helping to organise displays of the seasons of the liturgical year in classes and arranging special opportunities for voluntary prayer, such as saying the rosary in October and reflective activities in the playground shelter during Lent. Pupils feel comfortable turning to the school chaplain when they need to talk.
- Relationships in the school are of very high quality, with mutual respect and care consistently present. Parents and carers acknowledge the strong influence the school’s Catholic Life has on their children’s spiritual and moral development. They are deeply appreciative of the gospel values that are embedded, that pupils bring into their daily lives at home.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The school's mission statement has been reviewed and refined over time to ensure that it inspires and motivates all members of the community to live out the message of the gospel. All staff feel empowered by its values and show exemplary dedication to its implementation so that it impacts significantly on all aspects of school life.
- The school staff is united in participating enthusiastically and with personal commitment in activities that reflect the Catholic mission of the school. This can be seen in staff prayers and retreats, in voluntarily giving of themselves within the community, and their leadership and involvement of Collective Worship.
- The impact of their modelling of the Catholic ethos can be seen not only in the excellent relationships between all staff, and between staff and pupils, but also in the testimony of parents and carers, who could give several examples of care and support for pupils and families that went 'beyond expectations'. The most common word used in a meeting during the inspection with parents and carers was 'love', that 'everyone is loved'. These positive relationships have resulted in high standards of behaviour, with pupils given clear moral guidance in making the right choices.
- Parents and carers acknowledge that the pastoral care provided by the school is outstanding. Pupils are supported according to their needs, sympathetically and effectively, and that care extends to families. Examples were in evidence of widespread acts of kindness and care for the wider community. One parent commented that, if raising any concern with the school, she was treated as if she was 'the most important person in the school', an example typical of other comments.
- The school's Catholic identity is in evidence everywhere in its environment, from the reflective garden that greets that visitor to the site, through the entrance, down every corridor and into every room. Stunning displays take the eye, with inspirational messages included along with quotations from scripture, and celebrations of the school's population and their learning.
- Catholic social teaching is clearly prominent in developing spiritual and moral education. Current work included a focus on the stewardship and care for the earth and its treasures, the witness provided by extraordinary people and the concepts of justice and human dignity. Catholic values also effectively inform the school's personal, social, health and emotional education (PSHE) and the relationships and sex education (RSE).
- A fine example of the school's excellent provision for Catholic Life occurred in autumn half-term when pupils and their families voluntarily took part in a workshop to create poppies from recycled material that later formed a moving display for a Remembrance service outside, honouring those from the local community who died in wars. Further efforts helped generate funds to support the British Legion's poppy appeal.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The headteacher is passionate and inspirational in driving the Catholic vision for the school. She is deeply committed and energised by the task of ensuring that pupils have high aspiration in an environment where Christ is at the centre of all the school's activities. She models the Catholic mission to the whole community in the respect and dignity she portrays to all who work in, learn in or visit the school.
- She is supported by the whole staff community and by a strongly committed governing body in ensuring the highest priority for developing the Catholic Life. The evaluation of its impact is shared by

all stakeholders, with contributions from pupil and parental voice, staff surveys and more formal monitoring by leaders and governors. Information is used well to bring about improvements, such as in the recent delegation of the leadership of the SMC missionaries and chaplaincy activities. Strategic improvement plans are clear in their aims and progress towards the achievement of targets is monitored closely.

- Continuing professional development is given regularly and appropriately to staff to aid their understanding of the Catholic mission and they have found this very effective in equipping them for its promotion among pupils.
- Communication with parents and carers is frequent and informative, involving them in the life of the school and making them feel welcome. Examples of this can be seen in the school newsletters, the portrayal of the Catholic Life on the school website and on social media. The school has also developed very good links the local parish and the parish priest is a regular visitor to the school.
- A further example of the school's care for its community is shown in the 'Norma's numbers' scheme, where staff voluntarily contribute financially every week to build a fund that supports families in need or is saved over time to organise a community outing.
- Opportunities for sharing, with other schools, the outstanding initiatives that the school has developed in promoting the Catholic Life have been limited. Such celebration would further enhance the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Pupils are enthused and engaged by acts of Collective Worship. They willingly accept the invitation to join in celebrations, actively participating in appropriate manner to the varying settings that they experience.
- All pupils show respect for quiet and calm in gathering for Collective Worship, whether in the hall, classroom, outside environment or in church. They show a capacity for understanding the meaning of reverence and are able to reflect quietly, pray silently, sing joyfully, listen carefully to the Word of God, and respond in a variety of ways to its message.
- They understand that Collective Worship enables the whole school community, or parts of it, to come together in praise and worship of God, and that it is important to participate actively through communal prayer, the answering of questions, paired discussions, liturgical dance or singing together, and they do so willingly and enthusiastically. They also show an understanding that silent moments give them time to build their personal relationship with God and to offer private intentions. This is portrayed through their joined or open hands, bowed heads in liturgies, or when using their prayer journals in class.
- Pupils regularly take part in the planning, preparation and leadership of Collective Worship in age-appropriate manner. They grow in confidence in taking on these roles, supported by staff members but with increasing independence as they move through the school. They acquire the skills of choosing a theme, preparing a setting and form of gathering, selecting appropriate scripture and hymns, and are imaginative in their choices of response to readings.
- There is a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, thanks to the cycle of celebration in school. When asked, pupils were able to talk confidently about the main seasons and feasts and how they are celebrated, and knew the feast of Pentecost had given way to 'ordinary time'. Pupils have good knowledge of different styles of celebrations, and a range of traditional prayers, as well as a variety of prayer styles.
- They enjoy taking part in acts of voluntary worship, such as the reciting of the rosary before school in October, and the weekly lunchtime gathering with the chaplain. Their response to the activities organised by the SMC Missionaries during Lent in the playground shelter was impressive. Here, they took up the opportunity to draw or write on a paper plate while thinking of those who were in hunger, make promises on paper 'footsteps' or reflect quietly while taking a stone, holding it in prayer before placing it in a basket.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of St Margaret Clitherow's School. It pervades the day in a natural way, seeping into all manner of moments.
- At the suggestion of a pupil, a sign of the cross is made at the beginning of the day, and then not repeated until the end of the day because 'all of our day is a prayer'. A different school prayer is referred to each month to build pupils' knowledge, and they take on promotion of knowledge of the prayer enthusiastically, as seen in the Irish blessing displayed throughout the building for the month of July. Previously, 'Come, Holy Spirit..' had reflected the celebration of Pentecost, and a group of pupils had designed actions to support it, promoting these for all on social media.
- Even the sign to stop talking after a discussion in class becomes a prayer! For example, the teacher may call out 'Come Holy Spirit' to be greeted with the reply 'With your power' from pupils as they settle thereafter to silence. Staff used several examples of these phrases.
- Acts of Collective Worship take place throughout the week in a variety of formats, including whole school gatherings and smaller class liturgies. The Monday gathering ensures that pupils know and learn about the gospel of the previous Sunday. This gathering is skilfully pitched to ensure pupils are able to respond appropriately and to take a message of 'mission' from the theme.
- A whole school gathering observed during the inspection featured the story of Thomas the apostle, with the concepts of 'trust' and 'belief' explored in contemporary format before the Word was shared between a reading and a video clip of the gospel story. Communal and private prayer preceded joyful singing of 'Called to serve' before a mission was given to all – 'How has Jesus shown himself to you?' – posted on a sheet in the hall. By the end of the day, many pupils and adults had written their personal responses in heartfelt and sincere manner.
- Classroom worship leadership is modelled by teachers, but with the inclusion of roles for pupils. Responsibility for organisation and leadership increases according to age, and staff are skilled in preparing pupils to take on these roles. Styles of gathering are varied to help pupils understand different ways of invitation to prayer.
- The provision of a weekly theme has helped pupils and staff to focus on their Collective Worship in class. Each week has been given a theme, linked to a moral statement and a scripture quotation, with additional reference to the alignment of gospel and British values.
- The school ensures that Catholic traditions of worship are celebrated frequently, but in accessible manner for pupils, whatever their background or faith. Mass is celebrated every month in school and a Key Stage 2 class attends the parish Mass each week in rotation. The school had recently honoured Mary in the month of May with a procession, and had celebrated the feast of Pentecost in imaginative ways. A further example of imaginative and reflective prayer was seen in the video of the Stations of the Cross, created by year 4.
- The school welcomes parents and carers to many celebrations, including Mass, and this is much appreciated, with significant numbers attending. The 'Stay and Pray' services held twice yearly in each class are also well attended. The school has not yet developed prayer support that goes into homes to encourage family prayer, beyond the travelling crib at Christmas.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Leaders have extensive knowledge of how to organise the cycle of celebration across the Church's liturgical year. They are extremely skilled in ensuring a rich and varied opportunity exists for Collective Worship and private prayer, appropriate to the age and understanding of the pupils. This leads to a high quality experience for pupils, staff and families. They model the leadership of Collective Worship in outstanding manner.
- Professional development of staff has been prioritised to ensure that all understand the planning of Collective Worship and how to promote this among pupils. Staff members are enthusiastic in their leadership as a consequence. They are able therefore to develop the skills of pupils in planning appropriate liturgies and taking leadership of them.
- The coordinator for Collective Worship is extremely knowledgeable and dedicated, and has supported and encouraged staff members in the development and provision of resources, the sharing of best practice and the enthusiasm for prayer and praise.
- Leaders and governors regularly monitor the quality of Collective Worship and evaluate their findings rigorously in order to make improvements. They involve pupils and staff members in this to ensure the accuracy of their conclusions. The development of the delegation of some tasks from the worship coordinator to the SMC missionary leader and the chaplaincy leader was as a result of careful evaluation. This has enabled further opportunities for pupils as well as helping to share responsibility and develop leadership.
- The variety of pupil-led worship has been developing very well. Pupils regularly take the opportunity to choose between preparing three prominent styles – a liturgy of the word, a 'praise in the silence' or a 'praise in my whole being'. In this way, the school is introducing pupils to different forms of praise. The school recognises that this is an ongoing process, and is keen to continue to develop this variety of practice and innovation.
- The school links closely with the parish in supporting the sacramental preparation of pupils, and with ensuring the presence of the school within the parish community, through exchange of information for example.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons in RE. Their behaviour is outstanding in that they stay fully focussed on their learning, they concentrate very well, collaborate easily and confidently with their peers and contribute to discussions willingly and thoughtfully. They respond enthusiastically to tasks and work productively, taking great care in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils acknowledge the special status of Religious Education as a subject. 'It's a precious subject', as one child stated. They clearly recognise the links between the messages of Jesus in the gospel and how they should live their own lives. They enjoy the creative nature of their lessons, citing artwork, liturgical dance, the acting out of bible stories, exploring symbols and having debates as some of their favourite activities.
- Pupils are aware of how well they have achieved and how to improve their work. They understand 'what went well' (WWW) and 'even better if' (EBI), as it appears in their workbooks, and respond consistently to questions that challenge them to go further in their learning. Pupils are not so clear in their understanding of their termly targets, and how to achieve them.
- Pupils enter school with skills and levels of understanding that are typically below age expectation. By the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment approaches diocesan averages, indicating significant improvement, and this picture continues through key stage 2 so that the majority of pupils achieve the age related standard. This indicates excellent progress, which is mirrored in the standard of work in pupils' books consistently throughout the school.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils are becoming adept at raising questions and suggesting answers, often to complex religious issues. They use previous knowledge well to reflect on their learning, making links between scripture and more contemporary figures as well as the relationship to their own lives. They use a developing religious vocabulary to discuss ethical matters maturely.
- There is little variation between the progress of groups of pupils. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium and pupils with special educational needs match the progress of other pupils, and in some cases exceed.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Teachers bring energy, passion and deep thought to their teaching of Religious Education. They are inspired by the subject and want earnestly to convey a sense of wonder and relevance in their lessons to their pupils.
- The school uses the 'Come and See' programme as its core scheme, but teachers are approaching the topics within the scheme with imaginative creativity and innovation in order to maximise the engagement of pupils, without losing any depth of learning. They prepare each topic assiduously, ensuring that high quality resources are available to pupils, such as well thought out booklets of scripture readings and quotations from religious figures. Due weight is given to considering the 'big question' that starts a topic and this is frequently referred to throughout.
- Teachers' questioning is very effective, in challenging pupils to think deeply and to remember previous learning, connecting it to a current theme. Very good subject knowledge enables learning tasks to be appropriately pitched and that pupils benefit from seeing 'the big picture'. Lessons move at a pace suited to the age and ability of pupils, thereby maximising opportunities for learning.
- The majority of pupils' learning is very active. They are given good opportunities to work with partners or in groups, to involve themselves in discussions or to contribute collectively to the completion of a task. Very good use is made of a range of resources, including video, artefacts and information technology applications.
- Lesson planning is very thorough. Teachers take account of prior achievement in setting new learning tasks. They have an excellent understanding of the assessment of levels of attainment, and ensure that success criteria for lessons include 'driver' words and references to the relevant RE statements. Their knowledge of their pupils is excellent, as demonstrated in the discussion held with inspectors over the progress of 'tracked' pupils.
- Teaching assistants work diligently and effectively to support pupils, often assisting individuals with special educational needs to access learning or prompting groups to get the most out of a task. Their unobtrusive presence is a positive factor in aiding pupils' achievement.
- Marking and feedback are in evidence to a consistent level throughout the school. Teachers put much time and effort into praising pupils' efforts and achievement, and describing how work could be improved, as well as offering further learning challenges through thoughtful questions. The school is reviewing its approach to giving effective feedback to pupils, considering recent research on verbal feedback and recognising the time constraints on teachers of the present system.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- The school fully meets the Bishops' conference requirements of devoting at least 10% of the timetable to the RE curriculum. Indeed, the school often adds specially focused days of learning to the normal weekly timetable at particular times of the year in order to ensure the priority of the subject is recognised. The RE curriculum is comprehensive in its coverage of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Leaders and governors have also ensured that local initiatives, such as the 'Called to Serve' theme from the Nicholas Postgate Academy Trust, are fully interwoven with the curriculum. Other school initiatives enhance the diocesan approved Religious Education programme. The Retreat days in school inspire pupils and staff alike, and give a high degree of focus to the renewal of the school mission statement each year, influencing the whole of the curriculum, the Catholic Life and Collective

Worship thereafter. The increased focus on World Faiths is a further example of the enrichment of the curriculum.

- Leaders and governors are fully committed to rigorously monitoring standards and provision in RE. They seek the views of all stakeholders in monitoring the delivery of the subject and analyse assessment data thoroughly. The RE link governor takes part in focussed learning visits to school, meeting with the RE coordinator and talking to pupils, and the governors take opportunities to invite presentations to their meetings in order to hold leaders to account. They also ensure that improvement plans are monitored and their impact evaluated.
- The RE coordinator shows outstanding ability and the utmost dedication in carrying out all facets of her role. Her extensive knowledge of the subject, and her constant desire to increase that knowledge, enables her to evaluate provision, plan strategically for improvement and implement change in a way that engages and inspires all staff members and their pupils. She has ensured that very effective professional development has been delivered to staff to increase subject knowledge and aid them in the delivery of the subject, as well as helping them to reflect spiritually and deeply on their roles as teachers and assistants.
- Assessment procedures are very effective, with regular progress meetings between teachers and leaders to focus on the achievement of each cohort of pupils as well as more detailed attention given to how individuals' progress can be enhanced. Frequent moderation exercises, both in school and with other schools, have ensured confidence in teacher assessments. School leaders are already looking ahead to the introduction of the new 'Interim Standards in Religious Education', with a desire to be well prepared for future implementation.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

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CATHOLIC LIFE:

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

1

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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School details

School name	St Margaret Clitherow Primary Academy (Part of Nicholas Postgate C.A.T.)
Unique reference number	140769
Local authority	Middlesbrough
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Terence Patrick Draney the Bishop of Middlesbrough under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the governing body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
Chair of governors	Jill Miller
Choose School Leadership Type	Clare McNicholas
Date of previous school inspection	October 2013
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