

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 March 2017

Miss Sarah Robson
Executive Headteacher
All Saints' CofE (C) First School
Oak Road
Denstone
Uttoxeter
Staffordshire
ST14 5HT

Dear Miss Robson

Short inspection of All Saints' CofE (C) First School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2017, 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 December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. In 2013, governors took the decision to create a federation of schools, initially with one other Church of England school and subsequently with a second. As executive headteacher, you now lead all three schools within the 'Saints Federation'. It has been a period of significant change and development. You, together with the deputy headteacher, have ensured that there is strong and effective leadership in place. You have made sure that the federation, while allowing for the sharing of best practice across the three schools, also recognises and meets the unique nature, characteristics and needs of each of the individual schools. This has helped to ensure that the pupils at All Saints' continue to thrive both socially and academically. The comment of one pupil, that 'We are like a family and in a family everyone loves and cares for each other', personified the nurturing atmosphere that exists within the school.

You have made changes to the leadership structure. The deputy headteacher of the federation now takes a central role in leading the school on a day-to-day basis. This helps to ensure that parents have a first point of contact. You have used the expertise that exists within the staff of the federation to create leadership posts that operate across the schools. A particularly effective example of this is through the leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The federation leader has established innovative methods of planning for the specific and individual needs of these pupils and this helps them to make

good progress. The leader of physical education also coordinates the work across two of the schools, and this has greatly helped in improving the quality of teaching and extending opportunities for extra-curricular activities. As a result, pupils are able to take part in a wide range of competitive sports and activities, including tag rugby, cross-country, athletics and netball. You have recognised that there are further benefits that can be achieved by extending this system of federation subject leadership and have plans in place to achieve this. However, as yet, this is not embedded for all areas of the curriculum and this slows development in some subject areas, such as history, geography and science. There is further work to be done to ensure that all subject leaders are fully skilled in leading their subjects effectively to ensure that pupils make the same good progress in all subjects that they do in reading, writing and mathematics.

You, together with the governors of the school, rightly identified that there was a need for remodelling of the inside of the school building. This has led to the creation of an additional classroom so that all pupils are now taught in suitable accommodation. This also allows for effective use of the school hall for physical education, assemblies and other activities, rather than as a make-shift classroom. The learning environment in school is bright, attractive and supports and celebrates pupils' learning.

You have high expectations of all members of the school community and convey these clearly, with authority. Teachers now have greater ownership of their work. They have been well supported in developing their skills, both through opportunities to work alongside colleagues from the other schools and through professional development sessions led by external consultants and the local authority. Teachers and other staff who responded to the online survey were overwhelmingly positive about the changes that had taken place under your leadership. One member of staff commented, 'I value the support of the staff who work at the other two schools in our federation and I find the times when we get together and share ideas a great help.'

You, together with governors, have a clear view of how the school can continue to improve. You are ambitious to ensure that pupils have the best opportunities that they can to succeed in all areas of school life. While plans for improvement focus on appropriate priorities, the actions do not have tightly defined success criteria. You recognise that this limits the opportunity for you, and other leaders, to sharply evaluate the impact that the actions have on bringing about the desired improvements.

Pupils show great pride in their school. Pupils are polite, caring and well mannered. Their behaviour is consistently good. They take responsibility for their own and others' behaviour. Pupils are articulate and keen to share their learning. A calm, productive atmosphere exists throughout the school, with pupils fully engaged in their learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and opportunities as future citizens of modern Britain.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. You have established a cohesive approach to assessment that combines ongoing teacher assessment with regular, formal testing. This has ensured that teachers have a clear view of each pupil's progress and attainment and can then use this information to set challenging targets for future outcomes. You, together with other leaders, use this information well to monitor the progress of all pupils.

Outcomes in mathematics, reading and writing have continued to rise since the previous inspection. This is the result of your unswerving drive to improve the quality of teaching across the school. In the 2016 assessments, outcomes for pupils in Year 2 were above the national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. The most able pupils in school attained outcomes that were above the national figures in both writing and mathematics. While, understandably, your focus has been on improving the quality of teaching and learning in the core areas of mathematics and English, you recognise that there is further work to be done to ensure that pupils' learning across all areas of the curriculum, particularly in science, history and geography, is of the same high quality.

Teachers set tasks that are well matched to the different abilities within the classes, including the most able pupils, and have high expectations of what they should achieve. However, teachers do not consistently use probing questions that demand that the pupils think deeply about their answers. During our joint observations, we observed examples of where questions were being used well. You were clear that this was not yet consistently the case across all classes and agreed that this was an area for future staff development.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff recognise that safeguarding pupils is a shared and fundamental responsibility. Staff receive regular training and demonstrate a clear understanding of the processes that they need to follow if they suspect that a pupil is at risk of harm. Senior leaders have been proactive in ensuring that there are sufficient staff trained in safeguarding to a higher level so that there is always cover for the designated safeguarding leader if that person is not at the school. This demonstrates leaders' determination to ensure that a culture of vigilance and knowledge permeates the work of the school. Safeguarding procedures are strong and effective. The systems that the school has in place for ensuring that staff appointed to the school are suitably qualified and do not pose a threat to pupils are robust and followed through diligently.

Inspection findings

- School leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and where it can improve further. The expertise of the executive headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher, is used effectively to monitor the work of the school. This has been used well to bring about improvements in teaching. Leaders undertake regular monitoring, including scrutiny of pupils' work, learning walks and termly reviews of pupils' performance, to evaluate the impact of

teaching on learning. Highly effective use has been made of sharing leadership across the three schools in the 'Saints Federation' and this has helped in extending learning opportunities for pupils. However, senior leaders recognise that not all subject leaders are fully skilled in leading and evaluating their area of responsibility. Leaders have established plans to address this, but these have not yet been fully implemented.

- Governors are a highly effective force within the leadership of the school. They use their range of professional knowledge well to ensure that they have a detailed and accurate knowledge of all aspects of the school's work. The school improvement plans are well thought out and accurately identify what needs to be done to further improve the work of the school. However, plans lack precise indicators of success and this means that leaders are not in as strong a position as they could be to be sure that the actions are having the intended results.
- Class organisation has been revised to enable the majority of pupils to be taught in small, single-age classes. Additional staff work in the one mixed-age class in the school alongside teachers to ensure that pupils receive teaching and support that is relevant to their needs. Tasks are planned and taught well to meet the differing needs and abilities of the pupils. However, teachers and other adults do not consistently use questions well to challenge pupils' thinking. They do not adapt questions accurately to the abilities of the pupils or use questions to deeply probe understanding.
- Leaders have rightly focused on ensuring that all pupils in school make good progress and achieve good outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that pupils are well prepared for when they move to the next stage of their education at the end of Year 4. Pupils benefit from teachers' strong subject expertise in the teaching of physical education and modern foreign languages. As a result, pupils make good progress in these areas. The additional enrichment clubs and activities are well attended and enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning. During the inspection, a large number of pupils from across all classes were observed at a lunchtime art club. They showed concentration and attention to detail as they developed their sketching and observational skills.
- Pupils do not currently make as strong progress in science, history and geography as they do in other areas of the curriculum. There are too few opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations in science or make predictions about what they believe is likely to occur. Too often, learning activities in history and geography are not sufficiently demanding or challenging for pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate through their positive attitudes and behaviour the school's values of 'love, kindness and respect'. They have a good understanding of the beliefs and traditions of people of different faiths. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were clear that all religions are of equal value. Pupils' depth of understanding of different religions is enhanced through involvement in a 'faith trail' in Derby where they visit a Hindu temple, a Muslim mosque, a Sikh gurdwara and a Christian church. Pupils appreciate the opportunities that they have to take on responsibility, including through election to the school council and as representatives on the sports council.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders are suitably trained and supported so that they can effectively lead and develop the areas for which they are responsible
- school action plans have tightly defined success criteria to allow for effective evaluation of the actions taken to bring about further improvement
- teachers' skills in the use of challenging questions are further developed to ensure that the pupils are required to think deeply about their answers
- teachers develop more opportunities for investigative work within science, history and geography for pupils to extend their learning in these subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Hewett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the deputy headteacher. I met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. I considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and looked at text comments from other parents. I visited, together with you and the deputy headteacher, all the four classes to observe learning. I listened to some pupils read. I met with a group of pupils and also spoke with pupils in lessons. I observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime on the playground.

I scrutinised information about pupils' progress during the last academic year. I considered other documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school improvement plan. I scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures, including policies and checks on staff employed in the school, and checked the school website. I also analysed the range of views expressed by staff through Ofsted's questionnaire about the school and its leadership.