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21 November

Mary Wilson
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Dear Mrs Wilson

Short inspection of St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 October 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Senior leaders have worked hard to address successfully the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Leaders' focus on improving teaching has been successful, and as a result, teachers plan effective lessons to challenge the most able pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. This leads to the pupils using their time well in lessons to maximise their learning. High-quality feedback from teachers to pupils gives clear guidance on how to improve their work. Senior leaders provide models of very high expectations in their own practice for teachers at the early stages of their careers to emulate. Through regular mentoring, the school develops consistency in the quality of teaching. Consequently, the school maintains good standards of teaching across all groups and subjects.

You ensure that governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. You and your leaders use information gathered from the school's monitoring system to provide effective challenge and support for recently recruited teachers. This means that all staff share the high expectations set by senior leaders. You and your senior leaders recognise the importance of developing leaders at all levels. The strong team of senior staff supports those new to middle leadership in providing them with clear guidance to further improve pupils' progress.

Leaders' effective allocation of pupil premium funding has ensured that the progress of the disadvantaged pupils across the school is at least in line with, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils nationally in English and mathematics. You and your senior leaders have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching for mathematics and writing across the school. Consequently, the outcomes for pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils, in 2016 are above the national average by the end of key stage 2.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The strong Catholic ethos underpins the school's work. Leaders ensure that through the school's religious education curriculum, pupils also have a good understanding of a range of faiths and festivals. The school's well-managed behaviour system results in pupils that are well behaved and considerate. Pupils work and play together well.

School leaders provide effective support and guidance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Accurate assessments ensure that the right interventions are in place for identified pupils. Parents are involved in supporting the work of the school for their children. As a result, this group of pupils also make good progress.

Parents are very supportive of the way all staff are very approachable and listen to any concerns. They appreciate the quality of the curriculum provided for their children to develop academic and social skills. They say that the parent forum provides an effective way of working with the school to make positive changes for pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's safeguarding systems for the checking of staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to the school are robust. Governors check the single central record routinely. Consequently, governors fulfil their statutory requirements effectively. Staff and governors have had up-to-date safeguarding training, including on issues such as the 'Prevent' duty, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. School leaders have ensured that the internal systems ensure that staff are vigilant in recording any concerns.

You and your leaders work successfully with families to improve attendance. Overall attendance has improved and now the school attendance figure is above the national average. While there is still an issue around persistent absence, the school's analysis shows that when support is in place, pupils' attendance improves.

Pupils talk confidently about the effects of cyber-bullying. They know how to identify risks when using technology so that they can be safe online. They recognise different types of prejudicial behaviour and say that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff deal with any incidents quickly. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that school staff really care for them.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have developed an effective feedback system. This is used to track all pupils, particularly the disadvantaged pupils, and evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning. Teachers use this information to plan activities to ensure that pupils receive appropriate challenge in their learning. Leaders regularly analyse the information about how well pupils are achieving. This results in early identification of pupils' needs and the appropriate support for teachers and support staff to improve the progress that pupils make. The school's analysis shows that the disadvantaged children make as much progress as other children compared with the national average by the end of their Reception Year. This is also the case for the number of disadvantaged pupils meeting the standards of the Year 1 phonics screening check and by the end of each key stage.
- Teaching across the school is good. All staff receive good-quality professional development which impacts positively on improving the provision for pupils' learning. Well-supported middle leaders, recently appointed to their posts, are developing their skills well to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Leaders monitor pupils' attendance levels regularly. The strong parent partnership work enables the school staff to work positively with families when pupils' attendance becomes a concern. As a result, the number of persistently absent pupils has decreased due to the effective support put in place. The headteacher's reports to the governing body illustrate the very low instances of bullying. The parents say that the school effectively deals with any concerns and any instances of bullying.
- The rich experiences provided by the school curriculum enable pupils to develop their English and mathematical skills well. Leaders use the physical education and sport premium grant effectively to provide high-quality sports coaching and well-attended extra-curricular activities. A wide variety of visitors to school and trips enhance the pupils' learning. The school council is an example of how pupils have experience of the democratic voting system; consequently, pupils acquire a range of skills that increase their knowledge and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school is a bright and stimulating environment that celebrates success in the pupils' learning. The displays across the school are of a high quality and demonstrate the school's high expectations.
- The committed group of school governors share the strategic ambitions of the senior leaders. They receive accurate information, enabling them to hold the school to account well. They effectively monitor the spending of the pupil premium funding. Hence, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, achieve as well as other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Governors work with the leadership team to identify areas for school improvement, for instance, that new middle leaders have a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders who are new to their role continue to develop their skills and take more responsibility for further improving pupils' progress in their subject areas.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the archdiocese of Westminster, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Westminster. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

From my pre-inspection analysis and discussion with school leaders, the following areas were prioritised during this inspection:

- the quality and impact of safeguarding practice to ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements
- the support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with an education, health and care plan
- how the school uses the pupil premium spending to improve the progress of disadvantaged, including most able disadvantaged, pupils in mathematics and reading
- how school leaders make sure that feedback to pupils has ensured good progress for all groups, particularly the most able.

During the inspection, I met with you and the senior leadership team. Meetings were also held with representatives of the governing body and the local authority. The information looked at during the inspection included the school's safeguarding records, policies and procedures and the single central record. I looked at the school's assessment of its performance, minutes of meetings and information about pupils' progress. I interviewed the pupils on the school council and I heard pupils read. I spoke formally to parents before school started. I visited a range of lessons, including for physical education, religious education, phonics, mathematics and writing. I took account of 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.