

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



14 February 2018

Miss Louise Whitaker
Headteacher
St Matthew's CofE Primary School
South Street
Enfield
EN3 4LA

Dear Miss Whitaker

Short inspection of St Matthew's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 January 2018, 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 June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have provided effective leadership since being appointed in January 2016. You have successfully led the school through a period of significant challenge and have built a cohesive senior leadership team. Leaders have a clear insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses. You have identified as a priority the need to further develop middle leaders.

Since your appointment, you have brought calm and stability to the school. Staff and parents and carers have confidence in your leadership. Parents whom I spoke with at the start of the day expressed their appreciation of the pastoral care provided by the school. All parents described you as being 'approachable'. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are being well supported. You and all staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils are polite and courteous. They display positive behaviour in classrooms and around the school. Pupils said that the school is a friendly place.

All the identified areas for improvement in the previous inspection report have been successfully addressed. There is now regular and rigorous monitoring of the school's performance by senior leaders. Accurate assessment of pupils' progress ensures that school improvement is focused where it is most needed.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. Funding allocated for disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively. This has resulted in increased attendance and improved outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics for this group of pupils at the end of key stage 2.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and well maintained. The single central record of employment checks is scrutinised by the chair of governors and meets statutory requirements. Leaders know families and individual pupils very well. Case studies show that the school takes early and decisive action to ensure that the welfare and safety of pupils are given the highest priority.

Training is thorough and is kept up to date. Staff and governors have a good understanding of safeguarding issues in the local community, such as gang violence and knife crime. Specific risks that may have an impact on school life have been identified and appropriate action taken.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school and their parents confirmed this. At the start of every school year, pupils learn about different aspects of safety according to their age. They learn about fire, road and food safety. Pupils were able to talk with confidence about how to stay safe online. Pupils described the school as being a caring school. Incidents of bullying or derogatory language are rare. If they do occur, they are dealt with swiftly, and pupils know whom to report any of their concerns to.

Inspection findings

- We first agreed to look at how leaders are raising standards in the early years. This was because the school has been below the expected standard for the previous three years.
- Children enter the Reception Year having a wide range of abilities that are below those that are typical for their age. The school's own analysis shows that this is mainly because of difficulties in acquiring early literacy skills. Children make strong progress in literacy and numeracy and they are just below age expectations by the time they leave the Reception Year.
- The school sought support from the local authority and diocese on how to improve practice in the early years. This resulted in changes to the classroom and the outdoor environment. Staff visited other early years providers and collaborated with other schools on a project to raise standards. The school also introduced a more systematic approach to the teaching of phonics in the Reception Year. This has resulted in a three-year rising trend in children's outcomes in the early years. However, overall, children are still below the expected standard. You have identified as a priority the need to build leadership capacity in the early years to further raise standards.
- We next looked at how effective leaders have been in narrowing the differences in progress and attainment between disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils at key stage 1. Leaders and governors acknowledge that this is an area that still requires further improvement.
- School leaders have drawn up detailed action plans and employed a wide range of strategies to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, staff have designed their own subject plans to develop pupils' reasoning skills and understanding in mathematics. Similarly, staff have introduced more interesting activities to help motivate pupils to improve their reading and writing. To support higher-attaining disadvantaged pupils, the

school has been promoting thinking skills through carefully planned tasks and challenging questions. Teaching assistants also provide a wide range of effective targeted interventions. Since the last inspection, pupils' progress has steadily improved because of better teaching. The school's information for pupils currently on roll, confirmed by our visits to classrooms and our scrutiny of pupils' work, shows that pupils make good progress. Nevertheless, leaders acknowledge that teachers need to ensure that activities are well matched to pupils' needs, particularly those of disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1 so that they achieve their potential.

- Finally, we looked at the content and quality of the wider curriculum, including humanities, music and art. Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in core subjects of literacy, mathematics and science were strong in 2017. The school website provides detailed information about the content of each subject being taught in all classes. This enables parents to support their children's learning in homework.
- A scrutiny of key stage 2 pupils' books and folders showed that work in history, geography and art is of a high standard. Pupils record their work in topic books. They are able to apply their writing and enquiry skills across a wide range of subjects. For example, pupils were learning about the life of Anne Frank and making links to history and inspirational people. Pupils were able to discuss British values of respect and tolerance for others. A wide range of art is on display around the school, and pupils all spoke about their love of music and the opportunities for singing in the school. The quality of the wider curriculum enables pupils to develop a range of skills to make good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leadership capacity is developed in the early years
- teachers design interesting activities that enable disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1, to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Sean Flood
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held discussions with you and other senior and middle leaders. I spoke with representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of London and held a meeting with two governors, including the chair. I spoke with pupils in class, in structured

settings and informally. I also spoke to parents. I observed pupils' behaviour in class, in the playgrounds and as they moved around the school. I scrutinised pupils' work in a wide range of subjects. I heard readers across the school and spoke with pupils about the books they are reading. I also made visits to all classes alongside senior leaders. I examined the school's progress-tracking information and assessment records. A wide range of documentation concerning safeguarding, welfare and attendance was scrutinised. I also looked at behaviour and bullying incident logs. I considered the responses of 15 parents to Parent View and the responses of pupils and staff to Ofsted's online surveys and the school's own internal surveys.